Inspiring Interview

Hanzel Marcelo

Hanzel's career with the business started over a decade ago. He joined as a Protection Adviser in 2012, at age 24, with no industry experience. He is now an Executive Sales Manager with more than 20 Advisers in his team, plus more in the pipeline! Hanzel's team reflects his warm, professional and customer centric focus. Read Hanzel's story and how he is inspiring others to pursue a rewarding career working with Owl Financial.

Journey to Owl Financial

Prior to joining Owl Financial, I did about 10 jobs – but nothing that really motivated me or made me feel like this is the career for me long term. It was a friend who told me about this opportunity working as a Protection Adviser. After speaking to him, the role sounded interesting and being an opportunity-seeking person, I thought I'd give it a go and apply – I had nothing to lose, especially as I was told training would be provided. I was in my early 20's and didn't really know much about the world of insurance; at first I wasn't that excited. I didn't fully understand at the time how valuable it can be to have financial cover in place or how rewarding it could be as a career option. I now have a completely different perspective! I've seen time and time again how it's helping families and individuals when the worst and unexpected things happen.

What most appealed to you about the job?

One of the best things about the role is being able to work flexibly. I did a fair share of 9am – 5pm jobs, which were quite rigid in terms of how you must work, and I cannot imagine going back. Being self-employed, I could work around my personal and family life. My wife was studying at the time and had a new baby, and the flexibility of my hours meant she could do her studies, and I could schedule my working days in a way that best suited not just my clients, but also my family. Also with this role, you get to meet people of different backgrounds, and you can share knowledge, expertise and practical advice. I have met a lot of people on my journey so far and made some good connections. It's not just my clients, it's the opportunity to work with great colleagues too - some have become friends for life and for that, I am forever grateful to this role.

The early days

After meeting my manager, Executive Sales Manager - Dolores Dagamac, and being offered the opportunity to join, I decided I was going to give it a good go. When I decide to do something, for me it's all or nothing – so I went full effort and did it full-time. I attended training, completed and passed all necessary tests and requirements which included a face-to-face role play assessment at that time. My manager trained me well and after qualifying, I was a bit nervous booking my first few client appointments, but I started with my family, friends, and then other social circles who gave me some really helpful feedback. I soon relaxed and started to feel that sharing what I know and the things I learned as a Protection Adviser is what I enjoy doing. I am pleased when my clients and people in my community get financially protected, but most especially when they truly appreciate your time, your advice, and your service. They started giving me referrals and recommended me to others who they felt could also benefit from advice.

Was it easy to progress to become an Area Sales Manager?

At Owl Financial, there's an 'Area Sales Manager Programme' – I applied for this about 3 years after I joined. It's an intensive course – well worth doing, but I must admit, I did not pass first time. I was disappointed but didn't give up! Looking back now, I was not actually ready at that time. I was given practical feedback and support. Learning from experience and educating yourself is very important, so I learned my lessons and from others, and then I applied again. I'm so glad I did as I am very proud of the team that I have now!

What do you like best about being an Executive Sales Manager?

I have a great team! They are like-minded individuals who want to help others. I like to show by example how you can build your career, earn a good income and achieve your own personal goals by helping others. I particularly like to reach out to young people – those in their early 20's and 30's who are considering their career options; I like their energy and enthusiasm. When starting out, each of my Advisers have a mentor in my team who can also provide them with support and they grow together.

Another thing I like is that I can be a Manager plus continue to give advice as a Protection Adviser. It's a job I love to do, and I like the fact you have the flexibility to do both, if you wish.

What's the culture like at Owl Financial?

The best way to describe it is - it's like family. Supportive, friendly, with a real focus on customers, who are at the heart of everything. That's why quality and integrity is so important. I love the slogan we have 'with you through life' – we really are there for customers; whether it's giving advice or support with a claim. We're there for them.

What advice would you give people considering applying to work with Owl Financial?

I can honestly say, I've not looked back. With this role, there's a real sense of satisfaction and fulfilment knowing you can help others through your valuable advice. For me, it means a lot to be able to help those in my community understand the value of taking out cover. I've seen firsthand the difference claims payouts make for people and their families. And it's more than a job – it's an opportunity to make meaningful friendships, connections, and also create a legacy of values, knowledge, and positive influence we can impart to others.

> "I hope my journey can encourage and inspire others. I think ultimately what everyone wants, after they have travelled all the places they want to explore and eat all the ice creams they can eat, at the end of their journey, they want to be remembered or to leave a good legacy. With this profession, if you do it 'Right', you can have all 3.
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> You can enjoy life and at the same time, through your advice and the knowledge you share, you can leave a good legacy to all the clients you meet in your journey.
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> To anyone considering this career path and whether to do it full-time, I can honestly say it is the best thing I have done. I'm excited about the future and the opportunity to grow my team and support another generation of advisers."

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