



CGI

BUILDING AN SAP PRACTICE BY PROVING EXPERTISE TO CUSTOMERS

QUICK FACTS

Company

- Name: CGI
- Locations: Headquarters in Montréal, Canada; 100+ offices in 16 countries
- Industry: Professional services
- Products and services: Consulting, systems integration, and outsourcing services
- Revenue: CAD 4 billion (€2.4 billion)
- Employees: 25,000
- Web site: www.cgi.com

Challenges and Opportunities

- Promote global delivery and CGI's unique approach to serving clients from multiple shores
- Demonstrate SAP® application expertise to customers and colleagues
- Become better positioned for the future
- Build the SAP practice and increase its visibility
- Attain a competitive advantage
- Grow the business

Objectives

Obtain SAP Certified Application Professional status for consulting in the SAP ERP Human Capital Management solution

SAP Solutions and Services

SAP Certified Application Professional status, offered by the SAP Education organization

Highlights

- Took concentrated 4-week course in Toronto
- Passed SAP-certified application professional test

Why SAP

- Desire to build the SAP practice
- SAP's prominence in the market and increasing demand for SAP software-related services

Benefits

- Gained respect from customers, management, and coworkers
- Increased confidence in application know-how
- Made it easier to secure SAP software-related business
- Extended CGI's strong global SAP practice to lead its new Saguenay, Quebec, division of 18 SAP professionals

“As a leading IT services provider, CGI takes great pride in meeting our clients’ needs. Having my certificate demonstrates that I have completed my education in SAP software and passed a demanding examination, which ensures my clients the best service.”

Guylaine Tremblay, Director, Consulting,
Global SAP Practice, CGI



With its team of talented professionals, broad capabilities, and flexible approach, CGI helps clients define strategies for their business transformations and designs, develops, and implements systems and processes for achieving them. An end-to-end provider, CGI has hands-on experience and deep expertise in all facets of customers' business and technology environments.

CGI is an SAP partner, and a great many of the firm's projects entail planning and implementing SAP® software environments. It has over 100 SAP software

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Global SAP Practice, CGI

implementations to its credit, including over 20 upgrades, and supports SAP operations in 35 companies with more than 60,000 users.

Recently, to bolster its SAP expertise credentials, CGI enrolled one of its members in a course offered by the SAP Education organization. In this course, CGI member Guylaine Tremblay learned the SAP ERP Human Capital Management (SAP ERP HCM) solution and proved her proficiency at the end by obtaining SAP Certified Application Professional status. The reward for Tremblay's success: satisfied clients who rely on CGI for subject matter expertise, including now the skills that she acquired.

Capitalizing on a Global SAP Practice

Unlike other companies, CGI offers global delivery options to complement its pool of 700+ SAP experts in eight centers worldwide, including Canada, the United States, France, and India. The firm can combine on-site responsiveness through local offices with the value of remote delivery through its onshore, nearshore, and offshore centers of excellence.

Traditional offshoring and nearshoring offer clients a unique set of cost-saving options and give them the flexibility to choose the combination that best meets their needs. CGI has a robust nearshore offering from six Canadian global delivery centers, including one in Saguenay, a city about 400 kilometers (250 miles) north of Montréal, Quebec. The Saguenay practice was established to take advantage of the fast-growing SAP software-related opportunities with a cost-effective nearshoring model. This delivery option appeals to many customers in Canada, especially government bodies that are prohibited from outsourcing internationally.

Passing a Tough Exam Versus Just “Taking a Course”

Human capital management (HCM) was an area of particular interest to CGI, and Tremblay – with 20 years of experience in the field – was an obvious candidate to spearhead the effort. She knew HCM applications from several other vendors but had no experience



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Guylaine Tremblay, Director, Consulting, Global SAP Practice, CGI

with SAP software. So she looked into ways of learning SAP ERP HCM and found out about the concentrated courses on the solution that SAP Education offers in Toronto. These courses conclude with thorough examinations and certificates for successful students that attest to their SAP Certified Application Professional status.

“I’ve taken training courses from a number of vendors, but never did they provide even a test at the end, let alone any kind of evidence that I achieved proficiency,” says Tremblay. “I wanted to become an expert on SAP ERP HCM, and I also wanted to be able to demonstrate my achievement to management, to my work associates, and especially to customers. Having that tangible certificate from SAP means you didn’t just show up – you learned a lot and passed a challenging test to prove it.”

Condensing Six Weeks of Training into Four

Tremblay traveled to Toronto where she spent four intense weeks learning about SAP ERP HCM. “In this course, SAP compresses its customary six weeks of instruction into four weeks of highly focused learning,” Tremblay reports. “Basically I did nothing but eat, sleep, and study.”

The final exam matched the course itself in rigor, with approximately 80 questions that spanned the gamut of the application’s functionality. Since the test was

conducted online, Tremblay and her seven classmates from other firms were able to learn the results immediately – and each was relieved to receive a passing grade. They all returned home with “human capital management – management and administration” certificates of accomplishment from SAP in their briefcases.

“The course was very professionally administered, and the teachers were excellent,” says Tremblay. “I found myself very well-grounded when I began working on SAP ERP HCM projects. There was still a learning curve to be sure, but it was much shorter than if I hadn’t taken the course.”

Building an SAP Practice of 18 Professionals in Two Years

Soon after Tremblay completed the course, the SAP projects flowing into CGI’s Saguenay office became too much for one expert. CGI began building out the SAP practice and asked Tremblay to be the leader. In just two years she grew the group to 18 SAP software professionals, who are fulfilling contracts for many global clients including leaders in their respective fields. Tremblay is now a director of consulting for CGI’s SAP global practice. “My SAP Certified Application Professional status makes it much easier to secure business,” she says. “The certificate is a mark of achievement for any IT professional within the organization. People are always asking

me about it. It’s definitely widened my sphere of professional contacts internally and externally – one of the reasons I recommend it so highly.”

Continuing On to Higher Education

Despite her success, Tremblay is far from finished benefiting from SAP’s education opportunities. Next she plans to hone her expertise in payroll, her subspecialty, by taking a course from SAP Education that focuses specifically on that subject. With yet another form of SAP Certified Application Professional status to her credit, she will be able to make even greater contributions to CGI, and its stakeholders.

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