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How to Make Training and Certification Work for You in the Payroll Job Search

It's no secret that getting a professional certification can help you land the most desirable payroll jobs and earn a higher salary. The Certified Payroll Professional (CPP) is one of the most in-demand credentials employers seek in payroll candidates, according to the [2016 Robert Half Salary Guide for Accounting and Finance](#). The CPP is a certification for those with payroll knowledge and experience, but requires [eligibility](#).

Another option is the Fundamental Payroll Certification (FPC). The FPC is a certification credential for payroll beginners, and [no experience is required](#) to take the exam.

Read on for tips about how these certifications can work to your advantage during the job search process:

- **Mention the certification in your cover letter.** Although some employers may have dispensed with [cover letters](#), the accounting and finance sector still often asks for them — or will, at the least, make it an optional part of the application process. The cover letter is another good place to highlight your commitment to professional development.
- **Highlight training on your resume.** Because the FPC and CPP are so highly regarded, make sure these certifications are called out and prominent. It's OK to toot your own horn. Mentioning you have achieved or are pursuing these payroll competencies could help you to stand out among other applicants.
- **Connect credentials to your skills.** During the interview process for payroll jobs, emphasize how your FPC or CPP training prepares you to carry out job duties with professionalism, discernment and the latest best practices. Your answers to interview questions should incorporate the knowledge you gained during the certification process on topics such as the Fair Labor Standards Act, regulatory compliance and internal auditing.
- **Discuss future goals.** Demonstrate to hiring managers your dedication to the profession. Mention your specific plans for maintaining your FPC or CPP credential and staying on top of trends in your field. When it's your turn to ask the [interview questions](#), one of them could be around how the employer supports its workers with ongoing training and professional development opportunities.

- **Share your knowledge.** One other tool in your toolbox you can offer employers is sharing knowledge you gain through your continuing education with your potential colleagues. The ability to raise the game of other is a highly valued skill.

Companies are pursuing top payroll professionals today in hopes of bringing them on board. With your FPC or CPP credential, it could set you ahead of the pack. Just don't forget to highlight your training and certification at all stages of the job search process.

Accountemps, a [Robert Half](#) company, is the world's first and largest specialized staffing firm for temporary accounting, finance and bookkeeping professionals. Accountemps has more than 330 locations worldwide. More resources, including online job search services and the [Accountemps blog](#), can be found at accountemps.com.

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