



CYNTHIA RETTER

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, THE RULE COMPANY INSURANCE BROKERS

Growing up, I always wanted to be a grammar school teacher. Today, I am a principal at The Rule Company Insurance Brokers. It may seem like a big leap, but I find myself playing educator to our customers daily.

Most customers do not understand insurance so I am here to educate them, because the more informed they are, the better decision makers they become. I hold a deep sense of personal responsibility to protect the current and future assets of our clients. At the end of the day, if someone has a major catastrophe I want to be sure they have the insurance they need.

State Fund launched a pilot program to begin working with brokers in 1993 and I have worked with them ever since. During that time, I have learned a lot about what is important in a workers' compensation provider and why State Fund's knowledge and experience is unmatched in California.

- *Service:* The best accident is the one that never happens, but accidents are a part of life. While we can't always prevent them, we can make sure we have the tools in place to deal with them when they occur. If you get hurt on the job your biggest fears are: how am I going to pay rent, how will I pay for my car, what am I going to do? To have someone reassure an injured employee and explain how workers' compensation works is crucial to getting the person stable and back to work as quickly as possible. State Fund has always had experienced claims people, and they continue to look for ways to improve and expand their services in both loss control and claims.
- *Solutions:* State Fund offers both front-end and back-end solutions that support my clients' businesses. I once had a

restaurant owner contact me on December 31 for workers' compensation insurance starting January 1—as in the next day. I contacted the local State Fund district manager on his cell phone, had a quote back the same day, and we got the client covered. I tell customers “we will work it out,” because most problems are just challenges that you can work out. Once my clients become State Fund policyholders, they have 24/7 access to see their claims history, to pay their premiums, to download safety materials. I think State Fund Online is the best in the industry; no one else comes close.

- *Value:* I take value seriously. I want to get my customers every dollar of value out of the policies they buy, but most employers tend to focus on price. It's my job to help them recognize that the lowest premium usually doesn't translate into the lowest net cost to their business, nor does it always meet the unique needs of employers and injured workers. When California went to an open rating system in the mid-1990s, a flurry of companies opened their doors in California. Unfortunately, many of them underpriced their products and went out of business. State Fund was there to pick up the pieces, with an open door policy to serve both large and small businesses along with the financial stability to weather economic downturns. The fashion designer, Aldo Gucci, once said, “The bitterness of poor quality is remembered long after the sweetness of low price has faded from memory.” I think that is rather apropos to workers' compensation coverage and the importance of a stable and financially strong State Fund.

When presented with the opportunity to switch workers' compensation providers, many of my clients say: “State Fund insured me when I first started my business and they've been with me ever since—why would I leave?” Many businesses would have had to close their doors if it weren't for State Fund. They're not just a safety valve for California; they are a vibrant and reliable workers' compensation provider in the state.

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