

Jenny Guay

“Jenny from the SOC” Shares Her Path to IT Success



About our certified Cisco professional

Member name

Jenny Guay

Job title

Senior Network Security Analyst

Industry

Computer and network security

Certifications

CCNA CyberOps
CCNA Security
CCNP Security
CyberOps Associate

Learning to blaze her own trail

Jenny Guay has always been fascinated with computers and technology. She disassembled a PC as a kid. Later, in high school, she enrolled in networking courses. That led to her first certification, a CCNA, and she's never looked back.

Following graduation, Jenny attended a university for computer science, dabbled in video gaming, and then settled into her IT career. Pushing to know “everything about everything” on the network, she spent a decade on the front lines of call centers, IT helpdesks, and SOCs before eventually switching to cybersecurity.

It was during her training for other certifications that Jenny discovered cybersecurity. She was instantly fascinated. While attending cybersecurity community brunches, Jenny shared experiences with other women in IT and learned about various security jobs.

Today, Jenny works as a Senior Network Security Analyst. Her nickname, “Jenny from the SOC,” is a play on Jennifer Lopez's 2002 hit, “Jenny from the Block.” Through it all, one thing has remained true—Jenny's initiative has continued to shape her career and open new doors.

Certification training points Jenny in a new direction

That first CCNA certification ignited a passion for learning, and a love affair with certifications, that even Jenny didn't know existed. She's always been innately curious, but now she wanted to soak up every bit of IT knowledge she could.

Jenny decided she wanted to transition into cybersecurity. And when Cisco announced its Global Cybersecurity Scholarship Program (now discontinued), Jenny didn't wait for an engraved invitation. She pounced on the opportunity. She became one of the first people to pass the exam and earn her CCNA CyberOps certification.

Not long afterwards, Jenny earned her CCNA Security and CCNP Security certifications. Later, she taught study groups to help others prepare for their security certifications and discovered how much she loved to teach as well.

An unexpected opportunity arises

Midway through her CCNA CyberOps studies, Jenny learned of a opportunity at another company, working as its SOC operator. Busy as she was, she made time for the interview. The employer was impressed with how well-informed Jenny was. She knew the subject matter inside and out because it was precisely the material she had just studied during the Cisco course.

Once Jenny landed the position, she immediately put her CCNA CyberOps knowledge to work. The guidance she gained from the course helped her—in near real time—to determine what was happening on the job. For example, she was able to decipher network packet capture just by looking at a raw log and intuiting what was probably taking place.

Jenny found herself in the ideal career position. “I love the hunt for information—figuring out where a threat came from, what’s behind it, and who’s behind it,” she says. “I find the whole investigation process really exciting and enjoyable.”

So, what’s next on Jenny’s long list of aspirations? She has her eyes trained on a Cisco CyberOps Professional certification. She’s been in the industry for a while now, still loves to learn, and the CyberOps Professional could serve as the pinnacle on her certification resume.

None of Jenny’s success would have been possible, however, if not for the Cisco Learning Network. The numerous resources—from study groups to discussion boards, as well as webinars and training videos covering various security topics—have been truly indispensable along Jenny’s learning journey.

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Join the Exciting World of IT Security

Let Cisco help prepare you for a dynamic security career. Get yourself job-ready for critical security roles with real-world, hands-on training and certifications. Start today at [Cisco Cybersecurity Certifications](#).

Jenny Shares Success Tips

KNOW YOUR STUFF

- Print out the exam objectives to identify your areas of need
- Find a study group on the Cisco Learning Network
- Be curious and explore the knowledge rabbit holes
- Install and explore software/hardware that interests you
- Keep learning—take courses on LinkedIn Learning, Udemy, etc.
- Don’t ignore soft skills—writing and verbal skills are crucial

BE SURE TO NETWORK

- Attend virtual meetups and conferences to make new connections
- Engage with the people you admire on social media
- Follow companies on Twitter to learn about opportunities
- Apply for any security job to gain interviewing experience
- Don’t be afraid of the security frontlines—you’ll learn a lot!