

Certification *Profile*



Armed with a degree in electronics engineering from the DeVry Institute of Technology in Chicago, **John Philippi, CPP, PSP**, entered the security consulting and systems engineering field right out of college. In 2007, after spending 17 years

in the industry as a provider, Philippi joined the end-user side. “I started at HSBC, one of the largest banking and financial services organizations in the world, as their vice president and director of physical security risk technology for North America,” he says.

In less than two years, he was promoted to senior vice president for North America, physical security risk. This position combines his technology responsibilities with the operational aspects of physical security, which include guard force management, workplace violence, background investigations, executive protection, and travel security. “Issues that keep me up at night are related to workplace violence and terrorism,” Philippi notes.

Communication, he adds, is a critical part of the job. “Although e-mail is necessary...the actual work gets done by getting to know folks and having conversations,” Philippi says. “I have weekly one-on-one sessions with my direct reports. Additionally, I probably spend 4 to 5 hours a day on the phone or having face-to-face conversations with a wide variety of people, including managers from different

business units such as bank branches and call centers.”

He describes security management as “an interesting and intuitive” field. “Security is also satisfying, as is asset protection—the greatest asset being people,” Philippi adds. “Protecting people is an admirable profession. And because security is intuitive, it’s easy to explain to other people what I do, and they get it.”

An ASIS member for some 20 years, Philippi earned his Certified Protection Professional® (CPP) designation in 1995. He achieved his Physical Security Professional® (PSP) designation in 2000. “I was encouraging my team to get their PSPs, so I joined their study group and took the journey with them,” he states. “We all passed.”

The certifications were instrumental in making him a candidate for his current position. “They garnered immediate respect and understanding that I was a subject-matter expert,” he says. “It is this expertise that benefits my company.” Philippi has also earned a master’s degree in business administration and organizational security management from Webster University.

Philippi intends to encourage his staff to pursue certification. “Of my direct reports, one is already a CPP and three intend to sit for the CPP exam. Two others are preparing for their PSP certification.”

—Profile by Vicki Moeser, former ASIS public relations manager