



Best Agency to Work For - West

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA
Der Manouel



Der Manouel Insurance Group employees show their appreciation for agency President Mike Der Manouel.

Best Agency in West: Der Manouel, Where Improvement Is Key

By Don Jergler

Building a great agency starts with building great people.

That should be the slogan for Der Manouel Insurance Group in Fresno, Calif. Employees think highly of the agency, and a common theme they expressed about their employer was the importance that is placed on improving oneself personally and professionally.

"The agency stresses personal development and looks for ways to recognize all individuals who make an effort to advance their learning within the agency, both financially and through other recognition and awards," wrote one employee.

That is one reason why DMIG is the Bronze Winner for *Insurance Journal's* Best Agency in the West award.

DMIG rated high in the annual *Insurance Journal* survey, earning an overall "excellent" rating from most who took the survey. Most employees rated the firm "excellent" in cat-

egories like flex time, education, vacation, insurance knowledge and overall management skills.

Mike Der Manouel, Jr., the agency's president, said having an attitude that embraces a continual effort to improve oneself and one's workplace makes the agency more competitive.

"The competitive landscape is full of great insurance agencies led by very smart people," Der Manouel said. "Differentiating from competitors is hard work, requiring a relentless focus on improvement, an open mind to new ideas, and strong execution of a difference making and relevant service platform for clients. That's what we work on every day. It is an absolute blast."

Numerous employees echoed those sentiments in the survey.

"In my nine years of employment I have been given amazing opportunities to grow within the company and been witness to some amazing growth to others as well," was one employee's response.

Wrote another: "DMIG is a great

place to work. Continuing education is important and encouraged. God and family come first, community service is given paid time off, we all share in successes, and we are like a family."

Der Manouel said he was exposed to the industry by his father, then became fascinated by risk management and insurance while serving as the chief financial officer and risk manager for a large men's college fraternity headquarters in the late 1980s.

"Coming into the agency business with my father was a strong start, after acquiring that business, then hiring my younger brother to oversee day to day operations has helped make this journey a fantastic experience," he said. "What really brought our purpose into focus, however, was learning from peer agencies at Marsh Berry's APPEX group. Since 2005, we've been borrowing and working to perfect many great ideas from smart people in our industry. That has given us life and energy."

High ratings and the quality of employee responses was what helped propel Der Manouel to Bronze status in the poll.

One employee listed a variety of reasons for giving the agency such high marks.

"Michael Der Manouel, Jr.! He thinks of the staff as part of his family. He looks out for each of us and doesn't hesitate to help where the need is," the employee wrote.

The employee touched on community involvement and volunteering, technology, values and food.

"Technology offers our agency the ability to fulfill the purpose of our core values," the employee wrote. "Our core values are held high and followed in all we do. Our agency is very fast-paced and hard-working. That being said, the executive team sees to it that we also have some well-deserved fun, which almost always involves food." ■

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Der Manouel
INSURANCE GROUP
Changing the Equation