

BROKER

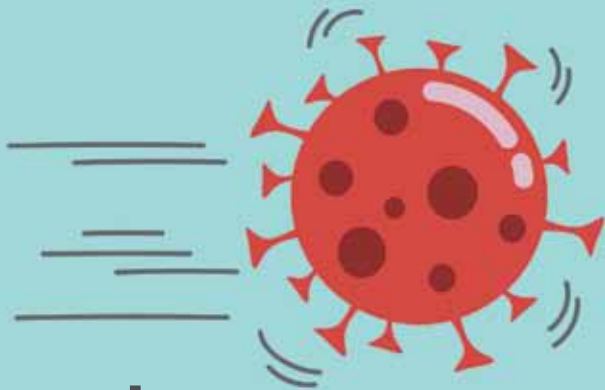
THE ALBERTA

THE INSURANCE BROKERS ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA

COVID-19 SPECIAL REPORT

What You Need to Know

- Broker Checklist
- Employment Law
- Online Meetings
- Stress & Anxiety
- Talking to Clients
- Virtual Leadership
- Working at Home



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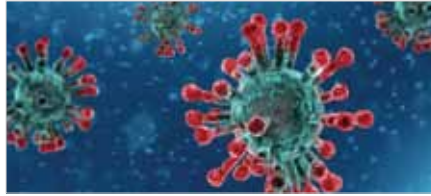


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THE ALBERTA BROKER

April–May 2020

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Vicki Livingstone

President's Message

It Starts With YOU!

As my presidency is coming to a close, I want to again bring up the importance of education. Our industry is constantly changing and evolving. It is not easy to keep up with all of the changes, especially when they are happening so fast.

The last year has been a tough one for brokers. We have had to deal with a struggling auto product and clients who are angry about lack of coverage or not having access to payment plans. When the cap was lifted, I think many brokers felt things would go back to business as usual. Unfortunately, this was not the case.

It will take some time for auto insurance to be sustainable again for insurers. The lifting of the cap was not the reason that insurance companies took increases; auto rates needed to rise for many reasons. Insurance companies have been losing money on auto lines and claims costs have been increasing to the point that remaining in the business was no longer affordable for Alberta insurers.

Brokers are also now dealing with changes in property and commercial insurance—specifically, condo coverage. Coverage on condo buildings and complexes has been underpriced for years, which leaves a tough situation for brokers to understand and explain. We are faced with clients interpreting or misinterpreting the situation and becoming frustrated.

As brokers, we owe it to our clients to understand the issues so that we can accurately inform them. Be frank about what is happening in the insurance world. When we talk to our clients, we reinforce the value of our expertise and make our industry stronger. Through us, our clients can learn a little more about what goes into their premium and a little more about risk management, which definitely benefits our industry.

It is way too easy for the client to blame the big bad insurance company and say, “They make so much money but always find a way to deny a claim.” This is an opportunity to teach your client a little about what is happening with their policy and why their premiums are going up. That’s the value of education. Brokers need to take the time to understand what is happening and why. Get your facts straight and then help your clients understand. There are many sources of information available to help you gain this knowledge. Insurance is an amazing and rewarding industry to be in. It is constantly changing and is always challenging. Keeping up is part of the job and it starts with YOU!

I originally wrote this column in February, BEFORE the global pandemic, which has overtaken all our newsfeeds and impacted all aspects of our lives. I was given an opportunity to revise my column, which I initially jumped at; however, I think what I said above is still very relevant during this pandemic. It will affect all aspects of the financial and insurance worlds, which in turn will affect our clients. Our roles as brokers will continue to be extremely important as we help clients navigate claims, coverage questions and premium increases resulting from the pandemic.

It is up to us as representatives of this industry, and as good citizens, to remain informed and take responsibility for following the rules and suggestions put out by health officials in these times.

I have the utmost respect for the frontline workers in this crisis. I also would like to thank those of you who are working from home, as well as the essential workers who continue to go in to work each day.

I sincerely hope that by the time this article comes out the worst is behind us. It will take a very long time before it is over, and things will probably never go back to the way they were, but there is also a tremendous opportunity to pave the path for a new way to do business.

Stay safe, everyone!

“It is up to us as representatives of this industry, and as good citizens, to remain informed . . .”





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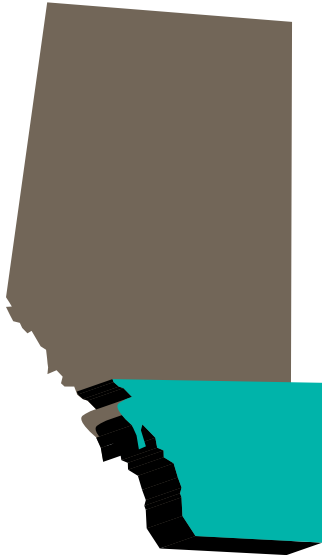
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ibaa Covid-19 Updates Hub

We feel that it is our job to build and maintain connection and awareness during this unprecedented period of disruption and change. The new Covid-19 Updates Hub within ibaa.ca is dedicated to providing brokers and community partners with important industry, association, and governmental updates regarding Covid-19. **Join our community and stay informed.**





Chinook COUNTRY REPORT

BROKER NEWS

- Dan Dunsmore (formerly with L&Y) joined Costen Insurance as a commercial insurance broker.
- Shawn Keating joined Costen Insurance as a business development rep and insurance broker. Shawn brings over 20 years of experience in communications—welcome to the industry Shawn!
- Vecas Griffiths is back in Calgary joining the Leibel Insurance Group as a commercial account executive. He moved from Schwartz Reliance Insurance located in Lethbridge.
- Wendy Moore-Whaley has moved from Link Insurance Agency to take a position as personal lines team lead with Kryvolt Insurance Brokers.
- Jared Collister formerly of HUB International moved to Toole Peet Insurance as its newest account executive.
- Karla Nichols is BFL Canada's newest client executive. She is working from its Red Deer office.
- Effective January 1, Del Fisher officially changed its name to HUB International Insurance Brokers and Bell Davidson Insurance officially became Wilson M. Beck Insurance Services (Alberta) Inc.

- Ing and McKee Insurance moved into its new building on Sharpe Avenue. Thank you to Jonathan Wenger for showing it to me; it looks like a lot of hard work went into the design and planning. Congratulations!
- InsureLine Brokers moved to a new Calgary location on 11 Avenue S.E.
- Sceptre Pointe Insurance moved from its Calgary Crowfoot location to new premises on Varsity Drive.

COMPANY NEWS

- Christina Kelland moved from Rogers Insurance to Aviva Canada as its newest commercial unit manager.
- Heather McKim moved from Aviva Canada to Toole Peet Insurance.
- GCNA Vancouver teams joined the Intact team in its Vancouver office.
- Karri McCann is celebrating 25 years at Peace Hills Insurance. Congratulations, Karri!

INDUSTRY PARTNER NEWS

In 2020, Crawford & Company will round out its digital strategy by offering WeGoLook (an Uber-style platform to expedite home and auto claims appraisals) and YouGoLook

(an app for sharing images needed to insure an asset, sell a vehicle, submit a claim, etc.). These apps will allow customers additional self-service options.

GIVING BACK

Peace Hills Insurance launched a new charity partnership program with Pathways to Education Canada, which focuses on the link between poverty and education. Peace Hills raised over twenty thousand for the charity and also donated school supplies and backpacks. Well done, Peace Hills!

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Costen Insurance's Dadima Charanek welcomed her baby girl and Kristina Noton left on maternity leave. Congratulations!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition of the "Chinook Country Report." Your information is always appreciated.

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TIME TO SELL? DON'T LEAVE ANYTHING ON THE TABLE

It's a common fear. You've come to the decision that it will soon be time to sell your brokerage. Will you walk away from the table confident that you negotiated your best deal? Could you have done more to get more?

According to Tony Carlton, there are many things brokers can do to ensure they achieve top dollar for the sale of their brokerage. Carlton is the CEO of Carlton Advisors Inc. (CAI), a consulting firm specializing in helping insurance brokers prepare for and negotiate the sale of their brokerages. "We work with brokers to develop plans to get their brokerages running as efficiently and effectively as possible—from processes to people and everything in between. Regular check-ins ensure that the plan is being executed and on track." Not all brokerage owners end up selling. After completing their consultation, some owners have "the fire in their belly" reignited and decide not to sell after all.

