

Sample article

What is a Certified Fraud Examiner

By Barbara Brown

Experts believe that an average business loses 6% of their annual revenue due to fraud and that only a small percentage of fraud is detected through normal accounting practices. Frauds can be perpetrated through the billing department, vendors, employee expense reports, or directly through stealing petty cash and merchandise. Every company is vulnerable and everyone loses in the process.

Unfortunately, many companies don't admit they have a fraud problem and do not seek help to protect the company. Professional help is available through the services of a Certified Fraud Examiner. A Certified Fraud Examiner is a specialist in the detection and prevention of a wide range of white-collar crime and other fraudulent conduct. The education and experience of Certified Fraud Examiners includes accounting, auditing, criminology, investigation, and loss prevention. The certification process is extensive, requiring passing a 500 question exam covering Fraud Examination and Investigation; Criminology and Ethics; Financial Transactions; and Legal Elements of Fraud. The exam is administered by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE), a 35,000 member-based global association dedicated to providing anti-fraud education and training.

The [Association of Certified Fraud Examiners](#) website provides detailed information on the certification process and a searchable archive of articles on ethics, fraud detection, fraud examination, prevention, fraud statistics, and legal issues. Newsletters and local organizations also provide up to date information for ACFE members. Most Certified Fraud Examiners have completed a four year college program, have had a thorough background investigation, and adhere to the ACFE Code of Ethics.

Some employers believe that certification by ACFE is only part of the skill set needed in fraud detection and prevention. These employers may seek out Certified Fraud Examiners who are also Certified Public Accountants (CPAs). These employers believe that the challenge of working on complex fraud cases benefits from a background that includes auditing and law enforcement, in addition to the ACFE certification. Whatever a company's situation, they owe it to their stakeholders to become more knowledgeable and proactive in detecting and preventing fraud.