



## Today's News

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Client Spotlight: Suhr Risk Services of California

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I recently had the opportunity to visit with John Suhr MS, CPCU, CRM, the Senior Partner of Suhr Risk Services of California, to discuss his company's business model and philosophy. It was an engaging discussion that helped me better understand this very dynamic organization.

With a 100 year history dating back to 1906, Suhr Risk Services maintains offices in San Jose, Burlingame, and Novato. The company is committed to building long-term performance driven partnerships with their clients, insurance companies, centers of influence, and employees. John expressed his belief that the organization, which harnesses the collective genius and talent of its people, is going to blow the competition away. And, he was emphatic that motivation, not legislation, moves people to excel and drive value.

The management team is clear in their conviction that the performance of any company is a function of its culture. And, the culture of a company is shaped by the character of its people. SRS conducts its day to day business in a way that is committed to the values of integrity, honesty, performance, personal responsibility, recognition, initiative, and mutual respect. As a result, in October of 2003, "The San Francisco Business Times" and the "San Jose Business Journal" identified Suhr Risk Services as the 7th Best Place to Work in the Greater Bay Area. In May of 2005, the company was recognized by the "Insurance Journal" as one of the Top 2005 Property and Casualty Agencies in the United States. It is evident that this fine agency is committed to empowering its employees to powerful performance!

A number of things are expressly evident when you take a close look at the Suhr Risk Services hiring model. Senior management defines their organization as a learning company and one where everyone is offered the opportunity to thrive in a culture of appreciation and abundance. Hence, it became clear that SRS is looking for individuals that possess very specific qualities. Absolute integrity headed the list, along with individuals committed to defying the standards and raising the bar.

In addition, the company's drive to find team players that are passionate and positive with a personal commitment to continue growing and learning is very evident.

Suhr Risk Services' commitment to growth is personified by a room in their Burlingame office, called "CANI Central". Here, company initiatives and goals are posted, along with specific results by division. In addition, people are celebrated and a banner in the room posts the word, "CANI" with a statement below it. The statement reads, "The personal choice to the commitment of constant and never ending improvement." It is this creed that is pervasive throughout the company and expressed by the fact that more than 50% of their current staff of 41 hold professional designations.

With a diverse 100 year history to stand on, a couple of years ago the company made the decision to substantially reduce its client base and focus on personal and corporate clients looking for a unique level of risk management expertise. Insurance products and services are delivered from specific divisions armed with professionals knowledgeable about the risk management requirements of individuals, families, as well as both privately held and publicly traded companies. Today, SRS is driven to bring unheard of value to the food products industries, franchised automobile dealerships, non-profits, wholesalers, contractors, and property owners. The entire company brings a partnership mentality to their client relationships, striving to escape the "vendor" label and to earn the position of a "trusted advisor."

It's apparent that Suhr Risk Services is prepared to play offense. John shared that SRS will always be about the future and that the clients which invest in his company are doing so because of where the company is going, not where it has been. Suhr Risk Services is focused on being a consultative broker, second to none, fueled by individuals with unyielding integrity, commitment to performance, and a desire to be the best they can be in the insurance industry. Great ideas and great people, building their own dreams at SRS will ensure that this company continues to thrive.

Ron Burgess