



* excerpt from NAHU.org

Why should I use a professional insurance advisor?

- Dramatic changes in the insurance marketplace make the professional insurance advisor's role increasingly important to individuals and small businesses in finding cost-saving measures and coverage options. They provide **and service** insurance products while educating and advising you on how to manage risk and make informed insurance choices.

Advisors are highly trained insurance professionals who will guide you through the complex task of choosing appropriate coverage at an affordable cost and are dedicated to serving **the long-term interests of consumers.**

Should I buy insurance online?

Buying health insurance benefits is different than buying books and music. Benefits are complex and they are critically important. Health care coverage protects both a family's health and its finances. Purchase the wrong book, and you're out a few dollars. Purchase the wrong health care coverage, and the consequences are far more significant. Remember, **if you buy health insurance online, there may be no advisor to explain benefits, no advocate if problems arise** and no counselor to help you make the right coverage choices.

How does an advisor get compensated? What is his/her incentive to give me superior service?

Insurance advisors have strong financial and professional incentives to give their clients a lifetime of quality products and service. Advisors seldom are salaried employees of the insurance companies they represent. Usually they are independent agents who represent many companies. Most advisors are compensated on a commission basis - a percentage of the premiums you pay your insurance company. In each case, the advisor's loyalty and compensation rests with you, the consumer. Regardless of the method of compensation, advisors have strong incentives to place consumers with strong, financially stable carriers and provide superior service on an ongoing basis.

What should I expect from a professional insurance advisor, and how can I evaluate my current one?

An advisor will guide you through the complex task of choosing appropriate coverage at an affordable cost. The following is what you should expect from a professional insurance agent. Use this checklist to evaluate your current advisor. Your professional insurance advisor should:

1. Work with you to evaluate your needs for insurance coverage.
2. Explain the details of different insurance plans.
3. Make specific recommendations and tailor plans to suit your special needs and budgets.
4. Review your plans periodically to update coverage and limit costs.
5. Serve as your advocate and advisor in dealing with insurance companies, doctors and hospitals, and government agencies involving claims, services and regulations.
6. Help you as a business owner communicate benefits packages to employees and demonstrate how various provisions can complement personal and government financial plans.

