

A Chat with Jack Cooper

CLIENT EXECUTIVE
KAPNICK INSURANCE GROUP, ADRIAN, MICHIGAN

What led you to a career in the insurance industry?

I used to say that a career in the insurance industry was my plan B. But now that I'm working in insurance, I know it should have been my plan A all along.

In high school, I had set my sights on being a teacher. My mom had a job in the public schools and my dad worked in manufacturing. Eastern Michigan University was just a short distance away. I went to college right after graduating from Adrian High School. Everything went as planned until my senior year in college when I went to work for a school district. The more I spent in the classroom and in school administration, the more I realized it wasn't the right fit for me.

I grew up in Adrian and had been friends with a family who worked in the insurance business. Jim Kapnick, the CEO of the Kapnick Insurance Group, reached out to me when there was an opening at the agency. I started out in an entry-level quality assurance position and learned a lot about how the industry worked. After a couple months, I inquired about getting into sales. I started the insurance group's sales training program and absolutely loved it. I have been

building my career and seeking out additional opportunities ever since.

Where do you see yourself going in the business?

When I started with the Kapnick Group in their Adrian office, I had no experience at all with the business. That changed quickly. The agency was welcoming and provided me with the tools and training I needed.

Currently, I specialize in personal insurance, small business and employee benefits as a client executive. I'm licensed to sell property and casualty, life and health, and currently working on my CIC designation. I split my time between the Adrian and Ann Arbor Offices, and am part of a staff of about 170 people across three locations. My plans are to continuously learn as much as I can about the industry and products, and to work toward writing larger and bigger accounts in an agency setting.

What perceptions do you want to dispel about the insurance industry?

People on the outside looking in tend to think that insurance is boring. They pay their premiums every month and don't think much beyond that. When you're on the inside and involved in the business, it's actually quite fun. It's all about finding solutions and taking creative approaches to helping



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people both during and before a time of need. And if you're a business owner, it's important to realize that the forces that affect insurance also affect your business operations.

I think working in insurance is an underrated career. From what I can tell, being an insurance agent is never at the top of the list of what someone wants to do "when they grow up." I can't say that insurance was ever on my list of what I wanted to do, but now, I can't think of a better career that provides you that coveted work-life balance. These days, we get so caught up in going to college and finding a career that we might not realize we can get started right away in a great field with a bright future like insurance.

What else do you think makes insurance careers a good fit for people entering the workforce?

I've thought about this a lot, especially since my dad was super surprised that I didn't go the manufacturing route like my brothers. Insurance is a fantastic industry for millennials and the mindset we tend to have. People my age gravitate toward jobs that give you flexibility, have a sense of social responsibility, and let you determine your own course. Insurance does all those things and more.

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For me, insurance provides the added benefit of being able to live, work and play in my hometown. Being based at the Adrian branch of Kapnick Insurance keeps me rooted and part of the small town life I love. I'm an extremely social person, so working in sales gives me a chance to talk to and interact with people all day long. Probably one of the biggest reasons I decided to build my career in insurance is the people part. I thoroughly enjoy my clients and colleagues. Everyone is very supportive of one another. I couldn't have landed in a better career. ●



Ann Kammerer is a freelance writer living in East Lansing. She has written extensively about business people, educators,

artists and everyday citizens doing good things.