Begin with the End in Mind

Of course, before the plans can be developed, it's critical to establish clear goals for life after the sale. Are you headed straight for the beach or the golf course? Do you foresee a slower transition, wanting to cut back on your responsibilities over the next year or two? Is rewarding key employees or preserving the legacy of your firm's reputation critically important to you? "The answers to these questions have a

great impact on the plan, the kind of buyers with whom you'll want to make a deal and, ultimately, the deal you want to make," Carlton explains.

Get Experience on Your Side

There is no shortage of consultants who aim to help improve your brokerage's performance and productivity. However, what sets CAI apart is Tony Carlton's firsthand experience in the brokerage sale process. Carlton was a broker for over 21 years and the owner of his successful brokerage for 17 years before deciding he wanted to sell. "I spent 13 months



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evaluating and improving every aspect of my operation to best position my brokerage for sale." Carlton eventually sold his brokerage at a value that exceeded industry standard. He stayed on in management for a while before realizing what he really wanted to do was to help other brokers improve their operations, prior to selling their brokerages for increased returns. "I knew brokers could use a hand at the negotiating table and really benefit from the lessons I had learned," Carlton says.

Value is in the Eye of the Beholder

Some of those lessons led to a keen understanding of what is important to brokerage buyers and what will give you leverage when negotiating your deal. "Buyers will know that if CAI is involved in prepping the brokerage for sale, they will be buying a turnkey operation, which they find extremely appealing."

Rounding Out Your Team

"When I decided to sell my brokerage, I had the best lawyer and accountants as advisors, but because they weren't insurance brokers, they couldn't see what needed to be done to increase the sale price," recalls Carlton. "They also didn't understand the nuances of the industry enough to see the opportunities for structuring the best terms of the deal. That's where I **ADD VALUE.**"

Because More Means MORE!

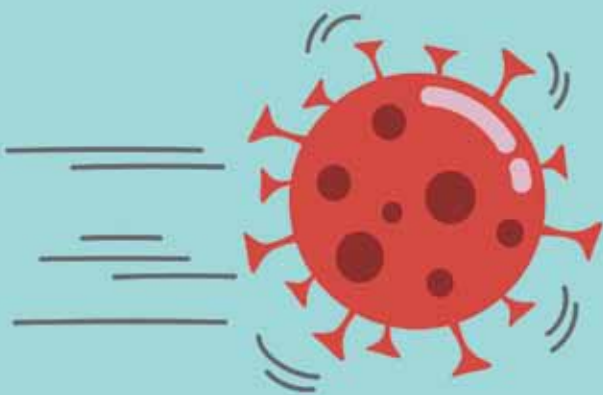
You've heard the expression, "Less is more." Well, when it comes to the sale of your brokerage, the opposite is true, says Carlton. "More is MORE! The more value you bring to the table means more leverage for commanding a terrific offer. The more expertise you have on your team means more negotiating skill and power. And, the more you earn on the sale means more funds for your retirement or next adventure."

So, if you're thinking of selling your brokerage, don't leave anything on the table. Visit CarltonAdvisors.ca and follow @moneytreesmatter on Instagram.

COVID-19 SPECIAL REPORT

What You Need to Know

Life changed in an instant. What seemed normal a few weeks ago—meetings, handshakes, stocked shelves, hockey games, eating out, travel, visiting grandparents—now is impossible. We are all developing new ways of living. The next few pages provide information to help you work better in the “new normal.”



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BROKER'S COVID-19

CHECKLIST

by Janis Losie



“Came in like a wrecking ball” is not just a line from a song anymore. It’s truly what COVID-19 has done to the entire globe. From a few cases in late January, to an international pandemic in a few short weeks, there are hundreds of thousands sick and thousands dead. It’s all so surreal.

Were you prepared? Did you have a catastrophe plan in place? Are your staff working safely from home?

In 2020, every organization should have a business continuity plan in place. Your staff should be able to work from

home, linking up to the cloud, with the ability to access your system as if they were in the office. Your phone system should be forwarded to alternate phones, or outgoing messages should provide email addresses for contact if clients have questions. Laptops should be available for your employees to use off-site so you can keep the business going. And you should have emergency numbers for your carriers’ claims departments and underwriting staff, or the ability to email them.

There is so much for brokerages to consider as we move into this “new normal” of operations for who knows

how long. Here are some items for your checklist:

Claims

How do brokers deal with clients’ claims during a crisis? The short answer is no differently than before the crisis. The claim is reported to the insurer and the adjuster will take it from there. Claims departments should provide a list of all available body shops and rental agencies in the event some are closed. Injuries should be reported and dealt with through medical professionals (depending on

government directives, which medical professionals are able to see patients is a fluid situation—staying current is paramount). Contractors will deal with property claims.

Cyber Security

It is critically important for brokers to ensure the security of their businesses. That means making sure your business is protected by working through the cloud to access the office system remotely. If you are not in the cloud, then you need to be sure that your staff are using a reputable internet provider with proper security and encryption in place. If you aren't sure, find out who the provider is and give them a call.

Make sure your cyber policy is equipped to manage remote employees and find out if there is anything special about the coverage that would change your behavior for remote access.

Office Security

Ensure the office alarm is set and emergency contacts are up to date. There should be staff charged with picking up mail and courier for

distribution and cheques for deposit. Keep staff from going into the office as much as possible and make sure they go in one at a time, out of respect for social distancing. This lessens the opportunity for people to forget to set the alarm or lock the door.

Extended Closure

You may wish to have your mail and courier stopped or delivered to a different address. Bank deposits will need to be done and bills will need to be paid unless you have made other arrangements. Electronic banking should be

set up, if not already available. You can easily transfer money electronically to companies and clients or accept transfers to keep your cash flow going.

Staff will need to be paid, so electronic deposits should be set up; otherwise, cheques will need to be issued and mailed in time for staff to manage their financial obligations.

Credit Hours and License Renewal

IBAA webinars will continue as usual, and IBAA is giving brokers a price break for the month of April! Any webinars booked in the month of April, even if they occur after April 30, are available at only \$99 per person! In addition, we will be offering a couple of free webinars. For example, we are

making available a flood webinar from the Intact Centre on Climate change just in time for our spring snowpack melt. We recommend you get your credit hours before June 1, 2020, to beat the last-minute rush. We also want to thank the AIC for giving all license holders the gift of five free credit hours this year—such a welcome break under such difficult circumstances.

Working from Home

While it sounds like fun to work at home, brokers tend to be a pretty social bunch, which makes isolation difficult. You and your staff will find that working from home gets old really fast. We encourage you to find ways to stay in touch with each other and find ways to take breaks and stay fresh. See Michele Schuldhaus's excellent article on working from home on page 12 for some great tips based on her first-hand experience. We also recommend you check the IBAA's webpage dedicated to COVID-19 for the latest industry and government updates.

This Too Shall Pass

We will get through this. Humans are nothing if not resilient. We will celebrate for those who recover and mourn those who have succumbed, but there is always light at the end of the tunnel. If nothing else, we will have shut down at winter's end, and re-opened during a time of renewal and growth. All will begin again, and we will be ever wiser for the next disaster that comes our way. Anyone taking bets on the next baby boom?

JANIS LOSIE
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8 TIPS

FROM A TELECOMMUTING WARRIOR

by Michele Schuldhaus



It's a whole new world and this new normal has given rise to the telecommuter. For those of us who are lucky enough, we can work from home through the COVID-19 pandemic. This may be a new and welcome change, or it may be stressful and lonely. I've worked from home for a few years and have learned the hard way what works and what doesn't. So, I'm coming out from behind the sales desk to share some tips I've learned along the way.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

I could start with a bunch of other working remotely tips, but without your mental health, the rest won't matter. There are many challenges with this new-normal and our mental health is going to be taxed. Prolonged isolation will affect everyone differently. Feelings of loneliness, anxiety and general malaise can take their toll. Maintaining good mental health through all of this is going to be of the utmost importance.

