

COUGHLIN COURIER



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SPECIAL EDITION: Michel Poirier retires A 43-year career at Coughlin comes to a close



A 43-year career with Coughlin & Associates Ltd. came to a close February 18, 2005 with the retirement of its President, Michel Poirier.

Under the leadership of Mr. Poirier, Coughlin & Associates Ltd. was transformed from a small benefits administrator employing fewer than half a dozen people to a national employee benefits consultant and third party administrator with 110 employees in Ottawa and Winnipeg. The company serves clients from coast to coast.

Mr. Poirier joined the company in 1962 as an administration clerk. A year later, he was appointed manager of Coughlin & Associates

Ltd.'s Montreal office, a position he held until 1969. He served in most of the other positions in the company over the years. In 1970, he returned to Ottawa and was appointed operations manager where he was responsible for the functioning of the company's various departments. Later that year, he assumed the role of secretary-treasurer, a position he held until 1978 when he was appointed to the position of vice-president and secretary-treasurer.

He became president of the company in 1984.

Under Mr. Poirier's direction, Coughlin deliberately avoided the "boom-bust" cycle of growth and job creation, favouring a marked but steady growth strategy ranging from five to 15 per cent per year.

For the company's employees, Mr. Poirier's conservative management style resulted in the development of careers, rather than jobs, particularly in the areas of insurance claims assessment, administration, consulting and finance. These careers often require a high degree of education, skill and professionalism that can take years to acquire and refine.

Mr. Poirier set the vision for the development of the Coughlin mission statement and the company's guiding philosophy: to provide *Service Beyond Expectations*[™] in everything the company and its employees do. He believed that by attempting to exceed the expectations of a client or its plan members, a quality circle would be created. Superior service would generate client satisfaction, which, in turn, would lead to client referrals and ultimately, enhanced growth.

That approach continues to this day. Whether it's processing an individual claim or developing benefit programs for large organizations employing thousands, the company's commitment to providing personal and individual service has helped to distinguish Coughlin & Associates Ltd. from other providers or benefits consultants.

In February 2003, Mr. Poirier and the company's senior employees began the transition of ownership to its current executive team including:

- *Vice-President, Ottawa,*
Brian Bockstael;
- *Vice-President, Winnipeg,*
Kirby Watson;
- *Vice-President,*
Mark T. Hogan;
- *Vice-President, Information Technology,*
Brent Moore; and
- *Director, Finance and Operations,*
Ken Kaitola.

At Mr. Poirier's request, his retirement will be celebrated privately, without fanfare.

The management and staff of Coughlin & Associates Ltd. join in wishing Mike great health and happiness as he takes his well-earned leave from the company. ■