



## HED – Building on the strengths of employees

'We take a genuine interest in helping our staff members achieve and succeed'

By Nancy Boomer – Photos by Darcy Finley

The sheer longevity of HED Insurance and Risk Services in a highly competitive industry shows it knows what it takes to attract and retain clients from across Canada - unique and innovative insurance products, outstanding customer service and dedicated, knowledgeable staff.

The Winnipeg-based company also recognizes the factors that allow it to attract and retain employees who share the company's commitment to personal and professional excellence.

HED is a Canadian-owned insurance brokerage that provides commercial and employee health benefit packages to independent businesses and associations across Canada. The company offers an impressive slate of insurance solutions, including commercial "Protected Self-Insurance" programs, supported by risk management and loss prevention services, and HED's proprietary employee benefits program - TotalGUARD.

A stellar reputation, an employee-friendly, progressive workplace environment and an attractive benefits package have placed HED on the Top Manitoba Employers list for the fourth consecutive year. The company has also been shortlisted for Maclean's magazine's Top 100 Employers list for the past four consecutive years.

"These awards are particularly gratifying because they recognize our efforts to continue to be an employer of choice," says Steve Korman, vice president of human resources and corporate services.

"The key continues to be employee engagement. We emphasize continuous learning, job enhancement and foster a positive corporate culture through our comprehensive performance-based compensation, policies and practices."

Recently acquired by Western Financial Group, HED now has the capacity to expand its market presence and the potential to provide even greater opportunities for members of the HED team.

Considering that insurance affects so many aspects of living, from driving a car to securing a mortgage, the industry's significance should never be underestimated by those seeking a rewarding career.

For those who do have the right stuff, HED offers extraordinary



HED team members (left to right) Elizabeth Creed, Steve Korman, Nancy Cumbers, Grant Ostir and Jennifer Babiak say the company's employee-friendly workplace and an attractive benefits package have earned it Top Employer status for the fourth consecutive year.



build on the strengths of our employees, providing timely feedback about their performances and that of the company,"

Mr. Korman says. "We take a genuine interest in helping our staff members achieve and succeed."

Helping staff maintain a healthy life-work balance is another part of HED's commitment to its employees. The company provides an annual, in-house flu shot clinic, a walking club and a company "wellness den" stocked with popular fitness equipment.

An affordable, comprehensive health insurance plan (soon to be 100 per cent employer paid), employee counselling services, generous vacation and leave allotment and a half-day Friday work program in the summer months help employees feel good about themselves and their employer.

New HED President Grant Ostir says the 2010 Top 25 honour was not only gratifying to management, but also reaffirmed their commitment to their already successful human resources strategy.

"We recognize that while we have our key initiatives, it is the people within HED that execute the strategies that help our company to continually improve and reach its goals," Mr. Ostir says.

"The Top Employer awards demonstrate that we are succeeding in positioning our company as a great place to start and grow a career."

opportunities to expand one's horizons, at work and in life. The company provides many professional development opportunities for staff, including a mentorship program, on-site classroom training, computer-based education, in-house workshops and seminars and financial support for employees taking college and university courses not necessarily job-related.

"We make a considerable investment in technology, seeking the most up-to-date technology tools for our employees, including a homegrown award-winning Intranet that is a key internal communication platform from which employees can learn about company news, policies and community involvement," Mr. Korman says.

"They can also use it to self-administer such things as their vacation scheduling and health benefit plan coverage."

HED's continuing efforts to support and encourage its employees has been shown to be successful in promoting job satisfaction and company pride among its 151 employees. A recent internal survey about job satisfaction received a strong response rate from staff, with 80 per cent of respondents expressing favourable ratings.

Likewise, the company's payroll has experienced double-digit growth in each of the past few years.

"We consider ourselves as a progressive company as we