

Always recognize the value of hard-learned lessons



At press time, the fact that the United States has not had any significant hurricanes this season is a relief in which we take great comfort. Just a little more than a year ago, the nation mourned the horrendous losses perpetrated by the double whammy of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, compounded by several other similar storms that made the 2005 hurricane season one we won't ever forget.

So, how far have we come in the past year? Well, as a resident and supporter of New Orleans, I am pleased to see the rebuilding process in full swing. Katrina has forever changed the face of New Orleans, but the spirit of this culturally-rich city is unwavering. The residents, government officials, and even the insurance companies realize that mistakes were made, and errors in judgment occurred in many aspects of how the hurricane was handled. But the residents who remain are committed to learning from these mistakes and to persevering as a united community. We are not so naive or complacent as to believe that being hit by another hurricane cannot, or will not, happen again.

Admitting our mistakes is distinctly easier than learning from them. No one likes to be wrong, especially in the eyes of others. What we sometimes forget is that making mistakes is an important part of the learning process. As we teach in our training classes, an employee who tries and fails is much more valuable than an employee who doesn't try at all.

What have you personally done to improve yourself or your skills since this time last year? What accomplishments can you look back on with pride? How have you grown or progressed in your career? Did you gain another year of experience, or have you just gone through the motions and remain in the same spot you were in 12 months ago?

If you are having a hard time thinking of how you have progressed in the past year, the good news is that it is never too late. This issue of *Claims Education Magazine*, like all previous issues, provides many opportunities and insights into gaining information that may be beneficial for your career and more importantly, for your individual growth. *CEM* can help you in areas ranging from re-energizing your career to seeking out additional training opportunities. And remember, the training classes available through our upcoming Claims Education Conference in Myrtle Beach in May, 2007, promise to provide more of those outstanding opportunities.

As always, we welcome your feedback, article submissions, and topic suggestions for future issues of *CEM*. But above all else, we encourage you to continue your quest to learn, develop, and continuously strive to be independent and progressive in your claims career.

Until next quarter,

Carl Van



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