

Advice & Representation

The Bank has a good track record in encouraging proper representation for members of the staff subject to PIP's. This is not only of advantage to the individual but is, of course, also of advantage to the Bank. This is because disciplinary action against an individual not properly represented is much easier to challenge at an Employment Tribunal, which is always sensitive to any lack of fair play or natural justice.

If you require advice or help of any sort an Official will work with you individually and it goes without saying that our support is provided on a 7 day, 24-hour basis.

Members can also be assured that any requests for advice or assistance will be dealt with on a completely confidential basis by Officials who work totally independently of the Bank and who have an established track record in resolving personal problems. I emphasise this because I know that members of staff are often reluctant to share their problems and this sometimes leads to our being contacted for assistance much later than we would wish.

If any criticism is levelled against you or if you think criticism may be levelled against you for any reason in the future, seek advice on how to proceed by contacting LTU's Advice Team on 01234 262868.

Service For Members Only

As I've said before LTU membership is a form of insurance. LTU members pay monthly subscriptions and these subscriptions pay for all our services including the Advice Line. Non members pay nothing and will get a blunt rejection if they try to get advice.

Increasingly we are seeing non-members trying to join by telephone to get immediate advice about a problem that has arisen. We will not accept new members in those circumstances: new members will be dealt with only after we have received a completed application form and direct debit mandate and received at least one subscription payment or accepted payment of substantial backdated subscriptions. Under no circumstances will we provide individual representation for new members if they have joined LTU after an issue has arisen or after they suspected an issue was about to arise. For that reason members calling the Advice Line may be asked to confirm personal details so that we can validate calls.

If you're a non-member please don't phone us after a problem has arisen: we don't want to hear from you. We will be busy representing members who have paid month in month out for LTU protection and you will be on your own.

Contacting LTU

Members with any questions can contact the Union's Bedford Office by calling 01234 262868 or by emailing the Union at ltu.co.uk. **Mark V Brown**
Assistant General Secretary

27th February 2007

Community Bank - 1

Welcome To LTU's Community Bank Newsletter

Welcome to the first edition of LTU's Community Bank Newsletter. We intend to publish the Newsletter regularly to all our members in the Community Bank. These Newsletters will be in addition to our All Members Newsletters, which will continue to cover issues such as Pensions, Pay and Offshoring which affect all our members regardless of their work location, and we will be focusing specifically on those issues affecting LTU members working in the branch network.

It's your Newsletter so if you have any issues which you would like us to raise in our discussions with Senior Executives from the Community Bank then contact the Union on 01234 262868 or by email at 24hours@ltu.co.uk.

Cold Calling In The Network

Much of the Community Bank's growth plans for 2007 are predicated on a 39% increase in the number of new accounts from 846k in 2006 to 1,172 million in 2007 and a 34% increase in the number of new products sold to customers.

INSIDE

Disappearing League Tables, Sales Practices, Community Bank Blog

Inevitably with such stretching targets Local Directors and Branch Managers will be using every available distribution channel and marketing opportunity to increase their share of the local market and of their customers' wallets. However, we have been told that branch staff in two Local Director Groups that we know of, and there will be some which we don't know about, are being asked to visit local shops and offices to recruit new customers.

The Bank has said that they are aware of such schemes and that as long as staff volunteer to take part then they don't see any problems with allowing them to continue. We are pleased that the Bank has said staff participation in such schemes is purely voluntary and that staff who choose not to take part will not be penalised when it comes to their balanced

scorecard rating for example. However, one of our major concerns with this method of selling is that whilst we can protect the working environment and personal safety of staff whilst they are working in branches and offices in the Network we can't do that whilst they are travelling from office to office selling new accounts. If this type of selling is going to be allowed to continue then the Bank needs to put in place centrally agreed guidelines detailing how it will be conducted. It only takes a Band 7 Customer Assistant to be in the wrong place at the wrong time and the consequences could be devastating.

We will be discussing this again with the Bank at our next meeting. In the meantime, we would like to hear the experiences of staff who have been involved in similar schemes. You can do that by contacting Nigel Ransome at the Union's Bedford Office on 01234 262868 or emailing Nigel at Nigel.Ransome@ltu.co.uk.

