



THE BRITISH
INSURANCE
AWARDS
2009
WINNER

the definitive mark of achievement

THE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

David Slade



Ethical with integrity

David Slade has had a rollercoaster of a career, and is as enthusiastic about the general insurance business now as he was when he started in 1961. **Ant Gould** details some of his achievements.

ETHICAL AND full of integrity are two statements that dominated the discussion by the British Insurance Awards' judging panel around this year's Achievement Award and the winner, the head of a successful and forward-thinking independent brokerage, has demonstrated these in spades over the years.

David Slade has not only shown a tireless passion for running his own business, but also for promoting his own region — Birmingham — and the profession of broking as a whole.

Traditional broking

Mr Slade left school at the age of 16 and started his insurance career in 1961 working at Royal Exchange Insurance, before joining Midlands broker Hogg Robinson three years later. After a spell as sales manager at the Birmingham office of Walker Young he then co-founded Perkins Slade in 1970 with David Perkins, with a view to tapping into the large market of industrial and manufacturing companies.

With the pen of insurer Generali, Perkins Slade quickly built up a strong book of business including property, accident, liability and

marine. The two founders of the business eventually split, leaving Mr Slade to focus on traditional broking. In the boom years, from 1983 to 1988, the business grew by almost 800%, an era that Mr Slade looks back on as a "wonderful, wonderful time".

The Broker Academy signalled the dawn of a new era for professional development within the broking industry

SLADE

In 1989, he sold the business to the Birmingham Midshires Building Society, only to buy it back a few years later and grow it both organically and via acquisitions, most notably in Hampshire and the West Country.

In 2003, Mr Slade teamed up with Ron Forrest and bought out the rest of the company's shareholders. During 2008 the firm began takeover talks with Oval but when these collapsed Mr Slade became non-executive chairman of the broker with Nick Tamblin, previously financial director, taking over as managing director.

Running the business has only ever been part of Mr Slade's passion. He has been heavily involved in local community

David Slade, left, with Jo Pendle of ISO.

work, and in relation to broking has been an outspoken advocate of the need for brokers to both display professionalism and to attract young talent.

It came as no surprise then that he became involved in the establishment of the Faculty of Insurance Broking, a market forum for brokers set-up under the umbrella of the Chartered Insurance Institute. It was as chairman of the faculty that he also spearheaded the launch of the Broker Academy, funded and maintained

of the Chamber of Commerce, act as chairman of a Prince's Trust group and be actively involved in Birmingham Forward, which promotes the interests of the city.

Comprehensive knowledge

Now in his 60s he has amassed a comprehensive knowledge of broking and has seen it all first-hand.

From working for national brokers to holding the underwriting pen, to starting his own firm, selling it, then buying it back again, he has had a rollercoaster of a career. Although retirement beckons, he remains as enthusiastic and passionate about the general insurance business as he was in 1961.

And in the present economic climate, with the wider banking and financial services sectors reputation in tatters, the BIA judges felt his ethical credentials serve as a beacon to all of those looking to join the general insurance industry.

by the faculty and the CII, which, in his words, signalled "the dawn of a new era for professional development within the broking industry" and was "the start of something really big".

Mr Slade's extracurricular activities have seen him sit on the board

Winning Words

On accepting his award, David Slade praised the "great industry" of insurance and quipped that, although he had hoped to win Young Achiever of the Year, "this is even better". Speaking just after, Mr Slade said he was "immensely proud" and "very humbled" by being chosen as the recipient of the achievement award. Commenting that the British Insurance Awards is "the cream" of all awards ceremonies, he said: "To be recognised by your peers is a great honour. No one wins without a great team around them and I have been phenomenally lucky to work with all the colleagues I have — both past and present."

Reprinted with permission by Media Revenue Services Limited. Not to be reproduced without authorisation.

