Sometimes things don’t turn out the way we expect – but don’t worry. How even tough changes can bring us forward.
Result for
the customer
2017
2.1 Overall result 2017
Everything is new

Time goes by, it trickles away, it moves forward. Evenly and unremittingly – but only as a physical measure. We often experience our lives differently. We feel accelerations, slowdowns and disruptions, rather than an even and unremitting pace. In exciting times, we hardly know how we will get everything done. And then sometimes time seems to stand still and we ask ourselves when it will start moving again. Ultimately, it is the upheavals, the turning points that primarily give our lives direction.

In this issue of the “Result for the Customer” report, we present stories of turning points and upheavals throughout our life cycles – from birth to adulthood to old age. People talk about their moments, about wonderful or awful events, about planned change or change that comes completely out of the blue.

All of these changes, turning points and new beginnings naturally involve uncertainty. We leave our comfort zone and open ourselves up to the new and unknown, often out of necessity and not by choice. As your insurer, Allianz can help you, our customers, bear the financial risks more easily, get back on your feet faster and live your life. Not every turning point is easy – we experience the same thing as a company. For example, when changing our health insurance system in 2017, there were initial backlogs – instead of the planned advantages – in processing customer claims. We quickly mobilized all of our forces to return to providing the best possible service. Changes require energy and strength – but then often become the basis of comprehensive improvement.

We see our customers’ satisfaction as our greatest asset and therefore also regularly measure where we stand in a market comparison. Last year we received a good overall rating of 2.1, but we still have a long way to go toward our goal of consistently inspiring our customers and filling them with enthusiasm.

Member of the Board of Management, Allianz Deutschland AG
Market Management
Contents 2017

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Your rating as a magazine within a magazine

In the middle of “Result for the customer 2017” you can find this year’s “This is how you rated us” section as a separate magazine.

Are you missing this pull-out section? If so, email us at kundenbericht@allianz.de. We’ll be happy to send you your personal copy.
Pregnancy, moving or changing jobs: Everyone has to face new challenges, important decisions, and changes during the course of their lives. Allianz customers reveal their own greatest challenges – and how they coped with them.

Sabrina G., 37, from Mering, Allianz customer since 1997

Dialed 911 just in time
Unable to work, but happy
We lived in the Munich slaughterhouse quarter for five years. It’s not the most elegant part of Munich, but there’s a creative energy about it, with its exciting exhibitions, art auctions, and a very lively bar culture. My husband and I are both designers and already had one child. We wanted a second child, but our flat was too small. We decided to move out of the city to the countryside because it’s less expensive. We found our home in Mering: a bargain, built in 1930, which we would renovate ourselves. Our joy turned fairly quickly to disillusionment though. Moving from the lively city culture to the countryside, far from all the creativity and hip people who know the trends, was really hard for the first year. But now four years later, when I sit out in my backyard, I know what “home” really means.”

Wolfram O., 49, from Wolpertshausen-Rudelsdorf, Allianz customer since 1984

After the Wall came down, the Karaoke boom swept eastward from West Germany. I didn’t even know who Joe Cocker was then, but everyone said that I moved and sang like him. When I impersonated him for the first time, singing one of his songs, everyone went crazy! That’s why I’ve been performing as a Joe Cocker impersonator since the ’90s. I have a cool apartment, a cool car and a Harley. I’m doing really well, but I don’t take all this for granted. A few years ago, I was diagnosed with high blood pressure. One morning I woke up and dialed 911, the emergency call number. I couldn’t even speak. The diagnosis: a stroke. You can’t tell when I step on stage these days. When I had my stroke, I weighed 180 kg, but I’ve lost 50 kg over the last few years. Sometimes I still feel like I’m 30 years old. And my audience seems to notice that, too.”

Peter R., 51, from Berlin, Allianz customer since 1998

After my apprenticeship as a carpenter, I decided against going to university and became a master carpenter instead. But in 2011, a seven-meter-long, 80-kilogram beam hit me on the head. My face was disfigured and I was in a coma for three days. Even today I still have difficulty concentrating and get dizzy easily, but I sold my company and work there on a 450-euro basis. Thanks to my disability and accident insurance, I’m financially secure. I also have more time for voluntary work, for example, in Probationary services, and feel I’m very happy.”

Allianz: Result for the customer 2017
New role

I worked in one industry for more than 20 years, ran the German branch of a US company and was chief representative for a publicly traded company. But I reached a point where I noticed I was no longer wanted there – so I left. My social status dwindled, so did my finances and I realized I had to take control of my life again. In the meantime, I play a lot of sports, have the body of a 40-year-old and manage an environmentally friendly farm. Most importantly, I have the feeling that my main purpose in life has yet to reveal itself.”

Paul S., 62, from Hamburg, Allianz customer since 1984

Suddenly, the car was too small

When we found out we were expecting twins, my first thought was: Dam, the car is too small! And when they told us at the next ultrasound appointment that there would be triplets, I thought – well, is that car I picked out even big enough? Our eldest was two and a half and suddenly it hit me that we would basically double in number: from three family members to six. That meant I had to ask myself a lot of very practical questions. The most troublesome questions were the medical ones that came with a high-risk pregnancy. I once made the mistake of reading online about all the things that could possibly go wrong. That was really scary! A normal pregnancy lasts about 40 weeks. With triplets, it’s considered a successful pregnancy if you get past 30 weeks. We made it to 32 weeks and three days until our three tiny, healthy humans came into the world. Until that time, each ultrasound appointment was extremely stressful and caused our blood pressure to soar. Since the beginning of November, all of them are now home from the hospital. Raising triplets is only manageable with financial support, professional help and friends and relatives. Otherwise, I couldn’t even take a shower, let alone drive to work. We manage with hard work and lack of sleep. What it’s like is that our government doesn’t help a large family like ours much and the bureaucracy makes life even harder. Still, we’re incredibly happy. My most amazing moments are when I stand at the bed where the little ones sleep peacefully. The first thought that often comes to mind is, “Wow, those three were all in my wife’s belly!”

Holger S., 40, from Ulm, Allianz customer since 2001

Hard work for our own home and family

The first time I saw our future apartment I thought – “Oh my God! Nobody can live in that place.” An empty shell, no walls, no plumbing or electricity. We originally meant it as a joke when we asked my now-husband’s grandmother if she would sell the apartment upstairs. At 24, I actually felt too young for such a project. But we really wanted to move in together and stay in our hometown. So, we got to work. Construction took over a year and we did almost everything ourselves. And at some point, our home was finished. Then our daughter was born two and a half years ago. We’re really happy – we’re parents and proud owners of our own apartment.”