First, breathe, yes breathe. Taking deep breaths has a calming effect and will increase your ability to focus. There is a tonne of scientific evidence to back this up, just ask Google. Whenever I feel overwhelmed with work, I stop, stand up and take five deep breaths. Throughout the day take regular mental health breaks and try to get fresh air and light, preferably sunlight. My home office is in the basement, without much natural light. I find taking a break (a.k.a. going upstairs to the light) to get a beverage recharges me. Remember to stay connected to family, friends and colleagues and ask for help whenever you need it. Even though it may not feel that way right now, we are very fortunate to have so many tools to stay connected.

Check out "How To Deal With Stress And Anxiety" from Mental Health America on page 17 for more tips.

Now, down to the basics of working from home filled with tons of distractions like children, a partner, easy access to food, television, social media and chores.

1. RISE AND SHINE

Set the alarm and get up. Yes, get up when you normally would, shower and get dressed as if you were going to the office. I know, crazy simple. It makes a huge difference to wear what makes you feel professional, not just comfortable. As they say, what you wear is what you are. This exercise will help shift your mind from leisure to work time and you will feel ready to take on the day. Working in your PJs may sound like a great luxury, but every time I do succumb to all-day "PJ work," I am lazy and less creative. In PJs, it's easy to linger with the first cup of coffee, then breakfast and then the next distraction.

I am the most creative very early in the day. I often delay the "shower/get dress rule" so that I can dive into my to do list right away. I then make significant progress on a project instead of working on it gradually throughout the day. I only make breakfast/shower when I've hit a wall or need a break.

2. SET DEFINED WORK TIMES

One of the great benefits of working at home is schedule flexibility—working when you are at your best, working around children’s schedules, working very early or late. Schedule flexibility is also one of the pitfalls of the telecommuter as your work life can easily bleed into your personal life and vice versa. These are extraordinary times and working more than usual may be needed. If that is your situation, make sure you are taking breaks and

scheduling personal time with family and friends either virtually or in person (if they live in the same household).

It’s easy to lose track of time working at home and work longer than regular hours. Without coworkers packing up and leaving the office to remind you the day is over; it may not be apparent. Set an alarm to indicate your normal workday is coming to an end. You don’t have to stop exactly at that time, but knowing the day is technically over can help you start the process of saving your work and calling it quits.

Michele’s crazy timer tip: I use laundry as a work timer. I get a 5-minute break (otherwise I’d be sitting all day) plus sneak in a needed task. Something on my to do list must be finished in the time for a load to cycle from start to finish. By committing to one assignment during the wash and another during the dry cycle, I work smarter and more efficiently, even though I may have all day to tinker with it.



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working from home can mess with your head

Source: JoyReactor.com

3. PRIORITY/TASK LIST

Before starting work, list what **MUST** be accomplished that day. It may be one part of a major project, or a variety of smaller tasks. Whatever the priorities are, list them. This will keep you focussed throughout the day and help eliminate your mind wandering to all the home distractions.

With schools and daycares being closed, many of you will have children at home. Consider developing a schedule/task list for them that will work with your task list/schedule or vice versa. There are tons of great tips online on how to work at home with kids of varying ages. My kids are young teens. At the time of writing, online schooling hasn't started yet. To help keep the boredom away and not live on video games, I've given them a daily task list: complete four sudokus, two word find puzzles, one chore and a 30-minute workout; organize something; go for a walk (I usually join along); choose one topic of interest and then teach us, the parents, about it over supper. This will fill up about 3-4 hours and then the rest of the day usually is filled with different screens.

4. CREATE A CONFINED WORKSPACE

Everyone has their own work style. Some need a tidy workspace and others thrive in clutter. Wherever you fit on that scale, try to have a designated workspace or confined area that is not part of your leisure space. This should

be tip number one, but in this situation most of us didn't have the luxury of planning a home office. Ideally, you want the ability to walk away from your work at the end of the day and not be visually reminded of it.

I do have a dedicated workspace with a door (a.k.a. godsend)! My partner is now working from home without his own space. He tried the basement but the Fortnite battles were too loud; the extra space in the kitchen/living area, but the kids were constantly living and eating. Unfortunately, he ended up in our bedroom. Not ideal to work where you sleep, but it is a large bedroom with plenty of daylight, privacy and space for a table and chair.

5. SET THE MOOD

Just as everyone has their own work style, they have their own work sounds. My business partner loves to have classical music play while she works, my partner plays rap, I listen to talk radio or podcasts as the chatter feels like an office and, at the opposite end of the spectrum, my friend wants absolute silence. Creating the sound environment is another simple way to get your mind into work mode and reduce distractions. The only exception is silence. This is more challenging due to noise from inside or outside the home. Noise cancelling headphones or ear buds can help block excess sound.

6. MANAGE DISTRACTIONS

Feeling a little sluggish? Hit a mental block? Want a break? A quick stroll to the kitchen can feel like the answer. Another benefit of working at home is not having to pack a lunch or eat out. But like all of the benefits, it can also be a pitfall. Easy access food can lead to eating more than normal and to quick chocolate or chips breaks. If you want to fit into your suit when you start back at the office, try to limit the unhealthy snack breaks. I "pack" my snacks to my home office in the morning to stop me from snacking all day and to help make good choices.

Curious what your friend is doing to break up the isolation? Wait until you are on a break or the end of the day before checking social media. We all know it is a rabbit hole that is really difficult to escape.

Put up a green or red sheet of paper on your workspace door/table for the other members of your household. Green means it's ok to interrupt your work, red means stop and go away.

7. COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE, COMMUNICATE

Communication with colleagues, supervisors and those in the household is paramount when working remotely.

Communicate your work expectations with those at home. Let them know your work hours and how to interrupt (and if there are better times to do so).



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Facing the storm with you

Communicate frequently with colleagues and supervisors. It's important they know what you're working on plus tone, intent and inference are often lost in email and text messages. Pick up the phone or video chat to help alleviate feelings of isolation and to ensure you are sending and receiving information as it was intended. Emails are not the same as human contact. It's amazing how many times I have skipped over a sentence in an email from a co-worker that completely changed its meaning.

8. TAKE BREAKS

Just as it's important to wear clothes like you would in an office, it's vital to take breaks. Breaks clear your mind and give a refreshed perspective. Now that it's spring, take a refreshing walk (two metres apart from others), relax for 15 minutes in the living room, or check in on the kids or your partner—the kitchen is the new office water cooler. Instead of having your workday bleed into your personal time, make a clear distinction between your work and break time.

I think under these extraordinary circumstances the one thing that's going to make us all successful is flexibility. We're going to have to figure out how to roll with the punches. For one person working remotely is just an everyday thing and for another it will be incredibly trying. What's going to get us all through this is understanding, patience and trust. If you think your co-worker or employee isn't doing the best they can or the work they should be doing. First, give them the benefit of doubt. Second, pick up the phone and ask, "How are you doing?". Everybody is going to try to do the best they possibly can. No one asked for this and no one wanted it, but it is what we've got for now. Let's all do everything we can to make the best of this "new normal."

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Senior Vice President, Operations ANNOUNCEMENT



Saskatchewan Mutual Insurance Company (SMI) is pleased to announce the appointment of Rob Jones as Senior Vice President, effective February 26, 2020, to succeed Shelley Willick, who was appointed as President & CEO in July 2019.

Prior to joining SMI, Mr. Jones was the Chief Information Officer (CIO) at Prairie Centre Credit Union (PCCU). He had been with PCCU since 2016, previously holding the role of Chief Operating Officer. Mr. Jones has a bachelor of arts in psychology along with a bachelor of commerce with a major in accounting. He has also taken the leadership development program from the University of Saskatchewan and strategic planning and organizational effectiveness training through other educational institutions. Mr. Jones also has the Professional Director designation (Pro. Dir™).

Following an extensive Senior VP search process, we are pleased to welcome Rob to SMI and look forward to working with him in his new role.

SMI is a federally regulated property and casualty insurance company operating successfully in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba with annual direct written premiums of \$83.1 million. As a mutual, the company's policyholders have voting rights and annually elect the Board of Directors that oversees and sets strategic direction for the organization. SMI has prospered for over 110 years, providing security and service to its many policyholders.

