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The Portal
for Loss Prevention
Professionals

CERTIFICATION

We Have Some Catching Up to Do

A little over eighteen months ago I wrote an article for *LP Magazine* about the Loss Prevention Foundation. Maybe you read it, maybe you didn't, but that doesn't really matter. The main point of my article was to celebrate the fact that a long overdue need had finally been served—industry-specific certification for loss prevention professionals.

Back then the Foundation was in its early stages. A number of dedicated professionals had performed a tremendous amount of work by bringing the vision to life. When I joined the Foundation as a charter member, there were only 800 members and 50 professionals that had achieved LPC certification. Now the Foundation can boast 2,700 members, hundreds of LPQ and LPC certifications completed, and almost 900 currently enrolled! That's all great, but maybe you're wondering, "So what's your point?"

LP professionals finally have something that is valuable, necessary, and affordable, yet only a small percentage of us have taken advantage of certification.

My point is this. In just eighteen months hundreds of LP professionals have taken advantage of the opportunity to stand out among their peers. Sure the letters LPQ or LPC look great after someone's name, but that isn't why these folks stand out in my mind. They stand out because they have made it clear to us that they believe in personal and professional growth; so much so that they have invested considerable hours in learning, growing, and developing as leaders first and LP professionals second.

I certainly wish I could list each and every name here, but suffice to say, "Congratulations!" I am especially proud to state that twenty-three of my LP team are currently enrolled or have been certified.

That Was Easy.

Actually, no it isn't. Achieving LPQ or LPC certification is just about anything but easy. The six modules that comprise the LPC curriculum—leadership principals, business principals, LP operations, safety and risk management, crisis management, and supply-chain security—may seem benign enough, but allow me to personally assure you, this is no quick read.

by Dan Provost



Provost is vice president of loss prevention for Staples U.S. retail stores and distribution centers. Prior to running the LP team for Staples, Provost held numerous positions within the organization, including vice president of store operations and store systems. His retail career spans nearly three decades, the last of which has been primarily dedicated to LP. Provost can be reached at 508-253-9145 or via email at dan.provost@staples.com.

There are thirty-one sub-modules contained in the LPC curriculum, each worthy of their own module in my opinion. Think about it, there are hundreds of how-to books on these topics alone. Reading, comprehending, and digesting all of this information is hard work. Honestly, you've really got to want to learn, grow, and develop to take on this challenge.

I Wish I Had the Time.

I hear that all the time, and by the way it's a valid statement. We all have way too many things on our plates (I won't insult you by listing them here), but here's the thing—if you wait until you have the time, you'll probably never get around to it regardless of your best intentions. Truth is this is less about having time and far more about having commitment to your future. Once you enroll, you'll make time.

Will Certification Make a Difference?

Three letters at the end of someone's name doesn't make them a better person, it doesn't make them a better professional, and it certainly doesn't inherently make them a better leader. But it absolutely does do one thing (at least with me), it opens doors. What do I mean?

Here's the scenario. Let's say I have a position open on my field team. After a number of interviews, the candidates have been narrowed down to two. Both have great experience and both have a track record of great results. One is certified, and one is not. If I were the hiring manager, and again, all things being equal, I'd give the nod to the certified candidate. Why? Not because they're certified, but because I see a candidate that values personal and professional growth and development. I see a candidate who isn't sitting still waiting for their career to happen; they're making their career happen.

108,000 and Growing

So there you have it. That's my pitch for growth and development through certification. To be truthful, I wasn't asked to write this article; I asked if I could submit this article. Why? Because from my perspective, we as LP professionals finally have something that is valuable, necessary, and affordable, yet only a small percentage of us have taken advantage of the offering. My guess is that this has more to do with lack of time than lack of desire...at least that's my hope. But I guarantee you that you'll never have the time if you wait for it to happen; you need to make the time.

Here's a fun fact. Did you know that more than 108,000 HR professionals have become certified in their industry? I think we have some catching up to do. ■