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Becoming a Driving Influence in Workers' Comp with Delphia Frisch

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Interview with Delphia Frisch, 2016 Women to Watch Honoree

Witnessing a company grow from infancy to industry leader is a journey very few experience. Those who do are often trailblazers who guide the new business toward future growth. That's the story of Delphia Frisch, Genex's COO, who rose from the ranks of management to executive and became an integral part of the Genex success story. In this edition of Inside Workers' Comp, Frisch, who was recently named a Business Insurance Women to Watch honoree, offers insight on what it takes to make a significant difference in workers' comp.

Tom Kerr (TK): I'm Tom Kerr. Witnessing a company grow from infancy to industry leader is a journey very few experience. Those who do are often pivotal players in the company's success. That's the story of Delphia Frisch, Genex's COO. Last week, Delphia was formally recognized as one of the industry's most successful executives by being named to *Business Insurance's* Women to Watch. Today, we talk to Delphia about the changes she has seen in the industry and what 2017 might bring.

So, how does it feel being named to *Business Insurance's* Women to Watch?

Delphia Frisch (DF): Well thank you, Tom. Clearly, it is a great honor, and the amazing outpour of sentiments and support from colleagues within Genex, as well as many in the industry really has been remarkable, humbling and truly inspiring. My family even got into the fun, including my parents, which obviously amped it to a great level. So, it has been a wonderful several weeks.

TK: So how have opportunities changed for women in workers' comp over your career?

DF: Well, I have been quite fortunate over my career to have many cumulative opportunities related to compelling and escalating responsibilities. Genex, as a leading service firm, has a high female workforce base. Approximately 85 percent of our almost 3,000 employees are women, so all roles and positions are typically well represented with outstanding female talent.

I, however, know this is certainly not the case in the broader business market and we need to all remain committed to improving the professional imbalance that persists. Although on a personal level, I've frankly not felt disadvantaged with gender issues in career situations, especially when there is such a strong representation

of women at customer, service partner, or even competitor levels. I have an enormous admiration for my female colleagues in all of those industry categories.

TK: What was the biggest change you've seen in the industry during your career?

DF: It is more related to today. The workplace, thankfully, is a much safer environment day?to?day, and the frequency of injuries is 50 percent lower than that what it was 20 years ago.

And then, specifically at Genex, there have been great changes at as it relates to our continuing, evolving managed care solutions continuum. For example, early on our Genex case management capability was a relatively nascent offering that not every workers' comp payer accessed.

Over 30 years, I have witnessed its consistent utilization as an important results-oriented claims management tool — a solid and stable, extraordinary capability that we are proud of every day.

But a company has to continue to reinvent themselves with other product offerings and service interventions. And we've done a great job at Genex of doing that.

TK: What do you foresee will be the biggest challenge that workers' comp industry executives face in the coming year?

DF: So, I think we always have to try to stay ahead of macro and micro market industry trends. Macro trends are related to the economy at large, figuring out the implications of the new president?elect's administration, world issues, etc. And, of course, the micro issues related to our workers' comp and disability orbit. For example, the anticipation of a generally softening market, claim severity issues, the rising medical costs within workers' comp spend, and the opioid usage calamity, etc.

These factors I think resonate every day with us, so it's critical to be versed on the trends, influencing factors, and when possible, stay ahead of the game.

TK: What advice would you give to a new executive in workers' comp?

DF: So, that's pretty easy. I think you stay relevant. I think you stay focused, and I think you stay nimble. Workers' comp is not for the faint of spirit. What you do today will most assuredly be different as time moves forward.

Learn and teach every day, because therein lies the reward and the satisfaction of the incredibly hard work and devotion that a long?term commitment to a fulfilling career is built upon. Respect the people you work with because, day?to?day, that journey is about who you partner and surround yourself with way more than you, singularly, as an individual.

TK: And that's a wrap on our 2016 Inside Workers' Comp series, but we'll be back in January to address the challenges of 2017. Until next year, thanks for listening.



