

Risk Management Answers

Insurance Solutions to Reduce Cost and Increase Profit

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A Client Service from Stephen B. Paulin, CIC

What a Golf Coach Can Teach You about Workers' Comp

By Stephen B. Paulin, CIC



Sports analogies are cliché in business, but that is because there are so many valuable corollaries between the two. This story about a golf coach is a great analogy to how to successfully handle your workers' comp coverage.

An acquaintance played on his college golf team in North Dakota. At that level of competition, golf practice starts in the spring. Spring in North Dakota can be very cold and many days that are not conducive to low scores or an enjoyable round. These are the 40/40 days - 40 degrees with a 40-mile and hour wind.

Each year he and his teammates complained to the coach about the conditions and whined about having to practice in such adverse weather. The coach had a standard reply, "The conditions are the same for everyone, boys," he growled, "Its how you manage the conditions that determine the winners."

The team would work at the skill and techniques which would be most effective for a specific situation, such as hitting off the tee into a strong headwind and keeping the ball low with a top spin so as the maximum yardage down the fairway. Practicing uphill lies, downhill lies, hitting out of the rough...you get the picture of what early spring practice was like. While the journey was not fun, the results where rewarding. When competing in a game where one or two strokes determine the winner, having a competitive advantage makes the difference. Business owners contend with two conditions that influence the cost of workers' compensation coverage - external and internal.

External conditions are those that you cannot control: rates, the system structure, efficiency and fraud - all a bit like cold and windy weather.

Internal influences are the ones over which a business has direct control, and can include: its safety culture, systems, processes and activities including how new hires are screened, the

structure of loss prevention and control programs, safety incentives, medical clinic partnerships and return to work programs - like the golfers hard earned skills and techniques.

Orion Risk advises business owners and helps implement best practices to better manage their internal conditions. Developing the expertise and capabilities to increase the effectiveness of the company's internal safety activities reduces workers' compensation costs and provides the necessary on-going risk management services to ensure long-term cost control. Much like the hard earned advantage of the golfers practicing in tough conditions, our years of expertise results and proven processes ultimately result in lower cost structures thereby increasing our clients EBITDA and providing them with a competitive advantage.



Steve Paulin, CIC, is a risk management professional specializing in integrating middle market companies' property, casualty and workers' compensation coverage to reduce risk and increase profits. His three decades of risk management experience, combined with Orion Risk Management's expertise in providing specialty services including risk control, claims management, captive formation and programs specific to key industries, means Steve's clients receive unparalleled insurance coverage value. He can be reached at spaulin@orionrisk.com or by calling 949.502.0850.

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