Sandra T., 34, from Wald im Schönbuch, Allianz customer since 2004

My wedding band gave me strength for the future

On December 23, 2000, I was officially dead. I was 30 years old and driving to my mother’s house to help decorate the Christmas tree. I crossed a bridge with black ice. The oncoming driver lost control of his BMW and drove right on top of my car. His six-cylinder engine crashed through my passenger side. The gas tank under his engine burst into flames and I was trapped. The only reason I’m still alive today is thanks to two brothers who reached the accident site right after the collision. They pulled me from the burning wreck and extinguished the flames on my body with their jackets. I had a lot of fractures, a punctured lung, liver and spleen, third degree burns on my face, back and thighs. When I woke up from an artificially induced coma after three weeks, my wedding band was dangling above me on a string. The doctors wanted this to be the first thing I saw when I woke up, so it could give me strength on the tough road to recovery. Since that accident, a lot has changed for me. What I realized is that often comes to mind is, “Wow, those three were all in my wife’s belly!”

Verena H., 41, from Gauting, Allianz customer since 2008

Turn your hobby into your profession

When my father passed away two years ago, I sold our consulting firm. I wasn’t confident I could run the firm by myself. I had always been passionate about decorating and interior design, and one of my friends suggested turning this passion into my profession. I visited various interior design expos and kept thinking about it until I opened my own concept store, “Saus & Brause,” in Gauting. For me, the biggest challenge was making all those decisions alone. Which items would sell well? How should I furnish the store? But today, when people come into my store and like all the nice things they find there, it makes me really happy.”

Stefan K., 47, from Gauting, Allianz customer since 1985
In all beginnings dwells a magic force

A sudden turning point in our life generally triggers fear at first. Why? On the trail of a misunderstood concept.

For example, when children move out of the house, parents often focus on the sadness of the perceived loss. Naturally, they keep the large family home and leave the children’s rooms unchanged, ready for them to visit. All those plans and ideas for “when the kids are finally out of the house” seem forgotten at first. Only in hindsight do we recognize that “after” wasn’t so awful after all – or is maybe even better.

Just like with our first love. Year later, the memories still awaken wistful feelings – until you see this person again at your 25th high school reunion, and the reckless heartbreaker has turned into a real bore. “That was lucky,” you think secretly to yourself. In a situation involving change, it’s difficult to let go of what is familiar and comfortable and trust that the “after” will be better. People only recognize what they are losing or giving up, only what is changing. We don’t recognize the opportunities, or the potential happiness.

As every flower fades and all youth departs...
Both positive and negative—turning points are part of life. Even those we would rather avoid are always the start of something new.

We must prepare for parting and leave-taking. Be ready, heart, for parting, new endeavor, Us speeding on to fresh and newer spaces, Blooms in its day and may not last forever. But lifts us stage by stage to wider spaces.

because our emotions are in play, because our degree of concern is much higher and because we ourselves have to change and decide.

It’s clear to most of us, of course, that change is something completely normal. For everybody. Life in and of itself is change and upheaval. We go through development stages that are often unsettled and marked by changes. Many of these changes are planned, even fully anticipated: by the six-year-old boy with a light saber on his Star Wars backpack on the first day of school; by the 17-year-old girl dancing proudly with her father at the graduation ball; from the big white wedding with the romantic Ave Maria being played in the church, all the way to a baptism with a screaming infant surrounded by family. All of these are rituals for undergoing sea changes in our life. And these turning points are planned and accompanied by celebrations.

Finding good in unwelcome events

If you ask your friends about the big turning points in their lives, they will rarely mention high school graduation, their first job or getting married. Those changes are part of life and people consider them as a logical sequence of events. At most, it might be odd if these things hadn’t happened. They’re more likely to mention unplanned, unexpected turning points: a serious accident, an unexpected inheritance, buying property at a bargain price, the loss of a loved one. All of these changes shape us, touch us emotionally and burden us occasionally as well. However, all of these things also offer us — just like planned changes — the opportunity to develop and grow personally.

Which leads us to ask: How much change is the right amount? High school graduation? Of course. Job? Naturally. A car, wedding and two children are also part of the deal. Something more perhaps? Sure, as long as it’s positive. But negative turning points? No thanks. Divorce, job loss, failed home construction project — we would rather not have all that in our life.

No one wants serious accidents, illnesses or life-threatening situations. Nevertheless, we all know that these things are part of life — and that something good can even come from misfortune. There are plenty of examples. Paralympic athlete Markus Rehm, who won a gold medal and set a world record after losing his lower leg, made the best out of the aftermath of his accident. The friend who finally found happiness in his third marriage. Acquaintances who had to change their profession against their choice but now have more time for themselves and their family — and the change enabled them to climb the next rung on the career ladder.

The fact remains: Every turning point is also a beginning and — as Herman Hesse phrased it so poetically — “In all beginnings dwells a magic force for guarding us and helping us to live.” As different as these turning points may be, when they burst into our lives, they all have one thing in common — both the planned and unplanned events — along with the accompanying new beginnings: we need support to get through them. This can be support from family and friends, good medical care, professional advice or financial security. We cannot replace friends and family, but for everything else, we at Allianz want to stand by our customers’ sides.
A twist of fate

Observing birds’ flight paths, reading coffee grounds or tarot cards: people have always tried to read the future. If you are looking for answers, you don’t need a crystal ball, you can just look up some statistics. Major changes in an average lifetime shown in numbers.

While living in Germany ...

... you will know 4.7 people who have been in prison.

... you will say “Auf Wiedersehen!” 108 times because friends, at least temporarily, will move abroad.

... you have a 47% chance of getting cancer ...

... you will lose 0.001 friends due to lightning.

... you will experience 21.7 divorces among your friends.

... you will bequest €305,000 ...

... you’ll have 1.42 children if you are a woman and 1.35 if you are a man.

... you will move 3.4 times.

... you will have 0.04 near-death experiences.

... and will have 18.2 of your acquaintances will declare bankruptcy.

... you will need a blood or plasma transfusion with a 66.7% probability.

... you will have a 1:9 probability of becoming the victim of a pickpocket ...

... you will have a 1:2 probability of you being injured in a traffic accident is

... the possibility of being diagnosed with depression is 18%

... you will know 0.016 lottery millionaires.

