

What does an Insurance broker do?

Insurance brokers act as an intermediary between clients and insurance companies. Clients may be either individuals or commercial businesses and organisations. They use their in-depth knowledge of risks and the insurance market to find and arrange suitable insurance policies and arrange cover. They act in the interest of their clients and offer products from more than one insurer to ensure that their clients get the best deal.

Retail insurance brokers usually arrange insurance policies for individuals or companies and deal directly with them. Policies range from motor, house, travel or pet cover for individuals or property to employer's liability and public and product liability insurance.

Commercial insurance brokers deal with high value and more complex insurance cover in areas such as marine, aviation, oil and gas and financial risks.

Typical work activities:

Activities depend largely on the size and nature of the employer and the scale of the business. In a large company, a broker may specialise in a core area; in a small firm, a broker could be involved in most functions, including new business development and acting as placing broker and claims broker.

Tasks often involve:

- * Gathering information from clients, assessing their insurance needs and risk profile;
- * Building and maintaining on-going relationships with clients including scheduling and attending meetings and understanding the nature of clients' businesses or lives;
- * Foreseeing clients' insurance needs, such as policy renewals;
- * Researching insurance companies' policies and negotiating with underwriters to find the most suitable insurance for clients at the best price;
- * Arranging specialised types of insurance cover in complex cases; this may involve preparing reports for insurance underwriters and surveyors and negotiating with insurers;
- * Advising clients on risk management and helping to devise new ways to mitigate risks, for example, by adding security measures such as fencing, surveillance cameras or lighting to commercial properties to reduce the likelihood of break-ins;
- * Renewing or amending existing policies;
- * Advising clients whether and when they need to make a claim on their policies;
- * Marketing and acquiring new clients;
- * Developing relationships with underwriters, surveyors, photographers, structural engineers and other professionals;
- * Administrative tasks such as dealing with paperwork, correspondence, keeping detailed records;
- * Winning accounts against competitors;
- * Keeping up with changes in the insurance market and in the clients' industries;
- * Collecting insurance premiums and processing accounts.