For more information on SMI, please visit www.saskmutual.com.

HOW TO DEAL WITH STRESS AND ANXIETY

MIND



Accept that you cannot control everything.

Put your stress in perspective: is it really as bad as you think?



Do your best.

Instead of aiming for perfection, which isn't possible, be proud of however close you get.



Maintain a positive attitude.

Make an effort to replace negative thoughts with positive ones.



Learn what triggers your anxiety.

Is it work, family, school or something else you can identify? Write a journal when you're feeling stressed or anxious and look for a pattern.

BODY



Limit alcohol and caffeine.

Alcohol and caffeine can aggravate anxiety and trigger panic attacks. Instead, drink water.



Eat well-balanced meals.

Do not skip any meals and always keep healthy energy-boosting snacks on hand.



Get enough sleep.

When stressed, your body needs additional sleep and rest. It's important to get 8 hours of sleep per night!



Exercise daily.

Exercising can help you feel good and maintain your health.



ACTION



Take deep breaths.

Inhale and exhale slowly throughout the day when you are feeling stressed.

10

Slowly count to 10.

Repeat and count to 20 if necessary.



Give back to your community.

Volunteer or find another way to be active in your community, which creates a support network and gives you a break from everyday stress.



Take a time out.

Practice yoga, listen to music, meditate, get a massage, or learn relaxation techniques. Stepping back from problems helps clear your head.



Talk to someone.

Tell friends and family you're feeling overwhelmed and let them know how they can help you. Talk to a physician or therapist for professional help.

7 Key Skills for Virtual Leaders

by Wayne Turmel



All of a sudden, many managers across the world have found themselves doing something they'd probably never envisaged—leading a (suddenly) virtual team—with very little preparation. And despite being thrown into the deep end, the onus is on them to get the work done one way or another.

In these unfamiliar times, there's one thing that we all need to bear in mind as we contemplate how to keep things going as best we can—and I can't state this any more clearly. Leading a remote or virtual team is not exactly the same as leading a co-located team, but it's not **THAT** radically different either.

I tend to use the terms “leader” and “manager” interchangeably and I know that that's not technically correct. They're different functions and sub-functions of the same job. Just as all dogs are mammals, but not all mammals are dogs. All leaders manage to some degree, yet not all managers lead. They should, but that's a discussion for another day.

But if you find yourself leading a team whose members you may never actually get to meet in person, my buddy Kevin Eikenberry, author of *Remarkable Leadership-Unleashing Your Leadership Potential One Skill*

at a Time suggests seven key behaviors that leaders of virtual teams need to develop to be successful.

Clarify Expectations. Crystal clear expectations make everyone more productive and reduce the bad assumptions that can multiply when there is less regular conversation.

Focus on Results. If you don't see your team members all the time, you have fewer things to give them feedback on—except for what is most important anyway, which is results. Don't worry about how they are spending their time or when they do their work. Focus on results.

Invest in Relationships. Relationships are harder at a distance. When your team is virtual, make time to build relationships. Look for ways and encourage team members to do this with each other as well.

Turn up the Trust. As a leader, you must trust your team members more. Grant trust and expect the best. Expectations must be clear, and communication frequent, but trust is critical to the success of your virtual team.

Be Patient. Some things will take more time when you aren't in close proximity. Get used to it. Be patient with the process as you look for ways to streamline and improve.

Create Actionable Meetings.

Meetings that are efficient and productive are key to a virtual team's success. Schedule short meetings with clear agendas. Push side discussion off-line and keep everyone engaged when you need to meet via technology.

Take Advantage of Technology.

Speaking of technology, use it and use whatever is available, pushing the envelope with external tools as needed to be most effective. By asking some questions and doing a bit of reading online you can likely find a tool to support any challenge your team faces. Use those tools.

Why seven? Well, it seems to be some sort of magic number in consultant land (probably we can blame Stephen Covey and his *Habits for that*), but Kevin's points are excellent. Leadership is about more than simply managing performance, and it's tough to do even when you're all in the same room, let alone scattered who-knows-where.

This article was originally published on Management-Issues.com and is reprinted with permission from the website and its author.

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Holding Online Meetings? Avoid These 5 Mistakes

By Howard Tiersky



Working from home (or WFH) is quickly becoming “the new normal.” The COVID-19 pandemic kicked the WFH movement into high gear, and many experts believe it will continue long after the crisis has passed. But before we can optimize this new way of working, we’re all going to have to get proficient at one of the biggest work-from-home fundamentals: the virtual meeting.

Remote meetings are inherently different from in-person meetings. If you’re not used to running them, you’re going to make tons of mistakes. And those mistakes can have major ramifications in terms of how well people perform once they log off and get back to work.

The good news is that well-run online meetings can be extremely powerful. In fact, according to the

Harvard Business Review, online meetings can be even more effective than in-person meetings when done right. But first you need to be aware of what not to do. Here are five mistakes virtual meeting newbies commonly make:

MISTAKE #1: Neglecting one (or more) of the “big five” success keys of online meetings.

If you are seeking to bring people together to share information, come up with solutions, make decisions, coordinate activities and/or socialize, you will be successful if you:

- Have a clear purpose
- Get participants in the right mindset
- Get them fully engaged behaviourally
- Incorporate high-quality content aligned with the purpose
- Make it easy to participate

If you do all of these correctly, you will have high-impact online meetings. If you don’t, there’s going to be a lot of awkwardness and inefficiency. Worse, bad meetings can lead to bad workplace performance, which is the last thing any of us need right now.

MISTAKE #2: Holding voice calls instead of video conferences.

When everyone has their cameras on, you can expect a 200 per cent-plus improvement in the effectiveness of online meetings. This keeps people engaged because they know that what they’re doing is visible to everyone else. They’re far less likely to multi-task, which is one of the greatest obstacles to audience engagement.

MISTAKE #3: Failing to be strategic about sequencing.

The first item on your meeting agenda should be a restatement of the purpose of the meeting. After that,

strategize on the sequence of your activities. For example:

- If there are any “elephant in the room” topics, deal with those early or they will be a distraction.
- If you have some sort of fun or exciting announcement, you may want to hold it for the end, letting the participants know that it is coming but keeping the outcome a surprise to create suspense.
- If an agenda item may be intense or create some heated discussion, put it in the middle—get people warmed up and feeling productive first, then hit them with the challenging topic.

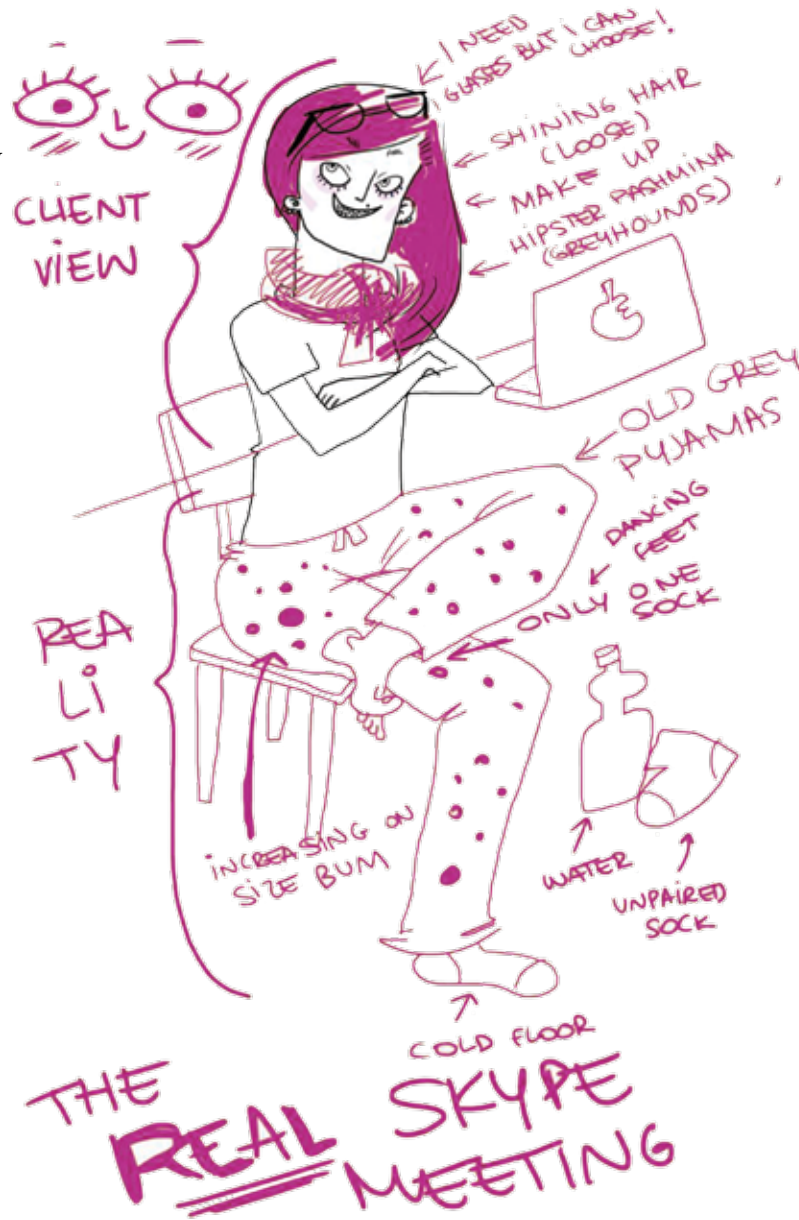
MISTAKE #4: Not giving people an active role.