... you will get married. ...

... people are declared unemployed every 11 and 7 months.

... the probability of you being injured in a traffic accident is 1:2
Allianz Ergebnis für den Kunden 2017

Bursting onto the scene

Everything is new
Even if you can’t remember it later: Birth is a radical turning point for every infant.

Out of the home

In 2015, only 1.3 percent of newborns in Germany saw the light of day for the first time at home or in a birthing clinic run by midwives: that’s only 9,562 births out of 740,362 total. 730,800 occurred in a hospital.

The upheaval that a child experiences during birth could hardly be more extreme: Softly cradled in its mother’s warm body, gently rocking in the darkness, floating weightlessly in the amniotic fluid, held so carefully in the womb, provided with everything it needs. And then comes the explosion into nothingness. Suddenly this tiny person finds itself in a blindingly bright, cold world, its umbilical cord to its mother is severed and the infant has to breathe on its own. In my experience, there are also perfectly healthy children who come into the world without a sound. Triggered by the moro reflex, a startle and stretch reflex arising from a sense of falling and a lack of feeling cocooned, the baby cries for its mother. When still connected and nourished through the umbilical cord, the infant has a gentler transition to managing its own circulation as well as breathing on its own. That’s important for stabilizing its breathing. For example, premature infants need artificial respiration for an additional week on average if the umbilical cord is cut after 90 seconds following birth.

Nature prepares every woman well for pregnancy and birth. The womb grows from the size of an egg to that of a basketball, from 60 to around 1,000 grams. For nine months, it’s the perfect elastic home for the baby and then powerfully brings the child into the world. From an evolutionary biological perspective, the mother’s body induces birth – after a mutual preparation period – because it would be dangerous and risk the preservation of the species if the infant could determine when it is born. All mammals seek out the safest and quietest location for giving birth. They need protection for themselves and their offspring. Once they’ve found a suitable spot, the time has come: it’s the same with humans – and it is, by the way, one of the reasons women often go into labor at night.

Once they arrive at the hospital, the contractions often stop – relaxation and quiet are in short supply. Things only start moving again when those conditions are restored. The most important job of the father-to-be and the midwife is to provide the best possible service: The father becomes the butler and the midwife, a chambermaid in service to the queen, the mother. It should be as comfortable as possible for her. When she reaches the end of her strength, that’s when the baby is born.

And even though labor, which can last a good 15 hours with a woman’s first child, is extremely hard work for the body. A baby can only enter the world when the mother is relaxed. And she is relaxed when she’s tired: When she says she can’t do anything more, then it’s often time. Shortly afterwards, she gets to hold her baby – and her child has experienced the first turning point of its life. It recognizes its mother’s voice and feels a bit safer again in this strange new world.

One turning point we all have behind us is birth. Well-prepared by nature, the life of a newborn changes radically – thanks to a true feat of strength by its mother.

Stephanie Struthmann has been a midwife for 25 years and has helped deliver over 3,000 babies.

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for the last few months, a small child who cannot feed itself yet has
been sitting at the breakfast table, especially when you spoon three or
four jars of strawberries in apple sauce into its wide, toothless mouth,
as it sweeps coffee cups off the table with its waving arms and fills
its diaper as its head turns bright red while the others all eat toast and jam.

“You’re disgusting and mean,” says Antje quietly. “How can you write
something so repulsive about a small child!?” “I love all kids. But I also love
my sleep.” “Sleep?” asks Antje, looking off into the distance with her red-
rimmed eyes and thinking out loud. “What’s sleep?” I go to the bookshelf and
take down a dictionary. “Schlaf, Johannes,” I read aloud, noting that “Schlaf”
means “sleep” in German. “A German writer born in Querfurt, 1882, died in
1941, also in Querfurt. Invented sequential naturalism together with A. Holz
under the shared pseudonym of Bjørne Peter Holmsen. Had nervous break-
downs, spent time in various sanitariums.” With my last ounce of strength, I
try to put the dictionary back on the shelf. “Nervous breakdown, sanitarium,”
repeats Antje, “holmsen, holmsen all night long, no waking up, hearing noth-
ing for 24 hours and holmsening the whole night through, not waking up.”

“Why won’t the baby sleep? Won’t sleep? Won’t sleep?” Did the pacifier fall out
of its mouth? Therapy for fennel tea? Or is it highly intelligent? Highly intelli-
gent children sleep very little, just two hours and 45 minutes a night. They
don’t need any more, I read it in the newspaper. This is how they finish off
their parents. I’m stupid, I have to sleep a lot. Antje is also stupid, also has to
sleep a lot. Probably the kid has known for some time now that it has appall-
ingly dumb parents and is torturing them in its fury: waking people repeat-
edly as soon as they reach the deep sleep phase and begin dreaming. At
some point you will never be able to sleep again, you’ve forgotten how. Or if
you do sleep, you have nightmares about never sleeping again.

Argue with Antje over breakfast about who is more tired. Me: Got up at
eleven and midnight and two and three, awful. Antje: Yeah, but you didn’t
hear what happened at 10:30, 11:30, 1:30 and 3:30. It was so much worse!
Me (sometimes I lie and say that I didn’t sleep at all, even though I did sleep,
just so I don’t look so bad): But I had so much work to do yesterday, so I was tired beforehand.
Antje: You sat around to find yourself and realize your full potential all day long, while I take care
of the kids. That makes a person far more tired. Me: Finding yourself also makes a person very
tired, you underestimate it. Antje, smiling deri-
sively: Do you want to trade?

Thus begins the day. My sleep deficit is cur-
rently at 421 hours. Add 3 percent interest and
that comes out to 433.63 hours. Write it down
because I want it all back once that cute little
rascal in the highchair is older.

Over the years, the sleep deficit grew by a few
hundred more hours. Axel Hacke is still waiting
to cash in the balance.

Everyone
is awake

Author: Axel Hacke

Nothing changes life so much
as having a small child in
the house. Germany’s most famous
columnist tells what it was like
for him: above all, sleep deprived.

Axel Hacke

No one manages to
impart such luster to
the little events of
everyday life as Axel
Hacke. Born in 1956,
the journalist has written
many bestsellers.

Text first published in “Der kleine Erziehungsberater”
(The Little Counselor) (1991)
Little devils

During puberty, an angel turns into a nasty pain in the neck very quickly. A small consolation: It’s their brains’ fault.

