



by Gene Smith

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Investing in Your Career

Improve Your Current Job Security and Increase your Marketability

During these times of uncertainty, many people are asking these types of questions: How can you increase the likelihood that you will not be the person downsized should your company decide to do so? What can you do to find employment during difficult economic times? How will you stay at the top of your peer class?

During tough economic times there is always the potential for downsizings within many retail departments, including loss prevention departments. As the candidate pool grows larger, employers can afford to be very selective in their decision making. The market will become more competitive than ever for the few job openings that do occur.

Set Yourself Apart

It is during times like these that the best professionals recognize the importance of investing in their careers. This is the time to show your current employer that you have the right attitude for learning and personal development, so you will be the one they choose to hold on to. Or, it may be the time to show a potential new employer that you are the candidate that has the greatest drive and initiative by demonstrating some or all of the suggestions discussed below.

In previous articles, we have stressed the importance of education and certification. However, now more than ever, it's the time to seek industry certifications. In a struggling economy retailers are forced to make tough decisions every day. Positions are going to be downsized, and this trend is going to continue during these challenging times. With few exceptions, it is true that most companies will typically try to eliminate what they perceive as their weakest links first when eliminating positions. If you are among the fortunate individuals that are retained, what steps will you take to maintain your status and your position? If you are among the unfortunate that get caught up in a downsizing, what steps will you be taking to improve your chances of regaining employment?

Retailers who are hiring can afford to be very selective. Look at your resume. How long has it been since you took a certification course, college class, or industry seminar? Have you shown a willingness to invest in your own career? If you haven't shown this initiative, what does that say to both your current and prospective employers?

When companies have to make tough choices between employees, what do you think they use to make their decisions? Sometimes it is purely based upon performance. Sometimes

it's geography or demographics. Sometimes it's attitude and who shows long-term potential. That being the case, we have to ask ourselves, "What am I doing to make myself better than my competition"?

How long has it been since you took a certification course, college class, or industry seminar? Have you shown a willingness to invest in your own career? If you haven't shown this initiative, what does that say to both your current and prospective employers?

Continuing Education

Seeking certification or enrolling in a college class sends many positive messages to current and perspective employers. Here are just a few.

- It demonstrates your desire to learn and further develop industry knowledge. You are not set in your ways and think you know it all simply because of your industry tenure.
- It designates a level of knowledge and understanding of the core competencies that our industry leaders have identified and acknowledged as critical to excel as a loss prevention professional.
- Certification is designed as a means to validate the knowledge level of LP professionals. It helps to promote industry professionalism by demonstrating your level of competency.
- It serves as a valuable resume builder, endorsing your knowledge base and promoting your commitment as a retail professional as well as a qualified loss prevention professional.
- Most importantly, certification is a means to enhance performance. It expands our knowledge and expertise, confirms our understanding, challenges our perspective, and reinforces industry goals and objectives.
- Companies have been adding certification as a preferred requirement to their job descriptions.

Economically strong companies are always trying to upgrade their teams. There will still be opportunities; however, the competition will remain fierce. Anything you can do to get a leg up on your competition, do it now. Get creative. Don't just

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“throw” together a resume; build one and revise, revise, revise. A resume shouldn’t just highlight your experience, it should show your capabilities and your measurable results. Make it the best it can be. It is your picture that represents you. Read books, network, and practice interviewing.

If you are still employed at the time you read this article, then make sure you adjust your attitude. This is not the time to complain. Be grateful that you are employed and think of how you can make yourself more valuable to your employer. Take on added responsibility without expecting financial compensation. It simply isn’t there. Consider using certification as a refresher course. Sharpen up your knowledge and become an LPQualified professional now.

Retailers Represented In Developing Certification

Visit the Foundation web site and check out the updated listing of all of the companies that have been represented in developing loss prevention certification. It is more than you might think.

New LPQ Certifications

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|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Joe Banaag | Shanay Jones | Philip Roundtree |
| Kimberly Benoit | Donald Lindsley | Brian Sasso |
| Jeff Berk | Pete Maddox | Tawn Sellman |
| John Boudreau | Christopher McCray | Walter Stampfl |
| Rosemary Cannella | Steven Palumbo | Jason Stockdale |
| Jackson Chambers | Burnet Pearce | Michael Theriault |
| Craig Dischinger | James Peters | Nancy Thompson |
| Wayne Frutchey | Rebecca Peterson | David Wood |
| Marcus Hunter | Tyson Roberts | |

2009 LPQ Certification Exam Schedule

- Cycle 1:** February 2 – April 24, 2009
- Cycle 2:** June 1 – July 31, 2009
- Cycle 3:** September 1 – October 31, 2009

Visit the Foundation web site and check out the updated listing of all of the companies that have been represented in developing loss prevention certification.

www.losspreventionfoundation.org

If you want your company involved, please contact us at gene.smith@losspreventionfoundation.org.

Promotions and Career Moves

Please continue to send us your promotions and career moves so we can display them on our web site. We also automatically forward them to *LossPrevention* magazine for printing in their “People on the Move” section. Since the Foundation started this service, the magazine listings are much larger than ever before. That is due to the fantastic support that the Foundation has received from our career advisors—Loss Prevention Recruiters, Jennings Executive Recruiting, Retail Placement Solutions, and Beckwith & Associates—who help by submitting information. Our site has become *the most current and comprehensive listing of industry moves*.

Visit our web site to check out the latest industry moves and our list of career advisors who have demonstrated their support for the Foundation. ■

CALENDAR

January 11 – 14, 2009
**National Retail Federation
98th Annual Convention & Expo**
Jacob Javits Convention Center, NYC
www.nrf.com

February 8 – 11, 2009
**Retail Industry Leaders Association
Logistics Conference**
Gaylord Texan Resort, Dallas, TX
www.rila.org

February 9 – 11, 2009
**HospitalityLawyer.com
The 2009 Hospitality Law Conference**
George Brown Convention Center,
Houston, TX
www.hospitalitylawyer.com

March 1 – 4, 2009
**Food Marketing Institute
Loss Prevention Conference**
Hyatt Regency Mission Bay,
San Diego, CA
www.fmi.org

March 10 – 12, 2009
**Merchant Risk Council
7th Annual Conference**
Wynn Resort, Las Vegas, NV
www.merchantriskcouncil.org

March 15 – 17, 2009
**International Council of Shopping Centers
Shopping Center Security Conference**
Renaissance Hollywood (CA) Hotel
and Spa
www.icsc.org

May 3 – 6, 2009
**Retail Industry Leaders Association
Loss Prevention, Auditing & Safety
Conference**
Gaylord Palms Resort, Orlando, FL
www.rila.org

June 15 – 17, 2009
**National Retail Federation
Loss Prevention Conference & Exhibition**
Los Angeles (CA) Convention Center
www.nrf.com

July 12 – 17, 2009
**Association of Certified Fraud Examiners
20th Annual Conference and Exhibition**
Bellagio, Las Vegas, NV
www.acfe.com

September 21 – 24, 2009
**ASIS International
55th Annual Seminar and Exhibits**
Anaheim, CA
www.asisonline.org