It’s possible for one person to present content, facilitate questions, ensure the meeting stays on time and take notes, but why? Seek to distribute the roles of facilitator (responsible for running the agenda), presenter (responsible for sharing specific units of content), timekeeper (watches the clock and alerts facilitators and presenters how to adjust their speed and content) and the notetaker (documents the meeting) among the participants.

When you give participants something to do, you prevent them from being passive listeners or webinar watchers. When people have an active role, they are far, far more attentive and engaged.

MISTAKE #5: Failing to take advantage of breakouts.

In most meetings of more than eight people, usually most of the talking is done by just five to seven participants.



This is one reason why during live workshops I often break larger groups into breakout teams, so they can come up with ideas, work on prioritization, action planning—whatever the work is—in smaller groups and then come back to the larger group and report on the work they did. (Several of the major online meeting platforms including Zoom and Google Hangouts now offer breakouts.)

We give each team clear instructions for the work they are to do, in writing, and then usually give them a small amount of time to do it, like 20 to 40 minutes. A compressed time

frame forces the group to organize quickly; get to work; and focus on progress, not process or perfection. I’ve been amazed over the years that sometimes when clear instructions, a small team and a tight time frame are combined like that, you get work done in a half hour that might have taken days, weeks or months if done “the usual way.”

These are just a few of the mistakes people regularly make. There are plenty more. The good news is most of these are easy enough to correct once you realize you’re making them.

When done correctly, online meetings are an incredibly powerful method of enabling collaborative work. It’s worth investing a bit of time and effort in learning how to maximize them. Frankly, they have the potential to move the needle for your business, and right now, this is more important than it’s ever been.



HOWARD TIERSKY is the author, along with Heidi Wisbach of Impactful Online Meetings: How to Run Polished Virtual Working Sessions

That Are Engaging and Effective. Tiersky is the founder of two digital engagement consulting firms with clients including Verizon, NBC, Nutrisystem, Viacom, Avis, Universal Studios, JPMC, NFL, Facebook, Spotify, and Amazon. For more information, please visit ImpactfulOnlineMeetings.com.



Talking to Your Clients About Insurance and COVID-19

By Janis Losie

Those who are on salary are thanking their lucky stars right now—their income continues regardless of the current crisis, especially if they are able to work from home. But, what about those who depend on an hourly wage, who earn nothing if they are not working? What about those who have roles where they cannot work at home? What if they have been laid off because the work has dried up? What if they support a spouse and children? What if both spouses are now without income? Even though the government has announced emergency funding for those whose income depends on being at work, it's not 100 per cent of earnings, so choices will need to be made. What would you do if you had to choose between the roof over your head and your insurance premium? Worse still, what if the choice is between food and your insurance premium? How long before you receive

government benefits?

Every brokerage likely has clients in this very position. Can you imagine the stress of knowing that everything you have worked so hard for is now at risk of being gone forever in the event of a loss? What a frightening scenario for people who are already under financial stress. What about your commercial clients who run the risk of losing their businesses as a result of the pandemic? Not only do they have to worry about their families, but their employees.

Insurance brokers can play a huge role in getting in touch with their clients and talking to them about their situation. Brokers should be contacting all their markets and asking what kind of flexibility can be offered to those who cannot afford their insurance premiums in the interim. Many insurers are already offering flexibility, so those clients should be contacted first. I guarantee you will make their day. If you haven't heard from a carrier

about their provisions, call them or Insurance Bureau of Canada. Let your clients know that you are working with insurers on their behalf.

If your clients are financed by your brokerage internally, what provisions are you able to make for them in the interim? If they are financed through a third-party premium finance company, do you know how the finance company is handling these issues? Do you have the information posted on your website and social media pages?

COVID-19 and E&O Exposure

The obligation of brokers to their clients is much higher because of their heightened insurance expertise, so E&O exposure should be considered. Brokers will be expected to provide updated information to clients, so they know how to handle their insurance under these circumstances. Are there any other loss prevention tips they should be aware of? Flood season will coincide with the pandemic if we are

still in isolation in mid-April. How can clients protect themselves? Are they covered? Should they be adding coverage?

Commercial clients need to know about coverage for the fallout from a pandemic. They should be encouraged to record all their expenses and make a claim if they have business interruption coverage just in case there are some expenses that may be considered. They need to know that pandemic coverage is not an included peril under most policies, but that the adjuster will make the final decision.

Renewal clients will need to be contacted for updates and are likely to be accessible since many are at home. This is your opportunity to reinforce the value of the service you offer as a professional insurance broker.

As morbid as it sounds, you should also be regularly checking obituaries when you hear of another death resulting from the virus. It isn't likely that grieving families will think to contact their broker when things are normal, and less so under the current crisis. You will want to send expressions of sympathy, even by email. Funerals are likely to be delayed until things are closer to normal. That's a very unhappy burden for loved ones to face. You will want to send correspondence at a slightly later date letting relatives or executors know that you are there to help if they need to know how the tragedy will impact their policy.

Claims

Claims don't care about a pandemic; they will occur regardless. Even though fewer vehicles are on the road, collisions will occur. More importantly, so many people are working from home transfers exposure from the office to the home. Increased exposure will result from whole families being in isolation where they live. Working, cooking, playing all day, every day, providing multiple times the activity and opportunity for accidents to happen.

As an insurance broker, you need to be ready to provide the same guidance

and tools you have on hand, pandemic or not. Emergency claims numbers, body shops, contractors, whichever emergency service they need. And, clients will need to know what they can do to mitigate their damages until they hear from an adjuster. You don't need to help them face to face, but you still need to be in touch with them on a regular basis, ensuring that they are being looked after.

Payment Issues

Most companies with direct bill have provided instructions on how to handle non-payment issues for those hurt financially by the pandemic. If you don't have access to this information, talk to your manager or check out IBAA's COVID-19 page.

This is going to be a tough one for you, since so many clients will be impacted. If you have access to premium financing in your office, don't forget to recommend it. The biggest issue right now is empathy for clients with no money coming in.

Emergency Provisions in Property Policies

Many commercial property policies have a "Declaration of Emergency" provision. By now, commercial brokers should have reviewed their clients' policies and advised them as to whether the coverage applies to their circumstances and what it means.

There is no such provision in auto policies, so customers need to know how to protect their vehicles this is where brokers will need to work closely with markets for flexibility.

Flood Season

As if we didn't have enough to deal with already, flood season is upon us. IBAA has offered access to a free video for members, provided through IBAC, to address the flood season. Check it out at ibaa.ca if you haven't already seen it, or email education@ibaa.ca for further information.

Be proactive. If you can, send electronic tip sheets out to your clients about their policy coverage in the event

flooding occurs, along with emergency claims numbers and tips on how to prevent damage (e.g. moving valuables to higher ground).

