

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact The Institutes:** Steve Ryan  
Director of Communications  
Phone: (610) 644-2100, ext. 7863  
E-mail: [ryan@TheInstitutes.org](mailto:ryan@TheInstitutes.org)

**Contact The Council:** Brianne Mallaghan  
Director of Communications  
Phone: (202) 662-4303  
E-mail: [brianne.mallaghan@ciab.com](mailto:brianne.mallaghan@ciab.com)

**The Council of Insurance Agents & Brokers Partners With  
The Institutes to Offer Online Training for Insurance Brokerage Firms**  
Courses to be launched January 9, 2012

**MALVERN, Pa.**— The Institutes and The Council of Insurance Agents & Brokers (The Council) have joined forces to produce a suite of online training courses designed to meet the unique business needs of insurance agencies and brokerages. The *Essential Business Skills for the Insurance Professional* series of online courses will teach important business basics, consultative sales principles, client relationship and servicing skills, and fundamental management competencies.

The series of six self-study courses – a total of 32 different topics – is designed for those new to the insurance brokerage industry or those who want to refresh their existing skills. Each course features original content developed using Council member firm subject matter experts combined with The Institutes' respected and relevant training material.

*Essentials* will help agencies and brokerages:

- Learn practical selling skills to turn prospects into customers
- Develop business-related interpersonal skills to increase customer satisfaction and retention
- Establish a common business framework that will enhance overall productivity and operational efficiency
- Acclimate the employee to the agent-broker environment
- Reduce lost time and productivity costs with flexible online delivery
- Provide a critical starting point for a lifelong learning career path to help attract and retain talent

*Essential Business Skills for the Insurance Professional* series includes these topics:

- **Course 1:** Overview of the Insurance Industry
- **Course 2:** Building Client Relationships

- **Course 3:** Consultative Selling Skills
- **Course 4:** Management Fundamentals
- **Course 5:** Essential Business Skills
- **Course 6:** Follow-Up Coaching

“We have developed something that allows member firms to hire and develop the next generation of insurance talent and to hire from other industries,” said Ken A. Crerar, president/CEO of The Council. “Talent and skills training was recently identified as one of the top business risks for 2012 and has long been a significant barrier for our member firms during the on-boarding process. This program helps firms eliminate that barrier. It will also serve as a refresher course and get more seasoned staff speaking the same language. Client-relationship building, selling skills and a broad understanding of our industry are important business fundamentals at any level.”

The Institutes and The Council are working together to support, promote and market these online courses. Additional information will be released as it becomes available. *Essential Business Skills for the Insurance Professional* will launch January 9, 2012.

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### **About The Institutes**

The Institutes are the leader in delivering proven knowledge solutions that drive powerful business results for the risk management and property-casualty insurance industry.

The Institutes’ knowledge solutions include the CPCU designation program; associate designation programs in areas such as claims, risk management, underwriting, and reinsurance; introductory and foundation programs; online courses; research; custom solutions; assessment tools; and continuing education (CE) courses for licensed insurance professionals and adjusters through its CEU.com business unit.

### **About The Council**

The Council of Insurance Agents & Brokers is the premier association for the top national, regional and international commercial brokerage firms and agencies in the United States and around the world. Member firms have offices in more than 3,000 locations across 100 countries. Council members place more than \$200 billion in commercial property/casualty and employee benefits premiums worldwide. More than 16 percent of the membership is comprised of firms headquartered outside the United States. Founded in 1913, The Council is based in Washington, D.C.

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