

# **HBW: THE BEST OPPORTUNITY IN FINANCIAL SERVICES**

By Kelly Bonanno

Financial freedom. Nearly everyone strives for it, yet it eludes most of us. Many writers and pundits have extolled the virtues of self-employment and provided hope to those whose working life just isn't personally or financially rewarding. However, few address the fact that the vast majority of those who work for themselves are sole proprietors so their income seldom exceeds the time and energy they expend. There are limits. HBW provides the solution for this problem.

HBW Insurance & Financial Services, Inc. is a financial services marketing company offering primarily term insurance that serves as a platform for people who want to build a financial services business. It is a unique company, the only one of its kind. It's a true hybrid with an array of traditionally accepted, high quality financial products, as well as a superior business building venture. Their sales force spans the spectrum from the most experienced financial services professionals, to the novice who has just passed the requisite exams. HBW offers an extraordinary opportunity that goes beyond selling a product, they teach people how to run a business. It is arguably one of the most compelling opportunities in the industry today.

Barney Hellenbrand, President and CEO of HBW entered the financial services field shortly after graduating UCLA. As he learned the fundamentals in the field and became successful in the business, he soon realized the greater benefits of recruiting others to build their own businesses within his business. After changing agencies a few times he was unable to find a company with the principles and practices he believed in so he decided to create the type of organization he himself would most want to be a part of. In 1991 he partnered with his life long friend Dan Ward who is now the company's COO.

Together they set out to establish a trustworthy organization with responsible leadership, one who puts the consumer first. It began with an innovative commission and override system which was put in place for HBW by American General, one of the strongest, well-rated and competitively priced insurance carriers in the marketplace. HBW now represents many quality carriers, including ING, Banner, Genworth, and West Coast Life. Finally, there have been many years of hard work to constantly improve the corporate infrastructure and opportunities for HBW associates. Today, there are several thousand agents licensed with HBW across the nation and almost 40 people employed at the home office in Simi Valley, California. The company is run with morals and standards that are not typically found in this line of work.

They offer a variety of competitive products to ensure that each client gets what they need. "The basic products that we sell are not complicated. You don't need complicated products. We think that term insurance is a very simple way to protect the family," says Barney. Investing for retirement doesn't have to be difficult either. It can be a simple mutual fund, a Roth IRA or an index annuity product. "The key is to start the process of investing and protect your family. This is a simple, simple process," he adds.

One of the many factors that sets HBW apart is their philosophy. Barney says that one of the basic tenets of HBW is win, win, win! "It has to be good for the consumer otherwise they're not going to buy it, it has to be good for the person selling it otherwise they're not going to sell it and it has to be good for the company that produces it," he explains. They learned this motto from Raymond Berry, NFL football Hall of Fame player and 1985 NFL coach of the year who joined the HBW team as partner and Honorary Chairman in 1995. "Raymond has preached from the beginning of his association with us that if you don't take care of the client you're not going to have a business so we're passionate about making sure our clients get the right product. We've really worked to maintain great partnerships with everybody involved," says Barney. The companies they do business with and their agents aspire to give the best possible products to the

consumer. "Sometimes things get out of whack where it's really good for the sales team with high commissions or it might be really good for the company because they've overpriced the product but it's lousy for the consumer, ultimately that doesn't win. It has to be good for everybody," he continues.

In their aim to create a synergy among the client, agent and company they have tapped into fulfilling the needs of the middle American consumer. The two main goals HBW has for their clients are to protect the family against premature death while at the same time showing them how to prepare, save and invest for long term retirement. Tom Paley, CEO and owner, Freedom Financial Group, LLC., and National Director of Agencies (NDA) for HBW in Albuquerque, New Mexico says too many people do not realize how important it is to be prepared for the future. "People seem to be very cavalier when it comes to their finances. They don't seem to have a sense of urgency," he says.

Ron Dortch, owner, Roland H. Dortch Company, NDA, Richmond, Virginia says that helping people gain peace of mind regarding their finances is the most rewarding aspect of his job. "I have been doing this long enough to have seen people retire successfully, send their children to school, accumulate wealth for their goals and deliver death claims. These outcomes are the direct result of our work. Personal financial problems and uncertainty are the greatest stressors on family life. I am grateful for the opportunity to be able to help remove stress and help families in this important way. I am not there to sell them something at all costs. I am there to help them solve problems using a systematic approach that has their interests at heart," he says.

Barney believes that a big mistake the financial services industry has made is that the middle American consumer has been overlooked in favor of the wealthy upscale client. "Our solution is to recruit people into our industry and teach them how to do this business on a part time basis. We can create a large sales force by recruiting people on a part time basis, letting them learn it with a manager that's teaching them the business which then allows the middle American consumer to be served. That is the basic concept, allowing the middle American consumer to be served and mass recruiting to middle American consumers through middle American people," he explains.

While mass recruiting is important, Barney stresses that this does not mean recruiting anybody with a pulse. Because it requires obtaining a license, it takes a greater commitment than some other business ventures. People have to be serious and motivated. Ideal candidates are married, have children, own a home, have a job and some life experience. "We think if you recruit someone who has a need for what we do as a consumer they're going to be far more aware of the importance of these products so they're going to be more inclined to understand how important that need is and how important it is to share that need," says Barney.

Paley says that to achieve success takes the right amount of effort. "HBW works if you work it. It is not a get rich quick scheme. It will pay you handsomely if you keep getting better personally and become a student of the business. Be passionate about what you do and don't quit. Have a business plan and work it everyday, don't lose sight of your dreams," he advises.