For personal lines, it is the difference between protecting property and losing everything. Clients need to know that they have a responsibility to protect themselves, regardless of available coverage—they can't just sit back and watch the flood wash everything away. And, they need to act fast to prevent their belongings from further damage. If stores remain closed, it will be next to impossible to replace anything.

Now is the time to put both your personal- and commercial-lines clients in touch with organizations like Flood Risk Canada, who provided demos of the available preventive technologies available to both homeowners and businesses at the IBAA 2019 convention. Their site is <https://www.floodriskamerica.com/flood-risk-canada>. While there is a cost to these tools, it is far less than the cost of a flood.

Being an Insurance Broker is our Hidden Superpower

Don't forget how valuable you are to your clients. Selling the right coverage and providing the right advice only become evident when you are needed the most—during a crisis. You have an opportunity to prove how much better life is when you use a broker. Use your social media pages, emails and newsletters to toot your own horn!

We need to let clients know that we are an essential service for a reason: because we are behind our clients every step of the way. This is the time to call positive attention to yourselves as much as possible and shake off any negativity consumers have expressed about our industry.

JANIS LOSIE
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COVID-19: Navigating Through Difficult Employment Law Issues



Since Alberta announced its first positive COVID-19 test, we have seen daily reports on the number of cases and, sadly, deaths in the province continue to increase. Throughout this unprecedented time, employers have been faced with ever-changing issues, recommendations and obligations. The following is intended to help employers navigate through some of these issues.

Information in this article is as of April 6, 2020. --Ed.

Occupational Health and Safety

Under Alberta's occupational health and safety legislation, employers and supervisors must ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of their employees and others. Employees have a corresponding obligation to take reasonable care and cooperate with their employer to ensure the health and safety of themselves and others.

COVID-19 is considered a workplace hazard. Employers must take steps to identify hazards and eliminate them wherever possible. When elimination is not possible or reasonable, then the hazard must be controlled. This may be done by administrative controls that change the way people work, including alternative work arrangements.

Because the suggested best practices for dealing with COVID-19 at workplaces has been fluid, employers need to monitor the information that is released daily by the public health agencies of Alberta and Canada. Employers may need to adjust their policies and procedures to ensure compliance. Recommendations such as social distancing, frequent hand washing, frequent cleaning and sanitizing of surfaces and requiring employees to stay home when ill have been consistent from the start and in some instances, have become law.

Employees have the right to refuse to work if they believe, on reasonable

grounds, that the work constitutes a danger to the worker's health and safety. Occupational health and safety legislation sets out the process that employees and employers should follow relating to work refusals. Where there is a valid work refusal, an employer must initiate an investigation into the concerns and adopt measures to eliminate or reduce the workplace danger and then take any necessary action to remedy the dangerous condition. The employer must not reprimand the employee for exercising their refusal rights.

Essential Services

On March 27, 2020, the Alberta government set out additional restrictions on certain businesses as well as a list of essential businesses. Further orders relating to essential services may follow as matters progress. Employers should be prepared to respond to how such an order may impact them.

Employers who have been declared an essential service should prepare their employees in case they are questioned by the authorities while travelling to or from work or are onsite at the business premises. Employees should also be given a written document explaining why the business is an essential workplace and why the employee is required to attend work.

At time of writing, “all forms of insurance including brokerage” are on the Government of Alberta’s list of essential services. The businesses and services on the essential services list can continue to provide services at locations accessible to the public, but they must have proper risk mitigation measures in place, such as sanitation stations and appropriate distancing between customers.

As noted above, the government’s response to COVID-19 is fluid, and businesses must check for updates daily, including essential service status.

Workplace Restructuring Options

The unambiguous language of the policy and the SEF 44 allowed the Court of Appeal to answer the question on appeal unequivocally in favour of Direct Insurance. The court also affirmed the relationship between policies and

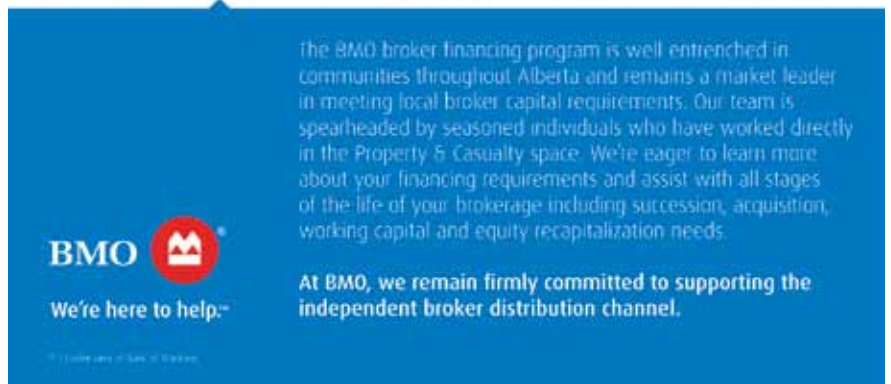
endorsements and the ways in which the latter are constrained by the former. Indeed, the Court of Appeal expressly stated that the endorsements are not stand-alone documents and must be read as part of the underlying policy.

COVID-19 has forced many employers to restructure or even close

their business in the face of declining business. The following are some of the options available for Alberta employers facing these difficult situations:

Temporary Layoffs

- Employers can temporarily lay off employees for up to 120 days (with no obligation to continue



benefits) or a longer period (if the employer and employee agree and the employer continues benefits).¹ The Employment Standards Code requires advance notice of the layoff (either one or two weeks, depending on the employee's length of service), but these notice requirements do not apply if unforeseen circumstances prevent an employer from providing the notice.

- For employers with unionized workforces, the layoff provisions of the collective agreement will govern.
- The benefit of temporary layoffs is that even though there is a risk of constructive dismissal claims, they preserve jobs and permit employees to collect government support benefits for the duration of the layoff.²
- Temporary layoffs must be undertaken in writing and must conform to a number of technical requirements set out in the Employment Standards Code.

Leave of Absence

- Employees who are ill with COVID-19, caring for a child or dependent adult with COVID-19, or forced to self-isolate, will be entitled to a 14-day unpaid job protected leave under Alberta's new Employment Standards (COVID-19) Regulation.
- Employees who are on leave due to COVID-19 may be eligible for income support from the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB).

Workplace Restructuring

- In addition to temporary layoffs, employers may consider implementing pay cuts, reduced working hours and/or staggered work hours in an effort to manage their costs.
- All of the above options would likely constitute a constructive dismissal. Employers need to consider the risk of constructive

dismissal to save jobs, versus terminations if finances do not permit continued employment by all employees. However, due to court closures and the fact that employees may be thankful to not have job cuts, constructive dismissal claims may not be as significant an issue as would ordinarily be the case.

Employment Insurance Top-ups

- Employers who have registered a Supplemental Unemployment Benefit (SUB) plan with Service Canada may top up EI coverage to employees who are unemployed due to a temporary stoppage of work, training, illness, injury or quarantine without the government clawing back those payments.

“... employers have been faced with ever-changing issues, recommendations and obligations.”

Work-sharing

- Work-sharing (WS) is an adjustment program designed to help employers and employees avoid layoffs when there is a temporary reduction in business activity that is beyond the employer's control. WS is a three-party agreement involving employers, employees and Service Canada.
- Due to the COVID-19 situation, the federal government has made some temporary changes to the program. For example, applications for WS must be submitted to Service Canada in advance, but the period has been reduced from 30 days to 10 days.

Government Supports

Both the Alberta and federal governments have announced numerous items to support employers through these difficult times. These include deferring tax filings and payments, and WCB premium subsidies.

A significant program that many employers will find to be of assistance is the federal government's Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), available to qualifying businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. The CEWS is available to all businesses (except public sector entities) that have experienced a 30 per cent reduction in revenue. The CEWS will cover 75 per cent of the first \$58,700 “normally earned,” meaning it will cover up to \$847 per week.

Conclusion

The legal landscape for employers is currently shifting, and it is important for employers to stay on top of the changes and adapt their business as needed to survive the impact of these unprecedented events.³

¹ On April 6, 2020, the maximum period for temporary layoffs under the Employment Standards Code was increased from 60 days to 120 days, retroactive to temporary layoffs related to COVID-19 that occurred on or after March 17.

