

Financial services must work harder to promote advice sector careers says Rob Macpherson

Recent presentations to university MBA students and corporate / business events has reinforced the need for financial services to do much more to raise industry awareness, and the advice sector careers in particular, to higher education students said Rob Macpherson.

Rob used his personal and professional journey to demonstrate how positively life insurance and financial services is changing and improving the lives of ordinary people across the globe. (A summary of Rob's career follows below).

"Whether in Australia or overseas, not only does life insurance and financial services protect lives and create wealth through investment opportunities, it also provides administrative / professional careers and self-employment for those seeking to operate an advisory practice, said Rob Macpherson.

"Fundamentals that seem to have been lost in an overwhelming background of change and negativity over recent years, even more so following the findings of the Royal Commission".

Rob joined the life assurance industry in 1973 and has worked as an agent, Unit Manager, State Sales Manager NSW and his Asia experience includes Assistant Vice President Hong Kong and Chief Agency Officer in China, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Russia, Thailand, and most recently in Cambodia. A total of 10 countries including England and Australia.

As Head of Sales and Agency, Rob has overseen teams ranging from 2,000 to 50,000 with career spectacular results he's delivered for start-up and established organisations in Asia.

"I was especially heartened by the response of university students and their willingness to learn more about the industry and career prospects", said Rob Macpherson.

"Internships was one of the key topics discussed at the conclusion of my presentation and reinforced the need for decisive industry action in this area".

Rob Macpherson continued, "Unfortunately, the compound effect of the Royal Commission; years of change and challenges has seen financial services lose its 'mojo' and needs to rediscover its passion and sense of purpose".

"Our industry and advice sector in particular have a great story to tell – especially as demand for the services of advice practitioners can only escalate in years to come".

While many university students aspire to join a leading multi-national or high-profile corporate on completion of their studies, others have aspirations to be self-employed with the freedom to chart their own course and destiny.

"For those young graduates with entrepreneurial ambition and skills in communication, problem solving, planning and managing relationships – the advice sector is an obvious choice".

"Hence the importance of internships and career paths as a beacon to attract graduates to the advice sector of the industry."

Rob also believes that this is not restricted to major institutions and fund managers. Dealer groups and advisory businesses should consider internships and graduate programs to attract skilled professionals to their respective groups.

"Promoting the diversity of careers and pathways should be a key priority for all stakeholders and in doing so, will position the advice sector as a desirable career option for higher education students", concluded Rob Macpherson.

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About Rob Macpherson

Rob was born in London and emigrated to Australia aged 18 in 1969 (alone) to seek his fame and fortune. He joined the life assurance industry in 1973 and has worked as an agent, Unit Manager, Regional State Sales manager NSW. Over the course of his career, Rob has lived and worked in 10 countries and his Asia experience includes Chief Agency Officer in China, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Russia, Thailand, and most recently Cambodia. As head of agency he has overseen sales forces ranging from 2,000 to 50,000.

Following below is a brief summary of his career over the past two decades

MANULIFE ASIA 2012 – 2018

Established the Manulife operation in Cambodia and was then responsible for sales recruitment, training and development of the agency force.

KOREA LIFE INSURANCE VIETNAM & THAILAND 2008 – 2012

Chief Agency Officer

Started up the new company and the operation was acknowledged as best start-up in Vietnamese insurance company ever exceeding sales target in excess of 300%.

Assistant Vice President Hong Kong

Providing strategic advice and guidance in planning and implementing sales and agency sales.

BAO MINH CMG LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY 2003 – 2008

National Sales Manager

Managed the agency sales force that consisted of over 6000 agents and sales managers, located in 56 offices nationally.

Over 3 years took market share from 1.5% to 8.2% and out-performed the industry. New premium income increased 63% (2002 /2003), 6.5% (2004/2003), 22% (2005/2004), in a market that has had negative new business growth in each of the above years.

As at June 2006 sales were up 17% (YOY), with the market down a collective 13% over the same period.

CHINA LIFE CMG 2001 – 2003

Chief Marketing Officer

Responsibilities for Sales and Marketing including strategies in Shanghai China, recruiting/developing Sales Managers, sales training, etc

ALLSTATE INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE 1999 – 2001

Regional Sales & Marketing Director, Southeast Asia

COLONIAL (CMG)China Life 1998 – 1999

Consultant International Sales and Marketing

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