

February 16, 2009

World Savings employee letter

I worked at World Savings for over 15 years throughout the East Coast. Most recently, my career there ended in October while I was a Vice President and Senior Division Underwriting Manager for several of our Underwriting Centers. I feel truly blessed and fortunate that I began my career with World Savings. It was an organization where integrity came first at all times. The training programs for staff and management were always conducted in a positive and ethical manner which helped World Savings become the most esteemed mortgage company in the industry. I could literally write for hours about the collaborative atmosphere, quality loan reviews, opportunity, and commitment to employees at World, but I simply want to address a few of the comments made by Paul Bishop on 60 Minutes this past Sunday.

Mr. Bishop seemed to take issue with the “Instant Underwriting” events at World. These events were designed, in part, to help bring in loan volume. However, there were other equally significant reasons why we had “Instant Underwriting”. These events were excellent opportunities for our staff (both the origination and underwriting) to help train and educate our broker community together. We had the chance at these events to adequately explain our adverse loan decisions to the broker and listen to their points of view. These events provided outstanding service to the brokers (and ultimately the borrowers) by giving quick answers (not necessarily approvals) to their loans. In addition, these events were also designed to help build lasting relationships with our broker community and among the various departments of staff. In no way was “Instant Underwriting” a means to collect and approve poor quality loans as Mr. Bishop indicates.

Also, Mr. Bishop talks about “loan packaging” as if it was some sort of way to defraud or manipulate the underwriting system. On the contrary, it was a way to help our loan originators and brokers understand what is and is not important in a loan package. Proper loan packaging is essential for any mortgage company. It would cover anything from making sure the loan application is complete with all pertinent information and sections completed to ensuring that the borrowers knew about and understood the loan program prior to submission. These are points obviously overlooked by Mr. Bishop. He indicated on 60 Minutes that reps were told to “package” their loans correctly to “get them by underwriting”. This is simply not true. In many cases, the originators and the brokers went directly to the underwriter, up-front, to help them package the loan. Why would something need to be “packaged” to get by underwriting in a deceitful way if the underwriter was helping to package it? In addition, since World kept all of its loans in its portfolio, it makes no sense whatsoever for Senior Managers to encourage and train loan originators this way.

Perhaps Mr. Bishop took a few examples of brokers and originators who he perceived to be manipulating the system and made a generalization of it for the entire company. This is simply a faulty way to make a judgment. I personally have conducted a countless number of training classes for underwriting staff and origination staff (and have sat through even more). Never once in 15 years did I get (or give) direction to do anything that I deemed inappropriate, unethical, or deceptive. Everything done in my area (Underwriting, Origination, and Appraisal) was done

with the borrower's best interest in mind. In any instance where we found the broker or originator to be fraudulent or deceptive in nature, the relationship was terminated.

I would support and back World Savings and its business practices, training, and quality 100% against any mortgage lender of its time. It is shameful that the media, and especially 60 Minutes, have decided to air such views by individuals who are clearly in no position to provide them with accuracy and truth. I am proud to have worked for World Savings and to have been part of an institution that represented such values and integrity.

Sincerely,

Richard Kirk
World Savings Employee from 1993-2008