² While previously, employees who were temporarily laid off could apply for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits, employees who became eligible for EI regular or sickness benefits on or after March 15, 2020 will have their claims processed through the Canada Emergency Response Benefit.

³ Dentons has developed a COVID-19 Client resources Hub, available to the public on its website at <https://www.dentons.com/en/issues-and-opportunities/covid-19-coronavirus-hub> to keep clients up to date on this ever-changing landscape.



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Helping Condo Corporations Control Their Premiums

Commercial insurance can be complex. It operates a little differently than residential property and auto lines of business because the regulations and the clients are different. Commercial insurance is also not often a focus of Insurance Bureau of Canada's (IBC's) public-facing work. Our public outreach is usually more about auto and home insurance, fraud protection and disaster preparation—the insurance issues that are top of mind for most average Canadians.

However, that is changing. Toward the end of 2019, IBC noticed evidence of challenging market conditions affecting some of our members' commercial clients, particularly condo corporations here in Alberta. In response, IBC gathered and mobilized stakeholders in the commercial sector to generate solutions to these issues.

Before I discuss what IBC and our industry are doing to address these challenges, I will highlight some key information that brokers can share with customers in the condo market and steps you can suggest they take to manage their premiums. These tips can help condo corporations regardless of conditions in the market.

What drives insurance increases?

While overall market conditions are a concern and can be a factor in what a condo corporation pays for insurance, it's important to speak to clients about some of the other factors that can have an impact on what they are paying for their insurance.

For those of us in the insurance industry, it may seem obvious that high claims frequencies will lead to higher premiums. But some condo boards aren't aware of this connection.

In fact, a primary method of helping to keep insurance at a reasonable level is to prevent a loss from happening in the first place. It's useful for condo managers and board members to know this.

What can condo corporations do to control their premiums?

Condo corporations can start by working to prevent damage that can lead to unnecessary claims. Taking the following steps could significantly reduce risks to their buildings and prevent many common types of damage.

Condo corporations should:

- **Ensure that they follow through on repairs and maintenance** as outlined in their reserve fund studies.
- **Complete repairs and maintenance in a timely fashion.** Buildings that

delay making repairs may be more likely to suffer a loss or damage due to poor maintenance.

- **Avoid using reserve funds for expenses other than the pre-determined reserve allocated expenses.** Using these funds for other expenses may leave the reserve fund short, and the condo will be unable to follow the recommendations of the reserve fund study.
- **Ensure their building has a comprehensive risk management strategy that is continually reviewed and updated.** This can help prevent and mitigate losses or damage and is a good practice to reduce potential loss exposure.
- **Take action to prevent common loss or damage occurrences in the future.** Many claims are preventable. Understanding how loss or damage can occur and taking steps to prevent these claims in the future will help over the long term.
- **Ensure they regularly review their insurance policy.** Every condo corporation should review its policy, coverages and options on a regular basis to ensure adequate coverage levels.

Going the extra mile

While the suggestions above will put most condominiums on solid footing when it comes to managing and maintaining their properties from an insurance perspective, there are other proactive steps they can take to manage their insurance over the long term. These include:

- **Providing specific training for condo managers.** Currently, condo managers are not required to be licensed or have any specific training or education to manage these multi-million-dollar properties. Training managers to ensure they understand their responsibilities, how to manage challenges and risks as they arise, and making insurance education a

key component of this training, can save money in the long run.

- **Educating board members.** Condominium board members should receive training so that they can better understand their obligations and establish best practices for good governance, including understanding when and how to make an insurance claim and how claims may affect future premiums.

“Brokers who feel they may have clients who could benefit from the risk manager’s services should contact IBC for more information.”

- **Considering upgrades as a way to prevent and mitigate extensive water damage losses.** Water damage is one of the primary causes of frequent claims for condo corporations. Condo corporations should consider taking proactive steps to reduce this type of damage by installing leak detection and mitigation devices, such as water sensors, to alert building managers about leaks before they cause major damage.

What is the industry doing to help?

As I mentioned earlier, IBC and our industry took action when we started hearing reports about difficult market conditions affecting condo corporations here in Alberta and in other commercial sectors across the country. To address these issues, we worked with industry stakeholders in late 2019 and early 2020 to put together a national commercial insurance task force. The goal of this task force is to gather information and figure out ways to help commercial consumers navigate an increasingly difficult market.

The task force is holding roundtables across the country throughout 2020 and will publish recommendations for the industry, governments and stakeholders later this year.

Helping condos manage their risks and taking action

Here in Alberta, in addition to holding a roundtable to address the concerns of condo corporations, IBC is also engaging a risk manager who will work on behalf of our industry to help condo corporations that are having difficulty acquiring insurance.

The risk manager will make practical recommendations to reduce condo corporations’ risks and help give them a pathway to more affordable insurance. For example, if a condo corporation can’t obtain insurance because of numerous water damage claims, the risk manager will advise on steps the corporation can take to reduce that risk.

The risk manager and the process created to help condos find insurance are part of an action plan to support condo corporations that are going through particularly tough times as the market continues to become more challenging.

Brokers who feel they may have clients who could benefit from the risk manager’s services should contact IBC for more information.

We know that these market conditions are cyclical, and while there’s not much we can do to control the markets, we can pull together with stakeholders and members of our industry to provide unique solutions to problems that arise. The best way to get through a challenging market is also the best way to get through any difficult situation: collaborate and find solutions together.

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Alberta's Automobile Insurance System Under Review

Alberta's current tort automobile insurance system is not sustainable. Between 2013 and 2018, private passenger vehicle insurers operating in the province lost over \$667 million. Claims costs have risen significantly during this time and litigation remains a major cost-driver. As a result of increasing cost pressures and the imposition of a rate increase limitation on private passenger vehicle insurance from 2017-2019, a number of insurers began to take actions that adversely affected many Albertans in order to mitigate losses. Actions included requiring a full year of premiums up front, reducing access to collision or comprehensive coverage and increasing administrative barriers to accessing insurance.

Government is working to ensure Alberta's insurance system remains fair, accessible and affordable for all Albertans, while creating an environment for a viable and

sustainable industry. To this end, on December 18, 2019, government announced a three-person expert advisory committee to review Alberta's automobile insurance system and make recommendations for potential changes to stabilize the cost of automobile insurance, while ensuring Albertans are protected in the event of a collision. A guiding principle of the committee is to ensure Albertans experience timely and appropriate outcomes when claims are made. The committee is expected to report back to government in June 2020.

Albertans, service providers and other relevant stakeholders have an opportunity to be part of the potential solution to escalating automobile insurance costs. The committee conducted a survey between February 18 and March 6, 2020, seeking public feedback on how Alberta's automobile insurance can be improved. Additionally, the committee invited key stakeholders, including

the insurance industry, healthcare practitioners, and the legal community to provide formal submissions. All perspectives will be considered by the committee as they develop recommendations for government's consideration.

