

# Advanced training: a career catalyst

**Interview** | 06 November 2017

Matthias Steller, Managing Director of the Association for Professional Insurance Education (Berufsbildungsverband der schweizerischen Versicherungswirtschaft, VBV-AFA) shares his ideas about training and education in a digitised environment and about sustainable plans for advanced training.

Matthias Stettler, on 27 October 2017, 75 insurance specialists (Versicherungswirtschaftler und Versicherungswirtschaftlerinnen HF) will graduate. What can they do with this degree?

They are now fully qualified for management functions. The course teaches fundamental business management and economics from an insurance perspective. Today, HF graduates hold various management positions, they also teach or act as experts in examinations.

I We live in digitised times – what are the expectations of the insurance industry as far as basic and advanced training is concerned?

The focus will continue to shift from traditional commercial knowledge towards IT. Formal apprenticeships must take these trends into account. However, this is an enrichment, because apprenticeships will increase in diversity and further key competencies that are essential in a digitised Workspace.

Are there any other trends in advanced training?

People start much earlier to plan their career, our students are younger than they used to be and more interested in modular course plans and shorter training periods; the market is becoming more agile. Therefore, training courses are more closely aligned and tend to meet the demand for customisable approaches to teaching and learning.

Where do people need to acquire additional knowledge?

The general trend towards customised, very specific solutions geared to customers' life cycles is not going to bypass the insurance sector. For two reasons, a solid knowledge in general insurance will continue to be of importance: This knowledge forms the basis for speciality insurance and is a prerequisite for the sustainable evaluation and the implementation of innovative trends. Implementing such trends, however, will be impossible if people lack competencies in financial technology, artificial intelligence and are unable to understand platforms such as blockchain. Basically, our industry is not alone in its search for ways and means to industrialise the trend towards customisation as far as possible.

Our world is becoming increasingly closely linked, increasingly mobile and increasingly international. Is it at all possible to compare non-university degrees?

It is: eficert – the European Financial Certification Organisation – sets the sectoral qualification framework for professional training and qualification in the financial services industry. eficert has been setting standards in the European educational landscape since 2002.

When is it a good time to pursue additional qualifications?

The time is always good.

What should I bear in mind when planning for further training? What should my employer bear in mind?

Ideally, further training is embedded in mutual, long-term goals, but can be broken down into several successive steps. If expectations or requirements change, a greater variety of offers means that a change of direction can be easily accommodated.

Education

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## Committed to industry-wide basic and advanced training

The Association for Professional Insurance Education (VBV-AFA) works to promote industry-wide basic and advanced training in the private insurance sector.

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