

Why We Should Be Thankful

This is the time of the year that most of us think about giving thanks for our health, our families, and friends and maybe even our 2013 successes and accomplishments. I know I am very grateful for these things. I also know that if it weren't for having good health, support of my family and friends, I would not have accomplished as much. Not even close.

Being thankful requires time for reflection. I recently took the opportunity to do some early year-end reflection after our October board of directors meeting. In that fall board meeting, which is one of two annual meetings that we are required to conduct, we did a year-to-date status review of

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what we had accomplished and what is planned for 2014. This was a four-hour meeting where the Loss Prevention Foundation (LPF) staff and committee chairs reported to the board, which is comprised of thirty retail vice presidents and senior executives from several leading solution providers.

Four new board members were added to the board, including

- Tim Gorman, DVP, Loss Prevention, Asset Protection, and Business Continuity, Walgreens,
- Mike Keenan, CPP, CFI, VP Loss Prevention, Gap Inc.,
- Mark Mellor, DVP, Loss Prevention and Global Business Continuity, Family Dollar, and
- Mark Stinde, VP Asset Protection, 7-Eleven.

by Gene Smith, LPC



Smith is president of The Loss Prevention Foundation, the not-for-profit organization charged with the responsibility of managing certification. He was formerly president of the industry's largest executive search and consulting firm. During the past fifteen-plus years, Smith has provided career counseling for thousands of industry professionals nationwide. He can be reached at 704-837-2521 or via email at gene.smith@losspreventionfoundation.org.

2013 Highlights

Many mentioned after the meeting that it was the best ever. That was great to hear, but the celebration was short-lived because we went right back to planning and working diligently to do even better. However, we would be remiss if we didn't share some of the highlights. The Foundation now has:

- 6,588 members in our group.
- 5,000 worldwide locations in 165 counties that offer the LPQ and LPC exams.
- 1,400 exam locations in the U.S.
- 1,000 certified professionals.
- 452 companies have either LPQ or LPC-certified or certification-seeking employees.
- 279 companies have someone certified.
- One company has 193 certification participants.
- 140 companies have LPC credentialed employees.
- 139 companies have LPQ credentialed employees.
- 78 vice presidents and directors are LPC certified.
- 74 companies now hold LPQ or LPC as a preferred requirement for employment.
- 5 countries have LPC certified individuals.
- LPC credential holders now hold positions in nine of the top ten U.S. retailers.
- The LP Memorial Fund distributed two gifts of \$2,000 each to surviving families who lost loved ones from the LP industry.
- New certificates for membership and certification were created.
- LPF was rebranded with a new website, conference booth displays, and a merchandise store.
- A fully automated CRM system was implemented.
- A recertification program for LPC-certified professionals was launched.
- Academic credit for completing the LPQ or LPC requirements was granted at American Military University, Eastern Kentucky University, Fairleigh Dickinson University, and Mississippi College.
- The LPF led fundraising efforts to raise enough donations for approximately 100 new bicycles (over \$10,000) to students at Devonshire Elementary School in Charlotte, NC. The school was recognized on the *Today* show for their efforts toward improving

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attendance and academic achievements of their students; 87 percent of the 576 children live in poverty and most have never owned a bike.

These accomplishments are due primarily to the efforts of the thousands of supporters who have helped in the efforts to elevate our profession. We cannot even begin to thank each individual, company, or group. It has been so inspiring to see the engagement of our board, our members, and our volunteers. We look forward to delivering on some really great 2014 goals that will further support our mission.

Personal Career Plan

The Foundation is focused on professional development. With that in mind, we offer you this challenge—formalize a personal plan to add to your professional skills and knowledge to further advance your career in 2014.

Most of you are committed to building a plan for shrinkage reduction or reaching your job performance goals, but often fall short on developing the same type of plan for professional development. It is amazing that when we speak at various events, LP executives can recite their top high loss locations and can articulate without hesitation exactly what the strategy is to improve results. But when we ask them about their career goals, they struggle with verbalizing what they need to do to reach those goals. Most of them have failed to formalize a plan.

We would like to encourage you to consider putting yourself on a path of continuing education. Invest some time in yourself and make a plan. Identify one or two areas in which you want to seek further education and go for it. While the thrill of the chase and the pursuit of dishonest individuals is one of the main reasons many of you were attracted to this profession, it is not the most important area to master.

Decide what you want your personal branding to be. If you do nothing but focus on investigations, do not wonder later in your career why you do not get interviews for higher positions that require you to manage the entire scope of loss prevention. If your resume speaks too much about investigations, ORC, interrogations, and not enough about the business, then guess what your brand is?

You must invest in yourself. Enroll in the LPQ or LPC and obtain valuable information that you can use immediately in your current position. Learn firsthand how easy it is to learn online. Join the Foundation as a member and add it to your credentials. Break the stereotype of being too focused on cases.

Commit to finishing your degree or taking a course at one of our great academic partners—American Military University, American Public University, Eastern Kentucky University, Fairleigh Dickinson University, or Mississippi College. The time to increase your desirability for a promotion or career

opportunity isn't tomorrow when you need it, but rather today, before you need it. The truly successful industry leaders pursue continued education in advance of when they need it. You should, too.

Newly Certified

Following are individuals who recently earned their LPC and LPQ certifications.

Recent LPC Recipients

Chris Barber, LPC, Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana
Jay Bonnell, LPC, Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana
Shannon Bueno, LPC, Walgreens
John Calhoun, LPC, Walgreens
William Colby, LPC, Coles Express
Kyle Davidson, LPC
Charles Delgado, LPC, Meijer
Stuart Deske, LPC, Redbox Automated Retail
Susan Factor, LPC, Walgreens
Jason Foshee, LPC, Cash America International
Richard Fuehrer, LPC
Amber Gilmore, LPC, Cabela's
Peter Green, LPC, Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana
Nathan Guta, LPC, Walgreens
Crystal Hancock, LPC, Big 5 Sporting Goods
Charles Kostyk, LPC
Joseph Laufenberg, LPC, Festival Foods
Pascual Machado, LPC, TJX
Karlye Maloney, LPC, Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana
Mark McInaney, LPC, Walgreens
Sonya Medlock, LPC Rite Aid
Charles Moore, LPC Walgreens
Nicole Pappas, LPC, Redbox Automated Retail
Matthew Pearsey, LPC, Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana
Camio Robinson, LPC
Saud Sanady, LPC
Chris Schkade, LPC, Walgreens
Ethan Stephens, LPC
Nicole Strange, LPC, Publix Super Markets
David Strom, LPC
Randall Thomas, LPC, Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana
Bryan Venza, LPC, TJX
Laurie Zaccaro, LPC, Walgreens

Recent LPQ Recipients

Mariah Angelo, LPQ, Rack Room Shoes
Eric Bosko, LPQ
Roy Bredahl, LPQ, Walmart
Linda Bredeson, LPQ, Publix Super Markets
Seirra Brown, LPQ, IOBSE
Kelly Cybulski, LPQ, RILA
Shaunte Davis, LPQ, T.J.Maxx
Camille Decker, LPQ, Weis Markets
Charles Dincol, LPQ, Home Depot
Walter Edwards, LPQ
Kelli Gasswint, LPQ, Rite Aid
Ginny Gomez, LPQ, Macys Logistics and Operations
Peter Leary, LPQ, Allied Barton Security Services
Gregory McDermitt, LPQ, Walmart
Trevor Monroe, LPQ, Rack Room Shoes
Toyce Newsome, LPQ, T-Mobile USA
Rudi Robinson, LPQ, Sears Holdings
Alicja Smardz, LPQ, eBay ■