



KRISTEN DAUPHINAIS
Cyber and Technology Beazley

The head of US Cyber and Technology at Beazley, a specialist insurer, tells us why ensuring their teams have a generous, empathetic view of the world is critical to the longevity of the firm's growth.

I recently had the pleasure of meeting with Kristen Dauphinais, who leads Cyber and Technology at Beazley in the US and has been integral in the implementation of a strategic people development program for the firm's US-based underwriters.

Solution Cell:

We know there is often resistance from underwriters and other technical professionals to embrace sales training. Why did Beazley want to invest in this type of development program?

Kristen Dauphinais:

I think it is common in the insurance industry for underwriters to think that if they have the best products then clients should be lining up to buy them, without putting themselves in the shoes of the person across the table. Moving our people at Beazley from an inward facing position, to a more collaborative and empathetic view of the world where we are able become a valued, trusted partner to the brokers we work with was essential for our long term, sustainable business proposition. Solution Cell were very generous with us, learning about who we are as a business by coming to team Away Days and carrying out an extensive

discovery process. In doing so, they helped us engage the hearts and minds of our team and launch this program with a powerful message designed specifically for the audience. This overcame barriers put up by some negative previous experiences of sales training.

Solution Cell:

What was it about our approach that stands out for you?

Kristen Dauphinais:

The relationship has always been interactive, dynamic and collaborative. Unlike other sales training that I have done where it has felt 'off the shelf', Solution Cell came to the table with a very broad and deep toolbox and helped us pull what we needed based on where Beazley found itself. I was thrilled that we had the partner that we had in Solution Cell.

What I liked most about the early days of the engagement was how much time we spent constructing the program and how much dialogue went into making sure it was on message and the tone was right. Specialty lines underwriters, who have incredibly deep subject matter expertise, can be convinced that they have it all figured out so getting this right was essential to the success of the program.

The biggest piece of feedback I have heard is how phenomenal your consultants are. How they are engaging, have great personalities, are knowledgeable in our sector, asked tough questions and challenged, all in a very dynamic way.

Solution Cell:

This program was designed to be delivered in a different world to the one we are all experiencing now. How has Covid-19 affected the program?

Kristen Dauphinais:

Solution Cell helped us to redesign Phase 2 of the program into bite-size virtual workshops. This worked really well as it allowed people to take on just the right amount of information and then go away, digest, practice and then come back. They got a chance to implement it in their day-to-day work environment and really change their behavior.

Solution Cell:

We have all had to be creative and learn new ways of working which in some ways has been very positive for business and innovation. How will you do things differently post-Covid?

Kristen Dauphinais:

I still really like the idea of an in-person kick off and when we reach a 'new normal' after this pandemic, we still want to get people together at the start of any new program. To get off on the right foot you need to physically get away from the day-to-day and break away from old habits and behaviors.

The feedback from our teams shows that the next phase of training, after the initial kick off, can be

delivered most effectively virtually and is very well received.

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"I like the shorter bite-sized sessions rather than the 2-day long sessions."

"Delivering a 3-hour training session via zoom is a tall task in a zoom-fatigued environment, but they made the content and conversation engaging and effective. It was a challenge to disconnect from my desk at first, but the content and instruction quickly pulled me in, and the time flew right by."

Participant feedback

I would also like to look at what we can do between sessions to further embed the learning and help the coaching have even more impact. Making learning and change part of the day job rather than a separate item on a task list.

Solution Cell:

It can be difficult to measure the return on investment from

development programs. What impact do you believe the program has had so far and how has it touched the brokers?

Kristen Dauphinais:

Something I am noticing across the board from our underwriters is a more critical eye towards the reality of their relationships. This is totally a result of the program. Our people are prioritizing their time much better and that is helping them improve the value of their conversations for both sides.

"Thanks again for the training you have provided. It has been really beneficial and particularly thought provoking for me. I was promoted yesterday, and I have no doubt that the training helped me along the way!"

Participant feedback

Recent feedback from brokers is that we have pivoted more quickly than other carriers, our service and responsiveness has remained exceptionally high. They feel our support and partnership much more so than other carriers and we are communicating better than our competitors.

I believe that a lot of that broker feedback has directly been impacted by this development program.

"I recognize that the life of the broker is even more challenging."

Participant feedback

I am also seeing improvements with some underwriters in their business development activities. They are asking better questions. Looking at every conversation as an opportunity to learn

more, gain some new information. Making business development part of every conversation and not something else they have to do and ensuring they bring real value to the brokers they are working with.

Solution Cell:

What would you do differently if you could start over?

Kristen Dauphinais:

I would get our Marketing department involved from the start of the program so that they can bring key learning and the gains we are achieving into the broader Beazley community.

Solution Cell:

What's next for Beazley and Solution Cell?

Kristen Dauphinais:

We will collaborate on how we further embed the learning across the teams. We are looking at more ways of measuring the impact of the training we are delivering. I know that Solution Cell is already rolling out another program with a separate business unit within Beazley and I will support and encourage further collaboration with Solution Cell across the firm.



Laura Hands
Head of Client Engagement
Solution Cell

If you would like to speak with us in person contact one of our team on:

+44 (0)203 642 1380

or email us at:
info@solutioncell.com

solutioncell.com

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