



UNDERWRITING TRAINING & E-LEARNING

— Success Stories —



UNDERWRITING TRAINING & E-LEARNING SUCCESS STORIES



Nicole Stricker

Manager, New Business Underwriting,
Co-operators Life Insurance Company

Designations Prior to Underwriting Program: None

Designations After Underwriting Program:
Fellow, Life Management Institute Program (FLMI)

About: Nicole co-manages a team of 28+ underwriters and works primarily with the most senior underwriters and consultants. With a background in Law, Nicole has an interesting story into how she stumbled into Life Underwriting!



QUESTIONNAIRE

Let's learn a bit about our Alumni!

1. What did you study in post-secondary school?

Nicole:

I have a unique story. My post-secondary education focused on Law, and I graduated to become a paralegal. I worked in a law firm for partners heavily involved in insurance litigation. This connection to the life insurance industry allowed me to develop an interest in Underwriting alongside the liability issues and better understand the contracts. I was interested in the underwriting aspect and lucked out on timing, as I was simultaneously considering doing something different in my career.

2. What types of skills does an underwriter require to succeed?

Nicole:

- Problem solving
- Critical thinker – ability to see the big picture
- Attention to detail

3. As an underwriter, what would you say is the biggest challenge in terms of advancing in this profession?

Nicole:

I would say that having the opportunity to work on the most complex cases is definitely key. And developing a whole new product and learning how it flows on the pricing, entry to market and so on can be a challenge for many underwriters. Ultimately it does come down to gaining exposure to the tougher underwriting cases and complex products. And I would say that continuing education is paramount!

4. How much does continuing education play in advancing an underwriter's role?

Nicole:

Structured Underwriting roles are directly based on this. In our organization, one cannot advance in their career without continued education. And advancements to the next level do not occur without that added education. The experience an underwriter gets everyday, as well as the advanced education, like obtaining one's FALU & FLMI, are certainly required. Continued underwriting education helps you become a big picture thinker, which is crucial in this field.

5. Share with us what your experience was like while in our Underwriting Training Program.

Nicole:

When I was a student in the program, my learning was held in class and the training was challenging to some degree. The learnings were very beneficial, and I quite liked the group setting because we got to learn from each other and talk as a group. This ensured that we didn't forget what we learned the previous day.

SKILLS OF A SUCCESSFUL UNDERWRITER:



Problem solving



Attention to Detail



Communication

6. What was your experience with the Underwriting Case Studies in particular?

Nicole:

I loved getting to hear stories from actual underwriters, real stories, and real case scenarios. The case studies painted a clear picture of what the real world is going to look like for us as future underwriters. It was very thorough in explaining "This is how you're going to apply your learning and this is how the real world is going to look like for you as an underwriter."

7. How do you feel the program has contributed to your success within your career?

Nicole:

The underwriting training program was instrumental to where I am now. It gave me a great balance of technical knowledge and how to apply it on a day to day. Additionally, the program prepared me with knowledge of what I would be doing as an underwriter in the real world.

It was very engaging and made me excited about making this career change. I really pulled a 180 in my career!

8. How would you say the material covered in the program has/had an impact on your day-to-day work?

Nicole:

Having had conversations with underwriting professionals on different cases and scenarios helped with real life examples of complex cases and applying our knowledge to properly underwrite cases.

9. With the course material made available to you post-graduation, how often would you reference it?

Nicole:

I referenced it a fair bit! It put a lot of the background into WHY something was a risk.



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10. What were the main takeaways from your personal learning experience while in the program?

Nicole:

- I personally realized how much I would like it. I knew it would be the right path for me to go on. I learned the importance of the role of underwriting and how complex it can be for an insurance company. It is something that you are forever learning. Continued education is KEY to success.
- Life underwriting is not a role where you can come in and just put in your eight hours. As the medical field changes, we have to change, too.
- To do well in this career, you have to be technical, but also personable, to be able to better carry those conversations with advisors.

11. When you enrolled in the learning program, your experience was in-class. How would your learning experience be enhanced if the course content was available to you in an online e-learning format? Would you find online learning conducive to meeting your professional and personal responsibilities?

Nicole:

Biggest pro would be learning at your own pace. The problem that can arise in a group setting is that there may be someone who is a little behind, which can get missed as the group progresses. For those of us in-class, we had to dedicate a number of weeks to physically being in class to learn. However, some people might already be on the job, so learning online would be really great in those scenarios. You learn a lot in training, you get on the job and sometimes you even have to go back to reference the material. Online learning would definitely be conducive to continuing education. For example, you're studying diabetes and then working on a diabetes case... great to balance the two while you're on the job!

12. What advice would you provide to an individual that is looking to pursue a career in Underwriting?

Nicole:

If you're looking for a career path that's conducive to growth and development, and helping clients... then this would be a job you find rewarding. My advice: education and continued education! To do well as an underwriter, you have to put in the time for continued education and keeping up to date with what's going on in the industry.



Want to be a part of our Alumni Success Stories? Jump start your underwriting training and development with our program today, or start with our free trial!



Get started with your underwriting
training & development now!

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LOGIQ3.COM | INFO@LOGIQ3.COM |    