

# ELITE TRAINING FOR LIFE PLANNERS

AIA's 18-month Elite Programme provides its Life Planners a strong foundation in a sustainable career

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THE success and failure of an organisation to achieve its goals is all down to its people.

With that in mind, AIA Bhd rolled out its AIA Elite Academy initiative to nurture promising agents – better known as Life Planners in AIA – with the necessary skill sets and knowledge for them to excel in their careers with the company.

AIA Bhd chief agency distribution officer Leong Chee Soong (*pic above*) shared that the company's vision is to be Malaysians' first choice health, wealth and protection partner.

"In line with that, we need a quality and professional agency on top of a comprehensive range of custom-tailored products.

"However, being an insurance agent is not always a first choice career as people often have misconceptions about the industry, or lack the knowledge and support to make an informed decision.

"As part of our efforts to address this and focus on quality recruitment, we launched the Nurture Premier Agent (NPA) pilot programme last year. The results showed that 929 new recruits who underwent the programme demonstrated two to three times more productivity than the standard new recruits.

"With that, we scaled up and enhanced the programme to continue our recruitment drive, leading to the establishment of the AIA Elite Programme early January this year," he said, adding that there are currently already more than 1,000 recruits on the programme.

The AIA Elite Academy features an exclusive on-boarding programme offered only to new Life Planners who have successfully made the cut after a stringent selection process.

Focusing on financial knowledge and social media marketing, the 18-month customised training also provides the new Life Planners with individual coaching and mentoring



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as well as a financing scheme to help them kickstart a sustainable career with AIA on a firm foundation.

To ensure credibility and transparency, candidates have to go through a strict panel interview.

The chosen ones will begin with a two-week on-boarding process followed by 90 days of product and sales training, before continuing with 15 months of training modules focusing on technical knowledge, financial planning, communication and leadership.

Recruits will also participate in a Sales Builder Study Group – a weekly peer support group which enables them to learn from each other and thrive in a community that cultivates a spirit of collaboration, professionalism and well-being.

"Ultimately, AIA Elite Academy charts out a clear path for the chosen new Life Planners to take according to their career goals and aspirations as it is tailored to their skills and capabilities, building upon their individual strengths and talent," said Leong.

Other than grooming Life Planners, AIA cultivates a strong focus in driving its Life Planners to achieve Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT) status, which is a global, independent association of the world's leading life insurance professionals.

"Our strong focus in MDRT continues to set our Life Planners apart whereby AIA has held the title for having the highest number of MDRT members in the country since 2015, with AIA Group being the number one MDRT company globally.

"Last year, we successfully groomed a total of 502 MDRT members – a 23% increase from the previous year," he said.

At AIA, the roles and duties of Life Planners go beyond just selling a policy but to be a partner in their customers' life journey.

"Living our brand promise in helping people live Healthier, Longer, Better Lives, we want to be there for our customers every day, not just when something unfortunate happens.

"With our AIA Vitality health programme that was launched in 2016, our life planners are empowered to be more than just financial advisors but also health ambassadors.

"Additionally, AIA provides a complete suite of solutions from health, life, takaful, motor, home, corporate solutions, retirement to accident, which provides our Life Planners greater opportunities to meet the needs of their customers," said Leong.

Another area that AIA emphasises is the importance of digital innovation for its Life Planners to ensure their efficiency and productivity is maximised.

Some of its innovations include AIA Life Planner app, AIA Recruiter app, Ask Sara and Interactive Point of Sales (iPos) sales tool, which were among the first in the industry.

"All these factors have contributed to our strong recruitment drive, enabling AIA to build a Premier Agency Force consisting of the best people," concluded Leong.

To date, AIA has a total of 14,000 agency force nationwide.