Because HBW encourages recruits to try the business part time, see if it's a good fit and build their clientele before going full time, it immediately takes the pressure off of someone just starting out so they can focus on learning the business and growing. This is an advantage for a person who wants to try something new but does not want to give up the security their job gives them. "That concept is brilliant because somebody can come into the business, give it a try, see if they like it and gradually work up if they want to go full time. If they're making enough money it might make enough sense to give up their full time job if they so choose," explains Barney.

This line of work is ideal for retirees who are forced into retirement but need to keep working. It's well suited for someone who has retired by choice but wants to continue doing something part-time, a teacher who wants to earn extra money in the summer months or a stay-at-home mom who wants to contribute to the family income.

Recruiting is one of the most important components in becoming a successful agent but the reason HBW does not have a recruiting requirement like most companies is because they have discovered if someone is forced to recruit they'll recruit to the lowest common denominator. It's a financial services company that has multi level compensation, not a multi level company that is primarily concerned with mass recruiting and internal consumption. By encouraging recruiting without requirements, agents recruit people that possess true potential to flourish in this business. People who build the largest most productive teams earn the most money so they seek quality candidates. "We have no full time requirements at any level because we feel that imposing restrictions on people doesn't help. We've taken all the best aspects of these other companies and we've left these things that are generally counter productive out. We discovered what was counterproductive from interviewing other people as well as our own personal experience so we think we've created the ultimate hybrid opportunity. The greatest sales opportunity in conjunction with the greatest recruiting opportunity in the industry to make it overall the most exciting package in financial services today," says Barney. Many enter the business assuming they only want to sell but soon realize the benefits of recruiting. "Eventually most people will figure out that recruiting is a sales man's dream because he or she supplements their income not just with their own personal production but with the sales efforts of other people," he explains.

Miguel Romero, NDA, Vista, California is among HBW's top performers. He says his favorite part about the company is being able to offer the best products and benefits to his clients. "Recruits can try the HBW opportunity without risks. There are no full time requirements, no big investments. It's the best opportunity for anybody without experience, education or background in business to be able to help families and educate them about finances," he says.

A recent CareerBuilder.com survey revealed that 84 percent of the nation's workforce are unhappy with their job. Perhaps you fall into this category. Maybe you're stuck in a rut and are not being challenged or fulfilling your true potential. Does your current job utilize your strengths? Does it energize you? If not, it's time to explore other avenues. You might be in the same boat as millions of Americans forced to work a second job that doesn't bring in much money so you still can't make ends meet. Or perhaps you're looking for a career rather than just a job.

The opportunity that HBW offers allows you to take control of your financial future regardless of your experience or education and gives you a means of building lifetime security that most jobs can't provide. It's the age old question women are still asking themselves, "Can we have it all?" Most women find they can't. We want a fulfilling career but we also want to spend time with our family. If you're like most women who have a family, your dream is to find a job that is interesting, allows you to make a good income and gives you the flexibility you need to spend time with your kids. If you're like most men, your dream is to find a stimulating career that allows you to make enough money to provide well for your family, take them on fun, lavish vacations, pay for your children's college educations and save enough for a comfortable retirement. It all comes back to financial freedom.

Financial security is universally coveted by nearly everyone. Even more important is the fact that you can help profoundly change the lives of many people. Paley says that is what he likes best about his job. "The joy that a new recruit has when they pass the life exam, make a sale on their own and receive their first commission is all worth it. When you recruit you not only change that new recruit's life, but you can touch a multitude of others. What a great business!"

Bruce and Janell Denk run Denk Financial Advisors in Portland, Oregon. Bruce says that problem solving is the most rewarding aspect of working with clients. "Developing a goals driven financial game plan for our clients and implementing it optimally. This is a people business first and foremost," he says.

With its competitive product line and underwriting, top rated carriers, and many other attributes, joining the HBW team is advantageous for an experienced licensed agent as well. They represent

the #1 writer of term insurance in the country and offer the highest level of support and service to their associates. "We have as much independence and autonomy as we want with as much support and leadership as we need," says Janell Denk.

Quality training is available. This gives recruits confidence, prepares them and alleviates the fear of learning because they are not left to figure things out on their own. "The training that we do weekly across the kitchen table is crucial. The reason is that we start teaching them how to set appointments, do the presentation, close the sale, get referrals and recruit! The better we train the better results we have," says Paley.

They offer a wide variety of training materials. Some people are better visual learners, others are better at memorization. Janell Denk says multi-media tools are very effective because different formats enhance learning. "Whether it's in person observation, hands-on application, using assorted formats of technology, studying literature or taking initiative with various visual and audio tools. Using a variety of materials and methods compounds understanding," she explains.

Attendance is always very high at their annual convention where extensive training is offered. It's also a chance for agents all over the country to get together and share ideas about their business. Dortch says the convention training format is critical to the success of agents. "Exposure to experts in a classroom environment is very beneficial. Also, being able to interact with other agents and exchange ideas has unlimited potential to help an agent see new opportunities," he says.

As with any business, to be successful takes focus and discipline. If you want to be financially free, learning how to build a business network is essential. In today's world of corporate conglomerates and over priced multi level marketing businesses HBW stands out as an exciting and enterprising endeavor.

For more information about HBW, their services and business opportunities, visit [www.hbwinc.com](http://www.hbwinc.com).