

A Cadre of Instructors (or Ambassadors)

Substantial numbers of persons are teaching Homeland Security, Security Management, Crisis Management, etc. at colleges around the world. In the US, Protective Services programs are thriving in secondary schools. And there are large numbers of state or provincial instructors delivering government mandated training.

Lots of folks are teaching Security!

Standards for instructors which establish baseline knowledge would certainly make a lot of sense. The body of knowledge within Security/Loss Prevention/Crime Prevention needs to be studied - and challenged. Retail Loss Prevention personnel utilize the same concepts as those involved in nuclear security. The applications differ, but the underlying theories are the same. Physical Security is Physical Security.

It is also important for instructional programs to contain allied concepts. Fire Protection. Safety. Crowd Management. Public Relations. Investigation. Etc! All of these are important to asset the protection, though they are not within the domain of Physical Security. A well-rounded knowledge of these areas is necessary for those who teach.

Faculty must have the academic background to understand concepts such as WAECUP, defense-in-depth, enterprise risk management, etc. They must know the 'language' of Asset Protection and then be able to teach it. And they must have an appreciation of organizational culture so their students can thrive within that culture.

The Certified Protection Officer Instructor (CPOI) designation serves as a recognized credential which is achieved after attaining specific academic work in Security/Asset Protection. CPOI's must also have some foundation in adult learning and teaching. They must have experience both in Security as well as instructing. There are over 600 CPOI's worldwide.

The first step in becoming a CPOI is to complete the Certified Protection Officer (CPO) process. This program covers 45 topical areas from Physical Security to Ethics. It's the academic piece. Many organizations require their security officers to complete the program as a condition of employment. Others use it for promotional purposes. Secondary schools offering Protective Services curricula use it as a capstone course. Forward thinking colleges have integrated it within their curriculums.

Becoming a CPO is the first step to earning the CPOI designation.

Earning the CPOI designation affords one opportunities for getting teaching positions. It also can assist in promotion and tenure decisions. And those can be very important!

Employers of CPOI's such as security service firms, academies, colleges, etc. may also gain a marketing advantage. Having staff who are professionally certified is important for many reasons; not the least of which is distinguishing oneself from competitors.

The Certified Protection Officer Instructor process will not solve all of the deficiencies in security education and training. It is not a panacea, but a significant step towards professionalism.

The CPOI process was developed by the International Foundation for Protection Officers (ifpo.org) in response to demand from organizations who wished to teach the CPO program in a classroom setting. That was the impetus for the program; but it is certainly not the only objective of the CPOI. CPOI's are forming a sort of cadre of instructors which help facilitate professionalism within security forces and individuals. CPOI's function as ambassadors for the Foundation; helping it to fulfill its objectives.

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