Radical neural cleanup

During the first years of our life, the brain grows rapidly and creates many more neural connections than it needs. During puberty, the brain undergoes a radical cleanup effort. Neural connections that are often used remain intact, while all the others are pruned. A new insulating sheath increases the conduction speed in the nerves to around 360 kilometers per hour. Once this process is finished by the early 20s, the brain has reached its best-possible thinking speed. By the way, it’s one reason why professional computer gamers often reach their peak performance in their early 20s, because their reaction speed declines after that,” says Beck, a neurobiologist. While the speed of thought increases, adolescents lose other abilities – professional memory games, for example, are part of childhood when the brain can still process information without bias. And the opportunity to learn a second native language disappears with puberty.

“Through all of this reorganization, the brain seems to finally establish the conditions that experts believe to be puberty’s main purpose. Children break away from their parents’ cosmos and create their own world. For that reason, parents should not just stand there bewildered when their little angels develop into arguative, raging creatures. “Adults are not at the mercy of the biological agenda going on in their children’s brains,” says Laube, a human development researcher. The extent to which adolescents become more aggressive, uninhibited or impulsive also depends on their social environment. So the following applies: Adolescents can’t do anything about it. The adults can. At least a little bit.

FACTS

120 billion nerve cells are connected with each other during puberty

100 milliliters of blood flows through each 100 grams of a child’s brain mass. In adults, it’s only 50 milliliters.

The cerebral cortex shrinks, which enables them to think more efficiently

It’s no fun for the rest of the family when pubescent adolescents ignore the rules, develop risky behaviors and discover drugs and alcohol for themselves. What’s more, they’re chronically unbalanced and in a bad mood. “Maybe it’s easier for us to understand this unpredictable behavior if we know what’s happening in their brains,” says Laube. “During adolescence, a child’s brain works very hard and gets completely reorganized.” Individual areas of the brain grow, others shrink, neural connections are pruned. The adolescent body is flooded with hormones. Biochemistry produces obvious results: Girls grow breasts, boys get broad shoulders and deep voices. Scientists still don’t understand all the details about what happens in the body during this time. But new findings about brain reorganization are improving the explanations we have for adolescent behavior. “The most important reorganization phases occur in the cerebral cortex, which grows during this time and gets thicker before shrinking again, enabling the brain to operate more efficiently,” says neurobiologist Henning Beck, who aims to improve laypeople’s understanding of the brain in presentations, books and workshops. “This brain growth dynamic also explains the different pubertal developments: The brain regions mature at different speeds, which can lead to imbalances within this process.” In other words: it’s not the adolescents’ fault.

The scene was captured in Hamburg-Eppendorf. For an outsider, this emotional roller coaster is difficult to comprehend. The beautician plucked three hairs too many from her right eyebrow? So what! But Corinna Laube is not surprised by these kinds of outbursts. “Children are extremely emotional during this time,” says the psychologist from the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin. When she says “this time,” Laube means puberty – the crucial transitional phase from childhood to adulthood that brings many changes for everyone involved.

The girl wasn’t robbed and wasn’t in a car accident either – she went to a beauty salon to have her eyebrows plucked. The beautician plucked way too much, my eyebrows will never grow back …” She sobs desperately while her friends put their hands on her shoulders and show their sympathy with bowed heads.

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Suddenly possessed

Adolescents are awful. They rage, try drugs, push the limits and rebel against their parents. But it isn’t their fault. It’s their brains’ fault.

FACTS

100 milliliters of blood flows through each 100 grams of a child’s brain mass. In adults, it’s only 50 milliliters.
One of the most defining turning points in life is the moment when we realize we're no longer kids – and we're not young people anymore either. Six memories of that moment.

**Insight in the desert**
I sat there with a friend in the desert of Morocco – two men, two off-road vehicles, one great adventure. I gave myself the trip as a 50th birthday present, and also to escape all the hubbub surrounding a milestone birthday. Some people might call it a midlife crisis, but I just thought, damn, I've grown up.

**Late certainty**
I thought I was grown up when I went off to university. But it wasn't until 17 years later when I looked into the eyes of my newborn son that I knew: I really am now.

**Salad instead of beer**
Four years ago, I took a salad to my best friend's birthday party instead of beer. Back then, I wondered if that made me old, but looking back now I realize I was just grown up.

**Becoming a man with a hammer**
Sure, moving away from home into a shared apartment was an important step. But the first time I felt really grown up was when I walked out of the hardware store carrying my very first toolbox.

**Recognition in hindsight**
It was shortly after I moved away from home. I didn't move out of my parents' house on the best of terms, and once I was in my own place I realized how great my parents really were, and still are. Recognizing this made me grow up.

**My rules**
My moment was more of a process. I've had supervisory responsibilities since my early 30s, and noticed more and more that I was quoting important people from my youth and apprenticeship – my mother and master craftsmen. I thought a lot about it and realized that I wasn't doing it because I had heard their 'rules' so often when I was younger, but because I understood them – and they had become my rules, too.

**Elke L., 49, from Geseke**
Allianz customer since 2005

**Christoph N., 50, from Munich**
Allianz customer since 2009

**Frank S., 37, from Berlin**
Allianz customer since 2010

**Sebastian F., 33, from Munich**
Allianz customer since 2010

**Christian C., 38, from Berlin**
Allianz customer since 2008

**Roland W., 43, from Munich**
Allianz customer since 2017

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**as in Adult**

One of the most defining turning points in life is the moment when we realize we’re no longer kids – and we’re not young people anymore either. Six memories of that moment.
Fail with a smile

Professional failure is celebrated at Fuckup Nights. Because failures are just as important as triumphs – and you actually learn a great deal more when things don’t go smoothly.

Walter wants to be this penguin? He takes a few waddling steps across the slippery ice and then his penguin colleagues shove him in the icy water with a decisive slap of their flippers. Yannick Kwak plays this short video over and over while the audience laughs: waddle, shove, splash, laughter. “I love this video,” he says and plays it again. The film illustrates what his presentation addresses as one of the most common causes for business failure: aggravation with business partners.

