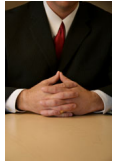


Insurance Agent

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Managing risk is an essential part of everyone's priorities; key to managing risk are great insurance policies. Insurance agents are independent work from home entrepreneurs that represent a specific insurance company. Agents operate on a commission basis and competition is fierce. If you're a talented sales person and looking to enter the financial services market, life as an insurance agent could be for you.

Before The Start-Up, Let's Not Get Ahead Of Ourselves

Fierce competition over lucrative commission rates makes sales experience and skills essential. If you've got plenty of sales experience and confidence enough to market your services aggressively then you're all set. If sales isn't quite your thing yet or you simply lack experience, start out in a different sales field where you're paid a basic salary in addition to a commission on sales.

The Start-Up

The high levels of competition might be daunting at first but smart entrepreneurs go where the competition is. Commission rates typically range between 20 and 35 percent making this a very lucrative work from home job once you begin to steadily convert sales. If you're looking for a job that is expandable and has endless potential this is it.

Starting out you have two options, either go it alone and act as independent agent for an insurance company or alternatively buy into a franchise. Buying into a franchise will require significantly more start-up capital but does provide training, equipment and support that won't be available should you decide to go it alone.

Starting an independent agency you'll need an complete home office including a work space, desk, computer, printer, high speed internet connection and business stationary including business cards, a letterhead and an invoice and quote template.

In most countries you'll need an operating license to sell insurance, do some research online and find out exactly what you'll need. Once you have a licence you'll need an affiliation to an existing insurance company, as an insurance agent operates entirely on a commission basis there are opportunities abound. Hit Google again and do comparative research before deciding on a company. Remember social networking sites such as Digg provide far better results when searching for actual reviews by people who have tried a product, service or idea whereas search engines tend to produce more conventional results.

Making It Work

Cut throat competition means finding a niche is essential in this business. Specializing in insurance for small enterprises and work from home entrepreneurs is possibly a good option. If you do decide to choose this niche then target businesses in close proximity to your home so as to cut down on

transportation costs.

Your success will ultimately depend on a mix between your financial abilities and people skills, working with small business will allow you to develop personal relationships with your clients.

Marketing

Great marketing will be essential to making a success of your agency, market your services in the newspaper on local radio, in small business publications and by using cold calling. Having a thick skin is essential as only a very small percentage of people you call or approach directly will want to use your services.

A small website is also essential, offer free tips and advice and consider a business blog. The latest issues in the insurance industry along with case studies from your existing client list could make for some great reading and help to drive traffic to your site.

Don't Forget

In certain countries you will be required to take out insurance against errors and omissions much like an accountant would. Don't forget to factor this hidden cost in when doing your own financial statements.