A QUALIFICATION IS CRUCIAL!

Take that first step...

The nature of the job would sift the passionate from the rest and the industry, through various tools and instruments, would groom those who remained to climb up its ranks and make a name for themselves.

> Years before it was easy for job seekers, without any financial education, to enter the insurance industry.

Pursuing educational opportunities

Now we have reached a point where the industry needs to develop products for a changing consumer – specifically the Millennial, who requires something different. This calls for constant innovation to meet the needs of a new generation. And so, people with some form of qualification already have a head start in today's climate. However, not all qualifications are achieved before entering the sector.

There are plenty of opportunities for formal growth within the industry. I, myself, have built on my formal qualifications over the years by pursuing educational opportunities within the industry.

A qualification is more than just a piece of paper. It also gives a glimpse into the character of its bearer. Often it is not about what qualification we achieve but who we become in the process of that pursuit.

Tell-tale signs of passion

In such a world potential employers also look for the tell-tale signs of passion, drive and a hunger to improve. A lot can be read from a qualification.

There are a number of qualifications that allow for a specialisation in insurance. Some of the better known ones are law, risk management and the Bachelor of Commerce degree. However, book knowledge is never enough on its own. Insurance can get extremely technical. Experience, skill and product knowledge often take centre stage.

The insurance industry is very dynamic. Career progression is determined by the technical skills that an individual possesses. Due to the limited formal courses offered in insurance, most individuals have managed to succeed in the filed through on-the-job learning and career development. In-house training also helps people to advance their careers.

There are a lot of local and international learning opportunities on offer, such as learnerships, skills development programmes and international programmes. And while non-qualified employees can still make their way into the industry, it is crucial that they work hard to develop their skills.

There is a need for qualified insurance professionals who possess strong technical and academic skills. Qualifications enhance an individual's skills and open a myriad of opportunities in the industry.

The stage has been set

Currently the sector is asking questions around how to further penetrate the local market as well as the rest of the African continent. Innovation and evolution are on the tips of everyone's tongues. The stage has been set for new ways of doing things, which will need both technical and academic engagement.

As a professional body for the short term insurance industry, the IISA ensures there are relevant platforms for skills development for insurance industry employees. Being an affiliated professional member of the IISA positions individuals in good standing and indicates that they have undergone extensive insurance training and acquired the necessary experience at the various levels.

Presenting yourself in the right light at the start of your career within a sector such as this means that you have taken control of your progression prospects from the start. The rest will require constant fanning of the passion and curiosity flame. Opportunities are available – and a higher education qualification is sure to accelerate progress.

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