

Feature Day in the Life - Sue Collings

Insurance is part of nearly everything we do in life and in business; there is always the need for insurance. Insurance may not be what new career seekers look to, but it should be! There are many opportunities for career growth and to be a part of an inclusive community. There is a place for everyone in insurance!

We recently had the opportunity to speak with an Insurance Industry Professional, Sue Collings who works in the Special Investigations Unit at a large insurer. She tells us how she landed in insurance, why she has spent the last 22 years working in the industry, and how you can get your start in the industry too!

Starting Out



From a very young age, Sue knew what she wanted; to be a police officer like her father. Out of high school, she enrolled in the Law and Security program at Cambrian College in Sudbury. She then continued her educational career at Carlton University for Criminology. After she wrote her last post-secondary exam, Sue hopped on a bus to Toronto where she started working for Toronto Police Services.

When she left Toronto Police Services, Sue was unsure about where she was going to go next. “I was a bit lost” she explains. She wanted a career that would still satisfy her love for investigating.

Like many, insurance wasn’t on Sue’s radar. “By chance I bumped into an old colleague who was working as an investigator” she explains. He later called to tell me that an insurance company was looking for an investigator, and gave me the information I needed to apply. “I immediately updated my resume and applied” she says. Sue had her interview, got the job, and the rest is history!

The Insurance Journey and Sue’s role

Sue’s career journey didn’t begin in insurance, but she has found a rewarding career path that has afforded her many opportunities to learn and grow.

Once she decided on insurance, she knew she had some work to do. “I knew that there were many retired officers vying for the same jobs” she explains. “I had to make my resume stand out”.

She started to grow her insurance network by attending seminars and industry events. Early in her insurance career, she also began taking Chartered Insurance Professionals (CIP) courses to help build her knowledge, enhance her resume, and to help her connect with other industry professionals. Sue worked hard to get to where she is now, and has had a wonderful career to date in a stable and vital industry.

Insurance has given Sue the opportunity to pursue a career that aligns with her true passion; investigating. Sue has always been a part of the Special Investigations Unit at the companies

she has worked for. She primarily works on investigation of suspicious or potentially staged auto collisions, and draws on her policing experience regularly. Case referrals make their way through various channels to get to Sue's office, and she determines if a full investigation is required. She works closely with a variety of parties to make sure the investigation is done properly. Fraud Analysts conduct background searches, and witnesses, drivers, and passengers provide her with statements. If required, Sue will hire an engineer to conduct an accident reconstruction and will visit the scene to look for any evidence related to the collision. On occasion, Sue may also testify in court if criminal charges are laid against anyone involved in the accident she is investigating.

Why Insurance?

Sue describes her career as challenging and fun. "You would think that after 22 years of doing the same job that I'd have seen it all - but not by a long shot" she tells us. Just when she thinks she has it all figured out, a new challenge comes along and pushes her career in a completely new direction. She loves that the industry is always evolving and changing.

"I also like the stability and security of insurance" she says. Since the industry is everywhere, she knows that it isn't going anywhere. Sue also finds joy in the fact that she is there to help people when they are going through some of their hardest moments.

Sue loves her career in insurance, and is passionate about the work she does. "There is a running joke in my office" she tells us. "What's the best part about Friday? That it's only two days away from Monday"!

Advice and Insights

As someone who transitioned into insurance as a career changer, Sue knows the many challenges that arise when trying to find the right fit. She knows that networking and seminars are important to meet people in the industry that may be able to help get your foot in the door.

She also recommends, once you are connected to the industry, taking CIP courses in a classroom setting if possible so you can network with others in the industry. It will give you the opportunity to learn more about the industry, and connect with other people that have the same interests and skills as you. "You never know who you might meet"!