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November 12 – 14, 2025 • Las Vegas

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Design Learner-Centric Certification Exams: A Case Study

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Design Learner-Centric Certifications

Signal-Based Framework for High-Stake Programs

About This Tool

This quick-reference framework helps learning and enablement teams design or refine high-stake program content. Use it to decide which topics should be assessed, and which should instead live in documentation, training, or microlearning.

The Signal-Based Framework

Shift certification from assessment to capability enablement. Use these lenses to review every exam topic before building or revising content.

Lens	Focus	Key Question	Example
Behavior	Scenario judgment, not recall	Does it test decision-making under real conditions?	Field coordination, multi-role workflows
Value	Real learner & business impact	Does mastering this unlock meaningful progress?	Faster onboarding, team readiness
Alignment	Shared definition of expertise	Do all teams define proficiency the same way?	CE/CS/Product alignment

Scoring Card Rubric

How to decide what belongs in certification. Score each topic on Behavior, Value, and Alignment (1–5).

Signal	1	3	5
Behavior	Recall only	Partial scenario	High-impact scenario judgment
Value	Low relevance	Some relevance	High learner & org value
Alignment	Team-specific	Partial agreement	Shared truth across org

Total Score = Value + Behavior + Alignment

Category	Score Range	Decision
Strong Fit	13–15	Keep in blueprint
Borderline	10–12	Pilot & re-evaluate
Misfit	<10	Move to docs or microlearning

Quick Workflow:

- Identify candidate topics
- Score collaboratively
- Discuss major gaps (≥ 2 points)
- Decide next action

For use in certification program design, audit, or refresh cycles.