

5 Tips to Getting Certified Like a Pro!

There is an abundance of certification options, and it is important to be sure to choose the certification that will most benefit your company. While there is a plethora of certification options, we find that most of our clients receive the most benefit from the following certification organizations:

- > **Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC)** certifies woman business enterprises (WBE)
- > **National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC)** certifies minority business enterprises (MBE)
- > **National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC)** certifies LGBT business enterprises (LGBTBE)
- > **US Business Leadership Network (USBLN)** certifies disabled business enterprises and service disabled veteran owned businesses (DOBE, V-DOB and SDV-DOBE)
- > **National Veteran Business Development Council (NVBDC)** certifies veteran and service disabled owned veteran business enterprises (VOBE and SDVOBE)

Certification for all 5 organizations has 3 main requirements:

1. **Ownership.** Is the company owned 51% or more by 1 or more people of the diversity demographic being certified?
2. **Operation.** Are the diversity people for which the certification relies upon involved in the day to day operation and does one or more hold the highest-ranking title.
3. **Control.** Does the diverse person/people have ultimate control of the company as stated in the company's governing documents?

Now before you get any funny ideas about trying to trick the system...DON'T! The big 5 certification organizations have gone to great lengths to weed out any ineligible companies and companies thinking they will simply change the ownership paperwork! They are smart and your name and reputation can be tarnished should you attempt such deception.

So how do I get certified like a pro? The Certify My Company way....

1. Identify the RIGHT certification for your business. Who is your target client? What certification do THEY want/recognize?
2. Complete the general information sections.
3. Gather the required documents.
4. Double, triple, quadruple check the information:
 - a. Do the governing documents meet eligibility requirements?
 - b. Does the ownership percentage on your stock certificates, match the ownership on your tax returns?
5. FINISH & Submit!

Or outsource the whole process and use a pro!