Disappearing League Tables

In one of our previous Newsletters LTU said that introducing a clear link between basic pay and targets for PBMs and SPBMs, through the multiplier approach, and then seeking to publish that information locally could result in the Bank finding itself in breach of the Data Protection Act 1998. In the past we've seen numerous examples of performance league tables that show individual seller performance against target and we said at the time that if such league tables are published in future then staff will be able to calculate each others basic salary. Some individuals, especially those whose basic salary is protected, might want to keep that information confidential. Basic salary details

are classified as personal data for the purposes of the Act and such data can only be disclosed in accordance with data protection principles.

The Bank recently produced league tables which would allow staff to calculate the basic salaries of their colleagues but following the intervention of LTU those league tables have now been withdrawn. The Bank has said that it will still continue to produce league tables but those will need to be consistent with the principles of the Data Protection Act.

Sales Practices

It seems that some local management are always coming up with different ways to push the envelope and increase sales through punishment rather than encouragement. We recently raised the case with the Bank of the Mortgage Specialist who was told that if they didn't book 3 self-generated appointments every day the penalty would be that the Mortgage Specialist would not get any welcome desk referrals the following day. In this particular case, which was sorted out by the local HR team when raised by LTU, the Mortgage Specialist only managed to get two self-generated appointments and was told that they would get no leads the following day.

It just so happens that a customer came in to the branch to talk about mortgages but because the staff at the Welcome desk were not allowed to refer the customer to the Mortgage Specialist, who was free at the time, the customer was offered an appointment and told to return to the branch at a later date. We don't know what happened to the customer but surely any reasonable person can see that such hard and fast rules are counter productive.

If the Community Bank is going to succeed and achieve its targets, which we all want, then such stupidity needs to be stamped out once and for all. Members who have first hand experience of similar problems should contact the Union's Bedford Office on 01234 262868.

Community Bank Blog

LTU's ability to communicate with members quickly and effectively on issues that affect them is central to the work we do. Equally, we want members to be able to speak to their Union quickly on a range of issues, like for example pay, targets and balanced scorecards, which they think are important.

To facilitate this real time interaction between the Union and its members in the retail bank, LTU are setting up a Community Bank Forum, or Blog, on its website. To access the Forum members will simply need to log on to our web site and register. When it's up and running registration will only take a few minutes and registered users will be able to access all areas of the Forum. Once in the Forum members will be able to reply to posted topics and post their own questions and opinions. When you register for the Forum members will be able to choose their own unique username which will ensure anonymity, for those that want it.

When the Forum is up and running we will write to members again to give them detailed instructions on how to access the system. In the meantime members with any questions can contact the Union's Bedford Office on 01234 262868 or they can email me at Mark.Brown@ltu.co.uk.

SIA's, BHC's and FPM's

LTU have continued our negotiations on targets for SIA's but the Bank's position remains the same that internal equity dictates that payment for bonuses should be the same regardless of bonus package. However, the Bank has said that it will be looking to put together a further set of migration proposals for sellers to entice them across to the FA 99 package and this new package will be available at the end of Q2 2007. Members will recall that the Bank introduced enhanced migration rules a few years ago and that consisted of the following:

Savings and Investment Advisers

SIA's who migrated to the FC '99 package in Q4 2004 received £15,000 in three equal instalments starting in January 2005 and then in January 2006 and January 2007. SIA's on reduced hours had their payments calculated pro-rata.

Black Horse Consultants

Black Horse Consultants who migrated to the FC '99 package in Q4 2004 received in April 2005, 2006 and 2007 their accrued persistency bonus they were entitled to based on their sales but subject to the normal BHC persistency rules. BHC's migrating to the FA package also benefited from the 'Flavours' scheme which currently delivers a 4% lump sum plus a range of flexible benefits.

Financial Advisers

FA's and FPC's migrating to the new package had the benefit of a more stable basic salary and would also be able to join the Bank's car scheme. We expect that the Bank's proposals, which we will begin discussing shortly, will be very similar to those we agreed in 2004. I will keep members informed of developments.