



NAJIHAH NAJLAA ACA SUCCESS STORY

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For Me, Everything Started with ACA

You've likely heard the expression, "Get your foot in the door". But what if you don't feel like you have the qualifications to even open the door in the first place? What if opportunities seem closed because you lack the experience or credentials in your chosen field?

Time to take a word of advice from Najihah Najlaa, an Adobe Certified Expert and instructor at Adobe Authorized Training Center in Cyberjaya, Malaysia. Najihah graduated with a degree in Software Engineering, and had, as she said, zero qualifications in design. Find out how Najihah used Adobe certification to break down the door and burst into the Malaysian design world.

Certiport: Najihah, your story is so inspiring. We're so happy you agreed to share more about your experiences with us.

Najihah: I am glad that I can share my passion for Adobe certification.

Certiport: Let's give our readers a little more information about you.

Najihah: I'm originally from Kelantan, in east Malaysia, but am currently based in Damansara, Selangor, Malaysia for work. I graduated with honors from Universiti Teknologi Petronas, majoring in Software Engineering. I earned my first Adobe certification in 2016, and it quickly became my passion. I now work as an instructor at the Adobe Authorized Training Center in Cyberjaya. In addition to my work as an instructor, I'm a freelance photographer, videographer, and designer. I started my own video production company, A Lifetime Project, about five years ago.

Certiport: You have so much on your plate! Tell us a little about what you do as an instructor.

Najihah: As a trainer, I teach industry creatives. I get to cover all areas of post-production work, everything from video editing to photography and graphic design. I've been able to conduct various workshops across Malaysia for the last three years. I love being able to share my knowledge with other creatives.



Certiport: Did you always know you wanted to work in the creative industry?

Najihah: Even while I was in college, I always knew I wanted to be in the creative industry. But I didn't know how I could get into that field since I was a Software Engineering major. My university was focused strictly on engineering, and they didn't have creative courses. My Adobe certification changed everything for me. Without my ACA and ACE certifications, I do not think I would be in the creative field at all.



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Certiport: That is amazing! One exam opened a whole new field for you. How did you first get involved with Adobe certification?

Najihah: I initially got Adobe certified so I could compete in the ACA Championship. When I signed up for this competition I wasn't aiming to win. I was just wanted to mention Adobe on my resume. That's it, a line where I could say, "I participated in Adobe Certified Associate Championship." Winning changed my future. The recognition given by Adobe and Certiport allowed me to be discovered as a designer, not just as a Software Engineering graduate.

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Certiport: It sounds like competing led to a great job.

Najihah: It did! After winning the ACA Championship, I was offered a job as a Graphic Designer by the COO of a large telecommunications company here in Malaysia. He offered me the job, even though I didn't have a degree in a creative field. Later, I was also invited to share my creative journey on stage at the Adobe Make-IT Local event in 2017. From that exposure, I was discovered by the Master Trainer of the Adobe Authorized Training Center, where he asked me if I was interested in teaching at the center. It's amazing to share what I know, while also growing my own freelance design company. I think it is important to practice what you teach technically and fundamentally, so I made my company, A Lifetime Project, as a platform where I experiment with new skills, and express my inner creativity.

Certiport: It can't be easy to teach and work as a freelance designer. Are your days incredibly busy?

Najihah: My days are full. In the morning I browse through tons of creative content, to get my juices flowing. Then I move on to learning new skills myself, studying new Adobe program updates, and preparing content to share on my educational platform, Sharingbasics. Throughout the day, I check social media to respond to my followers, mostly answering questions about tutorials and creating some how-to videos. All of that is on top of my creative work for my freelance clients and teaching.

Certiport: You mentioned Sharingbasics. Tell us more about it.

Najihah: Sharingbasics is my education website I started in December 2019. I use Sharingbasics as a platform to share my knowledge and teach others. Before the pandemic, I would conduct monthly workshops and corporate trainings in various corporate offices. Right now, I'm working to set up online webinars and online trainings.

Certiport: We love that you're so passionate about sharing your knowledge with others. What made you decide to work as a trainer, as opposed to working as a full-time designer?

Najihah: I want to inspire other people, especially the creative community in Malaysia. I've seen a lot of people wasting their potential. They don't have the technical skills to use their tools to express their creative ideas. By teaching, I can break down the technical barrier. Everyone is creative in their own ways. We all have our own callings just waiting to be discovered.

Certiport: We couldn't agree more. You need technical skills to be able to truly express your creative ideas. Thank you so much for sharing your amazing journey with us. We always like to end our interviews with this question: What advice do you have for other students looking to pursue a career like yours?

Najihah: My main advice is to begin with your end goal in mind. Put in your best efforts, connect the dots of opportunity, make choices to lead you where you want to go. That's what happened to me, and I believe good things will happen to you too if you believe in yourself and let yourself be discovered. Get certified, and the doors will open for you.

Interested in preparing your students with technical skills to express their creativity? As Najihah said, it all starts with Adobe certification. Learn more at www.certiport.com/ACA.

