All About Bob!

Meet Robert P. Bisaillon Jr., CIC, CPCU

Bob Bisaillon (pronounced biz oin’) consults, teaches in-house programs, and serves as an educational consultant at CIC institutes and Ruble Seminars. He also conducts faculty development clinics and teaches personal lines subjects for The National Alliance. Bob “semi-retired” as an assistant vice president of The National Alliance in 2001, but continues to travel cross-country and remains a widely recognized personage at Alliance programs.

Prior to joining the Society of CIC and relocating to Austin, Texas, Bob was the director of education for the Professional Insurance Agents of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut for eight years, where he became well acquainted with Bill Hold and other CIC pioneers. Before PIA, he worked 11 years for Merchant’s Mutual Insurance Company in the Albany claims office.

When Bob Bisaillon makes a decision…he sticks to it.

For example:
• He’s been married to Patricia Ann (Pat) Bisaillon for 42 years.
• He has lived in the same home in Austin since he moved there in 1984.
• He has been a CIC faculty member and designee since 1978.
• He’s been a New York Mets fan all his life.
• He’s been a “Mac guy” since 1984.
• He quit smoking in 1988.

Where did you grow up?
I was born in Schenectady and raised in Latham, New York. I was educated at Christian Brothers Academy—a Catholic military school in Albany where I was the designated class clown, and known as “the one with the big mouth.” Christian Brothers was a great school and a great education. Every class began with "At ease, gentlemen!"

Tell us about your family and pets.
Pat and I married in 1966. We met at work, where I was cashier/buyer and she was the bookkeeper. Within a week of our first date we decided to get married. We have two sons, Phillip, 38, and Jacques, 36. Our kids now are our two rescued mixed-breed chihuahuas, Duquesa and Cusco.

What is your proudest achievement?
Our family.

What motto do you live by?
Fun is an important value.

What’s the best advice you’ve ever been given?
Make a decision and stick with it! (See sidebar.)

What do you do when you’re not working?
Play World of Warcraft. I’m a serious gamer. Most people don’t know that about me.
What's the attraction with World of Warcraft?
It’s 70 levels deep, and endless, with about 9 million players. You start with nothing and build a character. It has an economy, and limitless adventure. It's complex but much more relaxing than thinking about insurance.

Any other hobbies?
Reading and cooking. My favorites are Asian and Italian. (See Bob’s family recipe for “working class marinara sauce.”)

What books are on your nightstand?
Three right now: The World is Flat, What Happened, and The Singularity is Near.

Any cooking tips?
When making a stir-fry, the wok can’t be too hot. And always rinse rice before cooking.

Do you like to travel? What are your favorite places?
Yes I love to travel. My favorite places are the high desert—around Phoenix and New Mexico. Also the Northwest—Washington and Oregon. Outside the USA my favorite cities are London and Amsterdam, and we had a great trip to Peru where my daughter-in-law’s family lives.

Please list your “favorite things.”
Movie: “Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid,” and Clint Eastwood westerns.
Musician: Mark Knopfler. He’s a poet. Everyone should have a copy of “Brothers in Arms.”
Artist: Monet and the Impressionists.
Historical figure you’d like to have dinner with: Winston Churchill.

What do you like best about your job?
The independence it allows and the people I meet.

What is the most important thing you do?
Teach. About 80 percent of a program’s success depends on how good the speaker is. If you’re just relying on a great PowerPoint, something’s wrong.

Please finish this sentence: The insurance industry is...
More impersonal than it used to be. It used to revolve more around relationships and now it depends so much on electronics. Insurance by its nature will always be a conservative business because it’s reactionary. Society does stuff. We react. But we won’t insure nuclear.

What three words would you use to describe yourself?
Tenacious, quick, fun-loving.

What three words would others use to describe you?
I had to ask Pat. She said: funny, reliable, family-man.