Talking about failure and freeing yourself from the supposed stigma of failure is what “Fuckup Nights” are all about. There are currently 159 of them being held worldwide. That’s why 1,000 people have gathered this evening in the Audimax at the Goethe University in Frankfurt. Students, entrepreneurs and wannabe entrepreneurs fill the auditorium. They want to hear stories about defeats, laugh with the defeated, learn from it and gather the courage for their own new undertakings. “Talking about it openly can only do Germany’s startup culture good,” says Elena, the evening’s moderator. Because failure is taboo in Germany — unlike in the US, where failure is practically celebrated in Silicon Valley and considered something you can learn from, as well as an important developmental step toward success. That’s also why large companies keep sending employees and trainees to Fuckup Nights. Frankfurt hosts one of the largest meetings in Europe, says

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Nhan Vu was successful with his business idea, but his partners wanted to get rid of him. He stepped down and learned the lesson of starting a business only with people who have similar values.

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There are now around 160 Fuckup Nights worldwide. They originated in the startup scene, and are attracting large companies that want to change their culture of failure.
Allianz: Result for the customer 2017

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1

Yannick Kwik
is the busy founder and CEO of international
Fuckup Night movement.

2

Oli Dobisch
was a police officer,
entrepreneur, owner, singer,
founder and now trainer
as a motivational trainer.

3

Laughter helps
us get over many failures.
And it gives us the
energy to start over.

Kwik. He has wanted to stop by for some time now. The American is now head of the worldwide Fuckup network, which originated in Mexico.

Three men will tell their story on this day. Three stories that approach the very limits of pain. There's Pascal Lauria, whose pizza delivery service for the mobile Internet failed 20 years ago— and only because he was ahead of his time. Mobile Internet was still in its infancy back then, and the business only lasted a few months. The now-successful entrepreneur is still paying off the debt from that venture. "Even if it sounds contradictory at first, a total crash like that can restore your faith in people," says Lauria. "Help usually comes from the most unexpected places."

Then Oli Dobisch stepped up. With his big sideburns and black T-shirt, he looks like a slender version of rock star Lemmy Kilmister. He's a colorful character—and not just here among business people. He says he never would've dreamed that he, with his high school diploma, would ever be allowed to speak at a university, and then talk about failure. Everyone laughs. He was a police officer, then a nightclub owner, then a singer in a hard rock band. He's happy as an artist, but doesn't make any money. He drowned the resulting bankruptcy in alcohol. He almost drank himself to death. He only managed to break the cycle with the help of his girlfriend. These days the two of them tour successfully with their band. Dobisch is also on the road as a comedian and motivational trainer. Today he knows that an artist also needs to be a businessperson. "You always need to have enough money for rent and health insurance at least," he says.

Like Lauria, Dobisch gets sympathetic applause. It seems no one in the audience today is here out of voyeurism. Some of them have failed themselves, although few of them were hit as hard as Dobisch. The rule here: Anyone who talks openly about their experience can expect respect and recognition.

The most important thing: depart with composure

Then Nhan Vu steps up. Blue business shirt under his hoodie, his head practically shaved. Vu is only 36 years old, but can talk directly about his failure like no other this evening. His fuckup was only three months ago. Vu is a programmer and has worked in the IT scene in his homeland of Vietnam for the last four years. He had an idea as an employee of a reduced printing company: software that you can use to create programs for companies without actually having to write code. He and a developer worked on the program in the evenings after work. That went on for months. When the first version was finished, his days as an employee were numbered. Vu and his programmer invited the printing company boss to be the third board member and got started. It was turbulent for Vu; industry trade shows, acquiring customers—all new experiences for him. The initial successes came and after many hard months, Vu took a vacation with his wife and two small children for the first time. When he got home and checked his emails, a message was waiting for him: the business partners wanted to meet with him. At the meeting, they said outright that they no longer wanted him there. He was just all over the map. Vu didn't engage in discussions. Within 24 hours, he packed his things and told employees that he was stepping down.

You could say that Vu is the penguin that got shoved into the cold water in this story. But he sees it differently. He doesn't want to complain about his business partners; he says. He believes that everyone made mistakes. "Why didn't we argue openly?" he asks today. That was the main mistake. The lesson he learned: "You can only work together with partners who have the same values." Someone in the audience asks why he left without resisting. After all, there were no grounds for throwing him out. "No," says Vu, the company would have blocked it. "The product and the employees didn't deserve that."

Vu just learned that his former partners made a deal worth millions. And that doesn't make him bitter either, he says bravely. There is applause and praise on Twitter for this attitude: "A departure with composure." This evening, Vu appears as though a burden has been lifted. Long afterward, people from the audience stand around him, asking questions, offering him their business cards. The most important thing is to deal with failure openly, says Vu at the end of his presentation. He has new projects now, hoping for the next big thing. He also works as a consultant—for startups, naturally.

“A total crash like that can restore your faith in people.”
Pascal Lauria
Allianz and Infarm could hardly be more different as businesses: The first is one of the world’s largest insurance companies that was founded in 1890 to turn the risks of others into a business model. The second is a startup that began revolutionizing urban produce supply in 2013.

Heinemann: Many hip young Berliners enjoy urban farming as a hobby, but you operate it as a business. Can you explain how that works?

Michaeli: We’re bringing agriculture into the city. We give our customers, primarily supermarkets and restaurants, the opportunity to offer their customers and guests super-fresh organic herbs, lettuce and vegetables — without using pesticides or packaging, 100 percent from the region, and with the shortest possible distance to the consumer.

Bernd Heinemann: I just picked a couple of leaves of your Thai basil and tasted it. It’s really delicious, very intense!

Osnat Michaeli: I’m glad. You just described our most important goal: Customers should be excited about the flavor, they should be able to tell immediately how fresh our products are.
92% of people feel it is important or very important to eat healthy food.

“Addressing a real need at the right time can trigger a revolution.”

Bernd Heinemann

Heinemann: It sounds like a lot of effort. Is it expensive for customers?

Michaeli: We cost about the same as organic produce. We don’t even have some typical costs. After all, our “field” is right where the consumer is – so there’s no need for transportation. Our vision is to revolutionize urban produce supply and reduce the supply chains in the produce market to a minimum.

Heinemann: What motivated you to turn your vision into a business?

Michaeli: My cofounders Guy and Erez and I had the dream of being as self-sufficient as possible. That isn’t easy for city kids like us. Guy studied Chinese medicine and worked as a cook, while Erez and I come from the film industry. Together we developed a solution that brings us closer to self-sufficiency.

Heinemann: You’re from Israel. What brought you to Berlin?

Michaeli: There’s no need for this kind of project in Israel: Everything grows outside and is sold locally. In Berlin, the fruit comes from Spain or Italy. In addition, Berlin is startup-friendly and people are open to new ideas.

