

media release

Vero's vPod takes three

7 March 2007: Attracting and retaining staff is a key challenge within the insurance industry today. In order to remain competitive, companies need to provide staff with challenges in the workplace and development opportunities to keep them motivated and fulfilled.

Vero Insurance Limited (Vero) has successfully implemented an employee-centred HR strategy, based on the provision of learning and development opportunities for its staff. In line with this strategy, Vero has developed several professional development programs.

Now in its third year, vPod is a six-month leadership and development program.

Mr Brad Griffiths, Head of Human Resources at Vero said there are two levels of the vPod program, one for Strategic Implementers and Senior Experts, and the other for Team Leaders.

"In 2006, 50 staff members were selected from across the business for our two vPod programs. Both programs are designed to develop leadership capabilities and equip the next generation of managers with the skills to take the industry forward," Mr Griffiths said.

In 2006, the program's participants found the experience extremely rewarding. Graduation ceremonies were held in November last year to acknowledge their achievement.

This year the Strategic Implementer program and the Team Leader program will be offered in Sydney, for Vero staff from around Australia.

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"The programs bring enormous benefits to everyone who is involved. The participants can try new approaches in a risk free environment, learn from each other and expand their network of contacts across the business," said Mr Griffiths.

Participants from the 2006 Team Leader vPod program said 'it was beneficial to share experiences with different people in the business who may have encountered similar or more difficult situations to you. It was also a great opportunity to network'.

One other participant said vPod was a 'truly inspiring program - both professionally and for life in general. I made many great friends'.

Coaching forms an important part of the vPod program. Participants are matched with a coach at the beginning of the program, generally a senior manager within Vero. The coaching partnership occurs throughout the program and beyond.

"The vPod coaches act as thought partners, providing alternate views and suggestions for managing challenging situations in the workplace. Coaches assist the participants to build upon their strengths and focus on their individual development needs. This helps to maximise learning from the program," Mr Griffiths said.

"Insurers must work hard to keep the people they have. Programs such as vPod are just one way to retain staff and provide opportunities for personal growth," he said.

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Editor's note

Vero Insurance Limited ("Vero") is a subsidiary of the Promina Group Limited, which is one of the top 50 companies listed on the Australian Stock Exchange. Vero, formerly Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Australia Limited, has for many years been offering highly specialised solutions to its large range of customers.

Vero is one of Australia's largest intermediated general insurance companies and has 19 branches across Australia, providing a suite of quality specialised risk management products and services through brokers, corporate partners and risk managers.

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