



# Adding Certification to a Master's Degree

This is another in a series of interviews with working LP professionals who have earned their LPQ or LPC certifications from the Loss Prevention Foundation (LPF) to hear in their own words why they pursued certification and how it benefited their careers.

## What influenced you to pursue certification?

After graduate school, I cross compared and analyzed the next education chapter in my professional journey. I always knew the Loss Prevention Foundation had certifications that could be incorporated into my career path and portfolio. I reviewed the LPC and found it was the additional layering and concentration I needed for my current industry. Since I believe in the value of continued education, it was an easy choice.

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## Interview with Jennifer Schaefer, MA, LPC



Jennifer Schaefer, MA, LPC, has been in the loss prevention industry for over seventeen years. She began her career in the public sector and then moved into LP at Target Stores and Caribou Coffee before joining McDonald's as a regional security manager based in Minneapolis. Schaefer holds a master's degree in criminal justice leadership. She is the first-ever recipient of the RLPSA's Salute to Excellence award. Schaefer was also a 2014 recipient of the McDonald's Presidents Award (top 1 percent in the company), Midwest Region's Director's Leadership Award, Exceptional Woman of Ohio Award, and US Operations STAR Award. In her spare time, Schaefer volunteers at the Ronald McDonald House.

## Was the course what you expected?

The LPC course not only met my expectations, but also exceeded them. I think LPF did a fantastic job of laying out the structure for the certification. Once you are in the process of reviewing the coursework, it is a plethora of engaging levels of all academic curriculums. The online program offers flexibility, adaptability, and general awareness. The courses in my graduate program were online, so the online operating system was familiar. The LPC is truly an individual study course since it does not have an actual instructor or networking peer group. This aspect accelerated my motivation, determination, and overall interest in completing the LPC course.

## Tell us more about the process of going through the coursework and taking the exam.

The certification process was definitely a personal journey. I thought the certification would be a great place for me to spread my wings and fly. Once I began the coursework, I found the material well written and full of depth and detail. The online material is available for a year, so I recommend utilizing your time wisely as I found "life happens" and before you know it the time has come to an end.

Once I completed the coursework, I utilized all of my Gopher Notes throughout the readings as a means to apply and prepare for the final exam. I prepared by taking each sectional quiz, multiple final exams, reading my notes, and preparing notecards on certain aspects of the material. I also recommend timing your practice final exams, as this will come in handy based on the timed final exam. I utilized one of my vacation weeks to sharpen my knowledge and study for the final exam.

I scheduled my exam for Black Friday and looked forward to the opportunity when I arrived at the testing center. The recommendations and guidance provided by the LPF was spot on regarding the preparation, date of exam, testing center, and the actual exam. The exam utilized the coursework in a practical and applicable sense.

## What benefits have you seen from taking the course?

There are multiple benefits. First was the individual gratification received when passing the exam. I cannot tell

the readers what it feels like unless it's an experience they have felt on their own. Knowing your time, effort, and energy have been placed into a certification, which allows for the betterment of an individual, carries an unspoken value.

A second benefit was becoming a member of the LPF as well as reviewing opportunities within the foundation where I could contribute and give back as a career professional.

Third, I have the distinguished opportunity of serving as a member of the LPC content review subcommittee, which affords me the ability to review content and provide feedback.

I have already had a number of individuals internally and externally inquire about the LPC designation. I cannot speak highly enough of the certification and what it means to an individual. Each of us has our own career path, and the less traveled path may offer the most excitement.

### **If you could offer one key takeaway to someone currently considering getting certified, what would it be?**

Utilize the tools and resources available throughout the coursework. The course offers a great application for taking notes called Gopher Notes. Throughout the material each category is broken down into subcategories. There is a significant amount of reading and application material. Use of the Gopher Notes is a great means to capture specific areas to highlight and ensure immediate comprehension. You can always change, add, or modify the notes section of each course. Once completed you can print the notes and utilize them as a study guide.

## **Newly Certified**

Following are individuals who recently earned their certifications.

### **Recent LPC Recipients**

James Bryant, LPC, Ahold USA  
Minia Chadwick, LPC, Vital Asset Protection & Investigations  
Michael Ferrell, LPC, QVC  
Camyle Haywood, LPC, Publix Super Markets  
Aron Kissell, LPC, Ahold USA  
David Kozak, LPC, Hy-Vee  
Thomas Mormino, LPC, Ahold USA  
Heather Pippin, LPC, Publix Super Markets  
Erin Roof, LPC, Ahold USA  
LaShonta Terry, LPC, C Spire  
Thomas Thweatt, LPC, Belk Department Stores  
Gary Thorpe, LPC, Kroger

### **Recent LPQ Recipients**

Nicole Bonner, LPQ, JCPenney  
Stephen Cashman, LPQ, Staples  
Brad Donatille, LPQ, Sears Holdings  
Ronald Drabenstadt, LPQ  
Monika Espinoza, LPQ, Louis Vuitton  
Alan Foyle, LPQ, HomeGoods  
Kimberly King, LPQ, Banfield Pet Hospital  
Carolyn Korchik, LPQ  
Vladimir Vlasov, LPQ ■



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