Heinemann: I find it fascinating. If you meet a latent need for people, it can become a really big thing. It was the same thing with insurance back in the late 1800s. It wasn’t nearly as widespread as today. Addressing a real need at the right time can trigger a revolution. The origins of Allianz were shaped by growth and innovation. During that process, it was especially important to find out two things: What exactly does the customer need and how can we make a marketable product out of it?

Michaeli: As a new company, we’re also seeing how essential it is to be close to our customers. We always develop products in direct contact with customers. Do you need that, does it taste good? When I think back to our first attempts at home in our living room … the question, “Will anybody want this?” kept coming up.

Heinemann: It makes sense that you sought out large partners to help you grow. We do the exact opposite. We work together with small, innovative partners or acquire shares in them. These can also be insurance startups.
“Our vision is to revolutionize urban produce supply.”

Osnat Michaeli

Michaeli: So you work with companies that are technically competitors?

Heinemann: In a connected world, new partnerships are simply a necessity. Some innovations cannot be achieved alone. Your collaboration with Metro is a great example. Both sides benefit: You gain from the distribution channels and financial strength of a large partner and they gain from your ideas and approach. What exactly does your collaboration with Metro look like?

Michaeli: We manage our growing equipment at Metro ourselves. One of our employees takes care of the plants and technology regularly. He picks the ripe products and packages them for sale. Metro pays us a fee for that. And we get feedback right away on what works well.

Heinemann: What’s special about your greenhouse?

Michaeli: We grow primarily lettuce and herbs, including types that you couldn’t normally buy in the supermarket, like the Thai basil you tried before, for example. We imitate nature’s processes to do that: We adjust our box temperatures, light and nutrients specifically to meet our plants’ needs, and it’s highly efficient thanks to LEDs and dripper technology. We use 90 percent less water. And our LEDs enable us to customize the lighting for each individual plant’s sunlight requirements—we can set conditions ranging from sunny to cloudy. That consumes 40 percent less energy while increasing plant growth by 50 percent.

Heinemann: Phenomenal how relentlessly technology and algorithms are taking hold in every type of business—even in an herb garden.

Michaeli: We wouldn’t exist without technology. We can capture all kinds of data from ambient humidity and light levels in the greenhouses to the size, shape and color of the plants. From all that, we can determine the optimal lighting for leaf growth, for example. Every parameter is important and we evaluate each one.

Heinemann: In the insurance industry, we have historically built on data and algorithms, especially in the area of risk assessment. Meanwhile, data has become crucial for the entire value chain—in customer interactions, marketing and many other areas. Even at the core, in risk modeling, data has become increasingly important.

Startups

The German Startup Monitor describes startups as having three specific characteristics:

- less than 10 years old
- have highly innovative technology or business model
- significant growth in workforce and/or revenue

Michaeli: Our vision is to revolutionize urban produce supply.
Michaeli: Can you give me an example?

Heinemann: Sure, the telematic rates from Allianz auto insurance: Speed, acceleration, braking and steering behavior — all that is captured via a telematics app and displayed to the driver. If the app demonstrates to him and us that he drives safely and doesn’t speed, he gets a portion of his premium back.

Michaeli: The penetration of every business area by data and algorithms, your new partners, the digital customers – all this must lead to changes in your company culture. Is that an issue for you? It certainly worries us a great deal. We’re growing fast, but at the same time we’re trying to retain our creativity. That isn’t easy.

Heinemann: Today, more than ever, regardless of the size of a business, a culture of change and transformation is crucial for long-term success. We’re increasingly operating in small teams and have implemented agile work methods. In the end, the important thing is to see change as a new beginning and a way to shape the future.
Many radical changes only become visible when we compare the past with the present. This also applies to places where we spend most of our waking hours – our workplaces. And yet, not that much has really changed. See for yourself.
All together ...
We have long since accepted an innovation from the 1960s as completely normal: the open plan office. A big open space that can be divided up and used in almost unlimited ways. The difference in our time comes from changes to work equipment and in breaking up uniformity.

... and everyone for themselves
No doubt about it: Nothing has changed desk work as much as the computer. Not just from a technical perspective: Much has changed from a social viewpoint as well. Headphones create an individual workspace at least acoustically – right in the middle of the open office. Today, people are meant to feel good in offices. Sometimes a dog helps, too.
One thing after another…
The automotive industry is simply the best model for complex products in high volumes. The assembly line helped increase productivity – at the price of monotonous work.

... automated, please
The production steps are more or less the same, but robots are increasingly the ones performing them. Today, machines often execute complicated procedures while humans step back from physical work and supervise.
The human being in focus...
Electric lights and gas from pressurized cylinders – there wasn’t much more technology than that in operating rooms in the 1960s. The rest was manual labor: human beings working on human beings. Machines could not take over highly complex individual tasks or provide meaningful assistance.

...surrounded by technology
The fundamental principle is the same – but everything else has changed in the operating room. Digitalization puts what was hidden from view in the past onto a monitor in real time. Surgeons are supported by surgical robots, while computers monitor the patients.
Even though diesel and electric locomotives were becoming more common in the 1960s, Deutsche Bahn Railways kept steam locomotives in service until 1977. The field of vision in the engine’s cab was dominated by countless gauges, valves and set-screws. The view ahead was limited, and it was hard physical labor.

In a modern high-speed train, the view forward is clearer and the physical work is far less challenging. The technology, by contrast, is similarly complex — even if it is digital instead of mechanical and hidden behind monitors and just a few switches.
Gone to the dogs

Actually, Yvonne Hofschneider had it all: money, a career, a secure future. Despite all that, she decided to pursue a new life - with a husky racing team in Norway. The story of a radical change.

She gets up earlier now than she did in her old life. It’s still dark outside except during the short summers. Sometimes she can already hear the dogs. She used to reach for her BlackBerry to answer the first emails waiting impatiently for an answer. Here her first thought goes to the thermometer and the question of whether or not she should put on another pair of socks. After slipping into her clothes, she opens the door and air colder than ice chills her face. Yvonne Hofschneider then takes a deep breath through her scarf and walks out into her new life. Her pack is already waiting for her.

Self-actualization, freedom, escaping the rat race – this dream runs through millions of minds every day then set aside when everything starts over the next day: an eternal sometime-I-really-should fantasy that brings a little color into our gray everyday lives. A daydream as a substitute and consolation. That wasn’t enough for Hofschneider. She made her dream a reality - in Norway, at -30° in winter, on the runners of a dogsled - as a dog handler for a husky racing team.

