



Q&A with Bill Napier

Bill Napier, LPC is senior manager of corporate asset protection for Cabela's where he leads the asset protection team at all retail stores and the corporate office. He has over twenty-eight years of LP management and leadership experience, including positions at JCPenney, Galyan's, and The Hang Up Shoppes. Napier can be reached at 308-255-2316 or via email at william.napier@cabelas.com.



Building a Better Foundation at Cabela's

E DITOR'S NOTE: Retailers such as Staples, Sports Authority, Harris Teeter, and Finish Line have all been successful in obtaining tuition assistance for the Loss Prevention Foundation's certification courses, the LPQualified and LPCertified. Cabela's recently undertook the challenge and Bill Napier, LPC, senior manager of corporate asset protection, successfully partnered with his human resources department to sanction the certification courses as official education resources for the asset protection team.

Because the Foundation often receives questions regarding what challenges are associated with this internal process, we decided to go straight to the source and see how Napier was so successful.

Why is the Loss Prevention Foundation's certification initiative important to you personally and professionally?

The loss prevention industry has been thirsty for a professional designation for a long time. The LPQ and LPC certification courses fill the void of the obvious paradigm shift occurring in our industry. It's an exciting time for the industry as we've seen over the past few years the emergence of a more prevalent desire for standardizing and certifying each professional's knowledge. It is rare to find a profession like loss prevention that does not have its own general certification. Successfully completing the Foundation's certification course not only expands your personal growth path, but it demonstrates to both current and prospective employers you understand and have perfected the core competencies of the industry.

How do you see certification benefiting your team at Cabela's?

I'm very fortunate that Cabela's had a rich history and tradition of training and educating its employees. We have a Cabela's University that is extremely successful, so our company is used to investing in our associates whether that education is within or outside our walls. Certification will help the loss prevention team members because it demonstrates we believe in being a well-rounded business partner. Each certification, the LPQ and the LPC, is a comprehensive approach to loss prevention as an integral part of the retail business. It doesn't just teach about shrink numbers or vendor relationships. The course deals with real-world scenarios and ensures the certification candidate learns a plethora of information and skills that easily translate into all business practices.

How has certification been received in the field?

It's been outstanding. Of course, with any LP team, we're swamped. But the certification initiative has swept through our team and has been contagious. Our associates understand it's not only going to benefit their position at Cabela's, but it's an investment in their future. They are realizing that taking the time to learn will only save them time in doing their job more effectively.

Was the response positive when you presented the certification idea to your human resources department?

Since our human resources department is no stranger to training and development, we had an incredibly easy time

First LPC Recipients

Below are the first loss prevention professionals to pass the requirements for the LPCertified program.

Carlos Alo	Jill Buzzell	Charles Grimmett	Walter Mulhall	Charlie Taylor
Dustin Ares	Kelly Campbell	Marlund Harvey	Bill Napier	William Thompson
Douglas Barth	Anthony Cavaliere	Terry Hodges	Steven Palumbo	Matthew Towers
James Behrend	Sandy Chandler	Cheryl Kaus	Dale Patterson	Terry Vannarsdale
Jon Berg	Brian Farrell	Henry Lague	Douglas Pettigrew	James Wilhelm
Kenneth Boremi	Kathy Gamboa	David Lund	Cindy Schultz	William Wright
Scott Boren	David George	Christopher McCray	Thomas Stein	
Jacque Brittain	Wayne Getz	Wayne McBrian	Adam Stokes	

obtaining approval. Once our HR department saw the extensive content, the academic involvement, and professionalism of the course, they understood the comprehensive nature of its development.

What advice would you give retailers looking to accomplish the same task or even incorporating it into their standard training for asset protection teams?

First, it never hurts to start with a great relationship with HR. At Cabela's my team is often called upon to conduct training and seminars, and we're always willing. We've established ourselves as integral partners in the business, and you always have to start with that—caring about the obstacles they face every day and doing something to help. Those daily types of tasks help pave the way, so it's more of a give and take.

Second, Gene Smith, president of the Foundation, provided me with incredible resources, such as value statements tailored to our business and different announcements regarding how many academic accreditations the certification has received. He was always available to connect us with other companies going through the same process for references.

What would you suggest if someone is working at a retailer that doesn't help pay for certification?

Pay for it out of your own pocket; it's that important to your future. Ultimately it is each individual's responsibility to educate themselves throughout their career. There are numerous payment options through the Foundation that really make it completely doable. Education is something that no one can ever take away from you. So, it's worth it to make the investment. There is also a retailer scholarship offered through the Foundation for practitioners. You can apply on the Foundation web site.

Is there anything else you'd like to share about the Foundation?

First, I'd like to thank Gene Smith for everything he's done to help get Cabela's started with certification. Second, I need to thank the solution provider community that is involved in the Foundation. These solution providers are truly committed to the industry, and they are demonstrating it by investing in the partnership. Many of the Foundation's scholarship partners have donated their scholarships back to the Foundation for retailers to receive. This is such an enormous commitment to the industry; it really drives home which providers value the industry as a whole and the ones that are committed to making a positive impact on retail loss prevention. What better way to give back to an industry you serve than to invest and support industry high-quality education.

Were you really curious if you passed your LPC exam?

Are you kidding? Absolutely. I was sure glad I passed. But I'd like to be the first to congratulate the other loss prevention professionals who have shown their industry leadership by being part of the first group of passing LPCertified professionals [see box opposite]. ■

THINKING INSIDE THE BOX



LOSS PREVENTION AND PHYSICAL SECURITY OPERATIONS

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