

Introduction

Claims Consortium Group is an Insurance Service Provider based in the Blackdown Hills above Taunton. Here Mat Vonck, a Claims Handler, talks to you about what it is like to work in the Insurance Industry.



Image: **MAT VONCK**, CLAIMS HANDLER –
CLAIMS CONSORTIUM GROUP



How did you get started in your career?

I started my career in my previous job. I used to work in security where I ensured the safety of people and the protection of goods. When I moved to this country a little over 2 years ago, it seemed like a natural progression to continue down this line but from a different angle but the same end goal which is why I chose to work in insurance.

Can you outline a typical work day?

There is no such thing as a typical work day in insurance as every day brings new challenges and situations. Having said that, I usually start my day by taking a brief overview of the claims I'm handling and prioritising which require the most urgent attention and then progressing them accordingly.

The fact that there is not a single day that is exactly the same, every claim is unique in its own way. I currently work in a team that has been very supportive and I think that this makes the job most enjoyable. A little bit of fun is required at work, as it is with any job.

What skills are important for anyone wishing to start in your profession?

Prioritisation, absolutely the single most important skill you require in this profession. Everyone can be taught how to progress a claim and what to do in which situation. The trick is being able to do everything for multiple claims and knowing which claim requires just that little bit more attention and adapting the schedule of your day accordingly. The skill to adapt to different situations is also crucial; you always need to be prepared for what may come your way.

What main personal attributes do you think is important for your type of job?

Professionalism. The policyholders you get in contact with are understandably stressed; these are real people with real problems and it is our job to smooth the process for them. You need to be a good listener, you need to actively listen; it can be quite easy to jump to conclusions as you, personally, have been there before whereas it might be the first time a policyholder has made a claim. Another important attribute is resilience. Sometimes events occur that are beyond your control, people react differently to situations and as mentioned previously, you need to be able to adapt to each situation accordingly and not take it personally. The job requires people who know that they are doing everything they can in order to help a policyholder, even when a policyholder might not realise this.

Do you have any tips or suggestions on how young people and adults can enter your industry?

Keep an open mind, you will learn lots of new skills along the way, gain lots of knowledge as well. If you are willing to learn and work hard, you have the potential to make it far in this industry. One big tip, do not be afraid; you will need to make lots of phone calls and speak to different people from different walks of life. Do not let that initial fear of having to talk to people stop you from entering the industry. I was afraid myself in the beginning but quickly learned that there is no need to be. In an industry as big as ours, you are never truly on your own. Ask colleagues for help and guidance where required.

What career progression opportunities are available in your business/sector?

“The world is your oyster” is probably the most applicable proverb I can think of for the career progression opportunities in the insurance industry. You can choose to specialise in a certain field and become an expert in say buildings insurance or you can progress in to leadership roles by becoming a team leader, service manager and eventually an Operations Director. There are also Industry Recognised Qualifications you can complete through the Chartered Insurance Institute which can really help you take your career to the next level

Why is it important for your sector to attract and train young people and new entrants?

As with any sector or business even, it is vital to attract and train young people and new entrants to ensure the survival of the sector. New people will bring new innovative ideas and changes that will benefit both the sector and everyone using their services. The industry is ever changing over time to adapt to something as small (or significant) as the weather therefore we need new people to adapt accordingly to these changes.

What trends do you predict for your industry within the next 10 years? E.g. is it a growing market requiring more young entrants

I believe that the industry will continue to grow, both in people and in technology. As new technology gets developed, it will require people to develop insurance products to cope with new advancements. Technology will only make it easier for both ourselves and policyholders so we need to ensure we have plenty of new talent coming in to provide real life advice on new technology insurance risks.

General words of advice

If you are looking for something desk based that is still exciting, I see no reason why you should not at the very least try a career in insurance. Like I said earlier, do not be afraid.

Further contact/information

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