Changing what bothers you can be very simple

Hofschneider had it all, so to speak: a well-paying job with tangible prospects for a brilliant career, a great apartment in Munich-Bogenhausen, a stable relationship. She gave it all up in 2014 and turned her back on her old life. The reason for this radical step was really very simple: What she had was not what she wanted. So she set about changing that. “It’s all really obvious,” she says.

However, the road to this “obvious” goal was a long, cautious approach, moving step-by-step to the big decision. It actually started back in Hofschneider’s childhood.
She was born in Berlin in 1984 and later moved to Thüringen with her parents. The German Shepherd was always there – until they had to give him away because her father had to go away on business for a long period of time. “I cried almost every day for six months.” Until one day her dad comes home with Rex, a German Shepherd-mix puppy. When Hofschneider moves back to Berlin to attend university, Rex stays in Thüringen due to a lack of space. “But the desire to have a dog was always there.” That desire never left her. She studies law and passes her exams with top grades. Hofschneider wants to be a judge, but realizes that the work at the public prosecutor’s office doesn’t keep her busy. She already has experience in a law firm and is used to a much faster pace. She finishes her daily workload in a few hours, then has nothing left to do. “I couldn’t imagine having to kill time every day,” she says – and quits her job. And that shows for the first time the radical approach Hofschneider takes to facing existential questions: If the conditions aren’t the way she envisions them, then she will seek out different conditions. Even if that means completely giving up her life plans. At some point, it was clear: “I want to go.” She writes to the husky farm: Yes, they’re interested. She quits her job: Yes, she’s really serious. She gives up her apartment: Yes, she’s really moving to Äkäskero, Finland. Naturally, she has to explain herself. “No one understood why someone would want to give all that up just to pet dogs.” No one understood, especially her colleagues. Her parents have enough empathy to understand what is going on with their daughter, and her friends can somehow comprehend her decision, too. But every time she visits Germany, her former boss still offers her a job. “He probably just can’t understand it,” Hofschneider says. She reenters the private sector with her old employer in Munich at one of Europe’s leading commercial law firms. Instead of traffic law cases crossing her desk, she now has corruption and tax evasion cases. She is paid well, much more than in public service. “But,” she says, “money was never important to me.” She has trouble settling in. She hardly ever sees the courtroom anymore, and court days are what she likes most about her profession. And she still doesn’t have room in her life for a dog, a big dog, because that’s the only kind that she will consider. “That kind of dog can’t be in an office all day long.” Hofschneider is right in the middle of her life, but somehow she’s also outside it. That’s where Scandinavia comes in. She had vacationed a couple of times in Finland on sled tours. That’s where she recharged: spending the entire day with dogs. Finally she realizes that life in the Arctic Circle is more than just a vacation experience that can sustain her through her regular everyday life. It’s an alternative. This doesn’t happen overnight. “It percolated inside me for a while,” she says. Even when she openly confronts the idea, she doesn’t rush into anything. She talks with the people at the vacation farm about the possibility of working there. She discusses it with her parents and her boyfriend, too. She doesn’t go easy on herself: She comes from a blue-collar family and was the first to go to university. Is she really going to give all that up? It’s difficult, her conscience plagues her. But she battles her way through. At some point, it was clear: “I want to go.” She writes to the husky farm: Yes, they’re interested. She quits her job: Yes, she’s really serious. She gives up her apartment: Yes, she’s really moving to Äkäskero, Finland. Naturally, she has to explain herself. “No one understood why someone would want to give all that up just to pet dogs.” No one understood, especially her colleagues. Her parents have enough empathy to understand what is going on with their daughter, and her friends can somehow comprehend her decision, too. But every time she visits Germany, her former boss still offers her a job. “He probably just can’t understand it,” Hofschneider says.
Allianz: Result for the customer 2017

She says. “Something like this doesn’t even exist in his world.” Eventually all the conversations have been had, all the preparations are made, and now the time has come. Hofschneider starts her new life in the autumn of 2014.

The cold is the toughest part. She’s outside all day long with the dogs, so her hands and feet are always freezing cold. Otherwise, everything is finally as it should be. She pays a high price for it: her relationship falls apart, the couple’s life plans no longer align—and add to that the long distance. At least work helps, and there is plenty of work: Hofschneider is a guide for tourists, helps manage the place and is starting to gain experience as a dog handler with the farm’s husky team.

A job where you lose money

And in 2017, when there’s a change in management in Äkäskero and her friends leave, she moves on. This time to Grimsbu in Norway, a village deep in the backcountry near a river and a country road surrounded by forested mountain ranges. No more tourists, just dogs, because here she will be delving deep into the Scandinavian husky racing scene. It’s a strange sport, one that few spectators or TV broadcasts know about. The races are 600, 1,000 kilometers long or even longer and they last several days—there are very few opportunities to set up fan zones. Most of the time the drivers are all alone on their sleds. They meet up with competitors and dog handlers at the checkpoints when they take a break to give their dogs a rest. Dog handlers are responsible for everything in a racing stable except for the actual racing. They are the racing crew, they train the dogs, drive dozens of kilometers with them every day, rear them, teach them the commands. They feed them, raise them, play with them. Hofschneider takes care of 47 huskies—puppies, the actual racing dogs, and old dogs that cannot pull the sled anymore. The days are long, “as long as in a large law firm.” Sometimes longer. She is outside in all weathers—and, above all, it’s voluntary work. It pays room and board, nothing more. Everything else, clothes, equipment, she has to pay for herself—and that costs a pretty penny. Hofschneider has a job that makes her poorer every month. That’s not really a fair description, she thinks. “I pay to be able to help someone realize her dream.” But that’s how the sport works and she won’t change it. Is that bit crazy? Yes, probably, she says, but that’s not what’s important. What’s important is doing what you want to do. That’s what counts. She has never regretted her decision.

It only looks courageous in hindsight

And only when looking back in hindsight does she understand why others thought her step was radical or courageous. She herself never thought in those terms: “For me it was perfectly clear.” Hofschneider doesn’t divide her life into a before and after. Both things, law and huskies, belong together for her. Her career was bad, not at all.” But if she talks about herself these days, it’s always with the intention of highlighting that there are alternatives. “So people see that there is more than just one straight path.”

