

# MANAGER SPOTLIGHT

## Make Your Best First Impression



**Brian Boechler**  
Commercial  
Claims Manager  
Allied/Nationwide  
Insurance Companies

For some, life might be a cabaret, but for Brian Boechler of Allied/Nationwide

Insurance, his work life is one extended interview.

Boechler believes that whether he's in the elevator between floors or grabbing a quick lunch in the company lunchroom, his behavior and his actions are being watched and evaluated by

other managers, peers, and co-workers.

"They may not be currently looking to fill a particular vacancy, but when they need to designate an individual for a new role or undertake a new task within the organization, actions at those relaxed moments are what others will remember," said Boechler, the commercial claims manager at the corporate office in Sacramento, CA.

"You have only one chance to make a good impression. The people that you interact with may only have that single notion to judge your merits."

Boechler's advice to claims representatives within his own department is to treat every

person as if they are important, "because they are." As a strong team builder and someone who prefers to lead by example, the 28-year insurance veteran has risen through various portions of the Claim Department before being named as one of the Commercial Managers two years ago.

"In 1979 I had no idea what I was getting into when I applied to an ad I saw in the newspaper," he said with a straight face. "I've always been customer-oriented. The training provided by this claim organization affirmed that this was the right path."

The Commercial Claims manager

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from training from the International Insurance Institute, specifically the *8 Characteristics of An Awesome Adjuster* class she attended this spring.

"The role-play Carl (Van) facilitated was uncomfortable for some, but the lessons were very useful. Even those of us who have handled claims for years," said Lipham. "It

was good to know I have been doing many of the right steps all along. But I also learned new techniques that will be beneficial for me and my customers. There is always something new to learn."

Lipham said she is excited by the impact the *8 Characteristics* class has made on her life and in her own department.

"Employee development is very

important to our enterprise. I appreciated the training State Farm has provided me over the years. Carl was an excellent instructor and the material presented was extremely beneficial for anyone in the customer service business."

Van selected Becky as Adjuster of the Quarter for her "positive attitude in class and her willingness to be open to new concepts that had made her an even better adjuster."

remember that each situation is unique and each person is an individual."

Her belief in the importance of customer service was confirmed when she took *The Awesome Claims Customer Service* course from the International Insurance Institute. She came away from the one-day course with a commitment and realization "that customer service is everybody's job."

Lark has had a life-long belief in good customer service. She recalls as an adjuster volunteering to take over the telephone duties for another adjuster who had "horrible phone skills." She stressed that the telephone can be an intimidating challenge to professionals who are not trained to listen—and relate—to the person on the other end of the line.

She joined CUNA Mutual 10 years ago and currently serves as a learning consultant in the Madison, WI, office. She admits to using the tools she teaches to other claim professionals on her three daughters.

"I apologize and empathize a lot more," said Lark. "I do my best to shut off the skills I use at the office at 5 pm. Sometimes it's difficult, but it's important for me to be part of my girls' lives."

Lark's oldest daughter turned 22 in June. Her middle daughter just graduated high school and will be attending college this fall, and her youngest daughter will be a sophomore in high school in the fall.

Living in the natural paradise of

Wisconsin, Lark enjoys the good weather outdoors with her daughters biking, walking, or landscaping their yard. Indoors she loves to cook and make jewelry.

Before beginning her insurance career, Lark earned a degree in police science and studied public administration. She plans to return to the classroom to obtain a degree in either instructional design or adult education.

She confidently boasts about her strengths in the insurance arena: "Claims, claims, claims."

"Claims is a wonderful area in which to work. It gives you the opportunity everyday to turn a bad situation into something *really good*."