

Building Careers, Validating Expectations

The Loss Prevention Foundation (LPF) has often used this column to provide the perspective of today's industry leadership on the value of certification. But what about tomorrow's leaders? Do they believe that certification is helping them to advance their careers? If so, how is it helping them?

We decided to reach out to some of those that have gone through certification to ask their honest opinions on the process, and whether they feel it is benefiting them in their professional development. *LP Magazine* recently sat down with Santo Zenone, LPQ, to get his insights on certification.

Tell us about what influenced your decision to pursue certification.

In early 2013 I learned that Vector Security was offering LPQ and LPC scholarships. After reviewing the course curriculum for the LPQ and LPC programs on the Foundation website, I recognized that there was a great opportunity to learn more about the industry. I saw that there were new things that could help move my career forward, and many lessons that would apply to my role in loss prevention. It was clear to me that the course would be great for my career growth and development. With Vector Security providing this opportunity, I decided to apply and was awarded an LPQ scholarship. I received my LPQ certification on April 2, 2013.

Was the course what you expected?

Parts of the course were what I expected, while other aspects provided learning opportunities that I didn't expect. I anticipated that I would learn more about the loss prevention industry and the fundamentals of LP. But what I came away with was so much more. Although I had a strong understanding of the general concepts of loss prevention going into the course, it helped me to gain a better and more thorough comprehension of the role of LP and how it applies to the retail industry. It opened my eyes to information and possibilities that I didn't expect. I was also able to share my own experiences during the course.

Tell us more about the process.

The way the program was set up made it easy for me to navigate through the course. I was able to work through the modules at my own pace, which allowed me to spend more time on areas where I wanted to focus extra attention. This really helped me gain a better understanding of the material. It was also great to have the review questions, as they reinforced the information that I had learned. As for the exam, there were plenty of locations in the greater Vancouver area that provided a quiet and professional setting.

Interview with Santo Zenone, LPQ



Santo Zenone, LPQ, is a nine-year veteran of the loss prevention industry, beginning his career as an LP agent for a contracted security company in greater Vancouver, British Columbia. Zenone has worked the last six years with Gap Inc. and is currently a district LP manager for Gap and Gap Outlet in Western Canada.

What information do you feel helped you the most?

The course really strengthened my knowledge of communication, interpreting information, and how all of this fits into the bigger picture. This has helped me to have more effective conversations with business partners and deliver well-rounded feedback. This also includes improving the perception others have of me, and how my body language could affect the conversation taking place.

Certification has not changed my expectations, but only validated my belief in the potential opportunities and influence that loss prevention has within the industry. I would definitely recommend it to others. After completing the program, I have added more tools to my tool belt. This has helped me in my personal growth and strengthened the potential for a long and rewarding career in loss prevention.

What other benefits have you seen from taking the course?

Within one year of becoming LPQ certified, I was promoted to a district LP manager position. Going through the program has helped me to analyze situations and challenges at a higher level. I learned the value of building and strengthening partnerships, which has helped to develop rapport and establish better credibility with key business partners. This has allowed me to receive more buy-in, work on new ways of creating a positive impact toward my company's goals, and have more constructive conversations with my direct supervisors and direct reports. I've become a well-rounded LP professional. It has furthered my skills and made me a better business partner in general.

If you could offer one key takeaway to someone considering certification, what would it be?

The certification process offers a professional advantage. It provides great learning opportunities. There are many takeaways

from a personal and career-development standpoint, but compared to other courses I've taken, the LPQ specializes in the loss prevention industry. It provided me with a more global context of the role, which I feel was the most beneficial for me. This has also helped me better understand the roles of my business partners, allowing me to become more supportive by tying their roles and their goals with mine to achieve better overall results.

How has certification changed your expectations of loss prevention as a career?

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Newly Certified

Following are individuals who recently earned their certifications.

Recent LPC Recipients

- Wayne Adams, LPC, Walmart
- Mattia Bartolini, LPC, Nike North America
- Jacklyn Cato, LPC, Cracker Barrel Old Country Store
- Matthew Christman, LPC, DICK'S Sporting Goods
- Lori Dearwester, LPC, Goodwill Industries of Sacramento
- Kenneth English, LPC, Walgreens
- LeVern Hayes, Jr., LPC, Navy Exchange Service Command
- Chris Hyde, LPC, Office Depot
- Paul Jaeckle, LPC, Walmart
- Kevin Kay, LPC, Navy Exchange Service Command
- Linda Keeps, LPC, Anchor Stone I.T.
- Gregory Lundell, LPC, Walmart
- J.D. Mauricio, LPC, JCPenney

- William McDermott, LPC, Cracker Barrel Old Country Store
- Will McDonald, LPC, Walmart
- Ryan Orlando, LPC, Walmart
- Gil Palomares, LPC, Lowe's
- Phillip Rumsey, LPC, Walmart
- Paul Rumsey, LPC, Walmart
- Gary Smith, LPC, 7-Eleven
- Brandon Snyder, LPC, Raleys
- Joseph Spencer, LPC, Rite Aid
- Allen Still, LPC, Walmart
- Sue Waugh, LPC, Walmart
- Jeremy Williams, LPC, Walgreens
- Denise Wynn, LPC, TJX

Recent LPQ Recipients

- Randy Brown, LPQ, Big Lots
- William Campbell, LPQ, The Beer Store
- Andrew Follett, LPQ, Walmart
- Elizabeth Harcourt, LPQ, Bed Bath & Beyond
- Lynn Kirouac, LPQ, Publix Super Markets
- Samuel Maze, LPQ, Mississippi College
- Samuel Puccini, LPQ, 7-Eleven
- Richard Roman, LPQ, Fairway Market ■

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