On March 17, 2020, Alberta declared the COVID-19 pandemic a public health emergency. The committee's work remains ongoing during this time. The committee's timelines are still expected to be met, barring any unforeseen circumstances, including the committee members being directly impacted by the pandemic. For more information on the review, please visit www.Alberta.ca/Automobile-Insurance-Reform.aspx. #

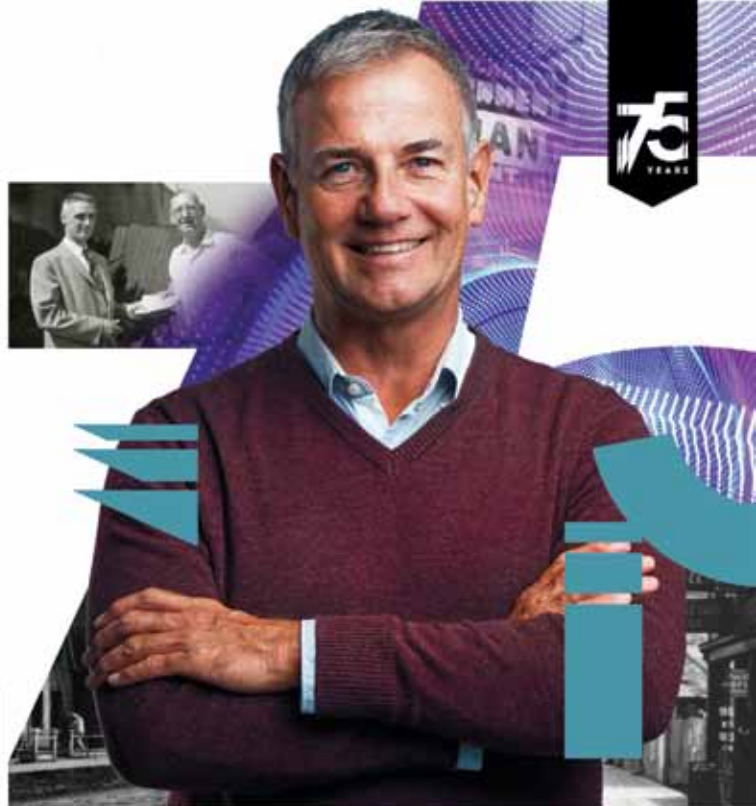
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THE BIG IF

RAISING AWARENESS OF NATURAL DISASTERS



No community is immune from natural disasters. Every spring we see catastrophic flooding from rising lakes and rivers or heavy rainfalls that devastates communities, businesses and families. In addition, certain regions of the country are vulnerable to earthquakes, and a major seismic event could have severe consequences. However, Canadians are often unaware of the risks of overland flooding and earthquake and many do not have

appropriate insurance coverage.

That is the message that IBAC CEO Peter Braid delivered at the annual CatIQ Conference, which took place in Toronto in February 2020. Participating in a panel entitled “Communications Tools for Preparedness and Recovery,” Peter explained that insurance brokers are taking action to educate Canadians on the risks of natural disasters.

Surveys have shown that Canadians underestimate their personal risk of

being impacted by flood or earthquake, and often do not know if their insurance policy would cover such damages. This exposes a disconnect that must be addressed by providing reliable information and education.

Given the trust-based relationships between insurance brokers and their clients, brokers are uniquely positioned to provide advice and help raise public awareness. In addition, brokers have a vested interest in protecting people in the communities where they live and work.

Flooding can have a devastating impact on a family's future, and can cause far more than just property damage. When homes and their contents are almost totally destroyed, long lasting impacts can include serious trauma, mental health issues and total community disruption.

Financial impacts can also be significant. An average basement flood claim is estimated to be \$43,000, and underinsured homeowners could face financial hardship. A common misperception is that the government will come to their aid. In fact, homeowners who decline the option to purchase overland flood coverage where it is available may not be eligible for government assistance. And those who are eligible may be compensated for only a fraction of their financial losses. This "insurance gap" puts families and businesses at risk and underscores the need for more public education.

As a responsible stakeholder, IBAC is stepping up to be part of the solution with a national public awareness campaign entitled the "The Big If."

"The Big If" aims to help Canadians better understand the risks of overland flooding and earthquake, and motivates them to take action. The campaign was launched in 2019 with digital ads on targeted websites and outdoor billboards in major urban centres across the country. The creative illustrations use a lighthearted approach to spark interest and engage people. Clicking through to www.thebigif.ca experiential micro-site leads to information about the real risks of flooding and earthquake as well as links to resources and suggested mitigation measures.

The call to action encourages Canadians to talk to their broker about their individual risk and the available insurance options that will protect them from financial loss. Homeowners can also learn about practical steps they can take to reduce their flood risk—from cleaning eaves troughs or extending downspouts to installing sump pumps or backwater valves. To

prepare brokers for these conversations, IBAC has partnered with the Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation to create free online training modules specifically for insurance brokers.

Governments, academia, and the private sector must all work together to protect Canadians from natural disasters and ensure the resilience and well-being of families, businesses and communities.

Insurance brokers have consistently demonstrated their strong commitment

to consumer protection. "The Big If" continues this focus and promotes the importance of knowing your individual risks and ensuring that you have the right insurance coverage to protect your financial well-being.

KENT ROWE
FCIP, CRM, CAIB
President,
IBAC
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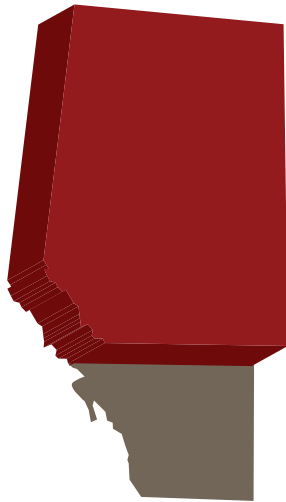
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NORTHERN EXPOSURE

BROKER NEWS

- Excel Lloydminster welcomes new employee Jill Fisher who is new to the industry. Welcome, Jill, and I hope you enjoy the ride!
- On January 31, 2020, Forestburg Agencies was sold to Westland Insurance. Greg Lemay will be staying until the end of July to help with the transition to the new ownership and then, in Greg's words, "hasta la vista, baby"!
- At Roberts McClure, Keith Gwynne announced the retirement of Barbara Doucette, FCIP. On February 29, Barb retired after 48 years in the industry. Along the way, Barb was the recipient of several major awards:
 - Judy Kalynchuk Memorial Award (top Fellow), Insurance Institute
 - Robert Fisher Clark Award, Gold Prize winner—Claims Major, Insurance Institute
 - Top Claims Major Fellow, Canadian Institute of Claims Managers Association, Northern AlbertaWhile both her clients and co-workers will miss her friendly and efficient manner, we all wish her the best in her retirement. She and her partner Bob look forward to the opportunity to travel.
- Congratulations to Brenda Williams, KC & Co. Insurance in

Tofield, on the completion of her CAIB with honors.

COMPANY NEWS

- SGI CANADA announced the retirement of Paul Stannard. Paul's official last day was April 3, 2020. Paul started his career on September 3, 1973, as a trainee for Royal Insurance in Nottingham, England. Paul emigrated to Canada in 1978 and spent time as a broker and with several insurance companies in a variety of underwriting roles before finding his passion for business development in 1985. In 2008, he joined SGI Canada. Paul formed many strong relationships with his brokers and industry partners. Paul has been an educator, mentor and ambassador for the insurance industry in a number of ways. He has been an insurance ambassador for the Insurance Institute for the past 10 years. He has taught CIP courses and volunteered with the Institute for many years. Everyone knows Paul! He has been a fixture at all industry events—they won't be the same without you Paul. You worked hard, enjoy your retirement, it has been well earned.

INDUSTRY PARTNER NEWS

- The Edmonton Insurance Curling Association (EICA) held its Sip and

Slip on February 2, 2020. It was a great event that was enjoyed by all who participated. There was a silent auction and 50/50 draw, resulting in a \$2,000 donation to Women in Insurance Cancer Crusade (WICC). Since 2008, the EICA has raised \$19,450 for WICC.

A FOND FAREWELL

Thank you to everyone who sent me updates and news for this column. This is my announcement that I will no longer be writing this column. It's been fun, but it's time for someone else to take on the challenge and keep you all enlightened!

TRACY FATA
Regional Underwriting
Manager
Portage Mutual
TFata@PortageMutual.com



Editor's note: Thank you very much Tracy for your time and dedication. You've been a great addition to The Alberta Broker.

If you are interested in taking over for Tracy, or know someone who would be, please contact the publisher, Annette Hubick at Annette@LinkPR.ca. If you have any tips or information, please also send that to Annette.



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The Grid- Getting the Steps Right	May 14	Cyber Liability	May 21
Ethical Considerations for Brokers	May 27	Errors & Omissions (A.M.)	June 4
How to Insure Non-Owned Auto	May 28	Errors & Omissions (P.M.)	June 4



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CAIB 2

CAIB 1 Immersion- Calgary	May 25
CAIB 1 Immersion- Edmonton	June 8

CAIB 3

CAIB 3 Fast Track- Edmonton	June 6	CAIB 3 Fast Track- Calgary	June 6
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Licensing Level 1 Immersion- Instructed Online	June 15
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