Returning to Germany isn’t in the cards for her, she says. Of course she still visits her parents and friends, but now she feels like a stranger in her old homeland. Life up here is more real, and she met her new love here as well—a Swiss man who moved here for the same reasons she did. Both of them realize “that we can’t afford to do this job forever.” But giving up life with the dogs is out of the question. Having their own husky farm, now that would really be something. Offering tours that put the dogs’ needs first, not chasing experiences with tourists who only want to be on a sled for a few hours. Both of them know that it’s difficult, that they would need capital. Capital that they are currently consuming every single day while they continue to be dog handlers. “That does worry us,” says Hofschneider.

The fact that she nevertheless stays calm and optimistic likely has plenty to do with the self-confidence required to take a path as winding as Hofschneider’s has been. She knows that whatever may come, in the end it will be something that she can say yes to. Something that she really wants, because anything else would just be another stop along the way. At least for someone like her.
Boris Grundl tosses his words at the audience like balls. “If you concentrate on what you can change,” he calls out in the rapt silence, “then you adopt an attitude that people love, that colleagues love and that your partners love.”

On this fall day, Grundl is the keynote speaker at the Dell EMC Forum, which the IT company has invited its customers and partners to attend. “The magic of change” flickers across the screen behind him. The fact that his presentation is not about IT doesn’t bother anyone. The audience is glued to their seats in the big hall at the Messe Frankfurt Center. They hold their smartphones up and take pictures of the presentation.

Grundl – black pants, light blue shirt, scarcely noticeable Swabian dialect – speaks with an intensity that makes people forget that he can barely move. He’s in a wheelchair.

Grundl is one of Germany’s most successful coaches and speakers. For over 15 years, he has advised and inspired managers at companies both big and small, helping them concentrate on the essentials so they can continue to develop and grow. He’s in demand because he knows what he’s talking about when he speaks of change and life-altering turning points. After all, he experienced one himself.

1990, he’s 25 years old, and Grundl has everything that you could want at this age. The physical education student plays semi-pro tennis, is a sought-after coach. He’s a charmer and, yes, a golden boy. Whatever he tries works out. His life at this time is like a highway in the late morning – no traffic, plenty of sun, a free ride. Until 3 December 1990. Grundl is on vacation with a friend. They’re driving from California to Mexico and make a stop in Puerto Vallarta: Cliff diving! No problem, thinks Grundl to himself. After all, he recently served in the paratrooper squad – earning a distinction.

He slowly works his way forward, and jumps from halfway up first – “Pretty cool!” At some point he climbs all the way up to the top. Once there, standing on slippery rocks 10 meters above the water, he thinks he hears a little voice saying: “Boris, don’t do it.” He ignores it. You have to fight your way through fear, he thinks. And jumps.

“From today’s perspective, it was completely senseless of me to ignore my intuition,” he says now, describing the moment. “But back then I thought I was immortal.” As soon as he hits the water, he notices that...
something isn’t right. He dives in, but instead of swimming to the surface, the 25-year-old athlete, the soldier, the invincible one, sinks like a stone. “It was as though my body betrayed me. I thought, That can’t be right – I’m immortal, I can do anything,” he recalls.

His friend pulls him out of the water. On the beach, Grundl’s entire body feels like it has gone numb. Spinal column, he knows right away. “After 20 seconds I knew that I would spend my life in a wheelchair.” A boat brings him from the beach to a nearby hospital. The diagnosis: neck sprained, seventh cervical vertebra broken, muscles up to 90 percent paralyzed. An emergency surgery is performed to set a brace that should stabilize his spine, then a Red Cross plane brings him back home to Germany.

Three hours to get dressed

Grundl lies there like that for close to four weeks before he can move into a normal bed. He has to relearn how to do just about everything: He practices how to sit up by himself, hold a fork, works with a speech therapist to learn how to speak again after paralysis of the recurrent nerve. He slowly makes progress. When his right thumb twitches again for the first time, it holds a moment that would change everything.

The athletic young man, the tennis player, the winner seems to have disappeared – loneliness is all that’s left. Self-pity and doubt roll over him, and again and again, the question emerges: What is his life worth now? Once he asks one of the nurses just to sit next to him and hold his hand until he falls asleep. “During that time I often just concentrated on breathing to help clear my mind.”

Three hours to get dressed

Grundl finds himself in a hospital bed again – in a body that no longer feels like it’s his own. His neck is clamped in a brace, cut off from any sort of movement. Every few hours he’s turned mechanically from lying on his back to his stomach, stomach to back, so he doesn’t get bed sores.

He says there were only two views for him during this time: floor and ceiling, nothing else. His new situation threatens to overwhelm him.

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After nine months, Grundl is able to leave the hospital. He moves back to Cologne and finds an apartment in a project for differently abled seniors, families and people. Once there, he’s starts fighting his way back into life, one bit at a time. He has to deal with setbacks again and again. The first time he goes shopping, he realizes that he will have to get used to needing more time than other people to do the simplest things. When he’s at the cash register with the “pedestrians” waiting behind him, he gets so nervous that he drops everything. Getting up in the morning, getting dressed and going shopping rob him of all his energy in the beginning. Afterward he’s usually so tired that he needs to lie back down.

He depends on public assistance during this time. “We’ll have to see where we can find you a job,” they tell him at the employment office. “That was brutal, I almost broke down because of it,” recalls Grundl. Looking back, that’s his moment of awakening.

FACTS

Four out of five accidents happen during leisure time. Breakdown of accident types:

- Leisure time accident
- Accident at home
- While shopping
- At school or work
- Commuting accident

Grundl at age 25: Golden boy

Grundl at age 44: and paralyzed

Grundl at age 63: and millionaire

Grundl: “I thought, That can’t be right – I’m immortal, I can do anything.”

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He doesn’t want to be taken care of anymore, and decides to find a job for himself. After nine months, he goes back to his old university faculty, he wants to finish his degree. Since he can’t play tennis anymore, he adds a minor in psychology. But he uses his expertise nonetheless: For his thesis project, he performs the first systematic analysis of wheelchair tennis and, according to him, becomes the first severely paralyzed person in a wheelchair to earn a degree in sports science in Germany.

“Back then I was just so focused on this goal. These days I would say, ‘Man, you’re crazy,’” says Grundl on this afternoon in Frankfurt. Then he becomes serious. “If you’re down so far, there are only two possibilities: Either you surrender to your self-pity, or you do something about it. Pulling yourself together is the only thing that counts.” Fresh out of university, Grundl finds a job at a company that makes rehab products. Instead of being on public assistance, he earns management wages now. He purchases three lots next to his parents’ house and starts building – a bungalow, of course: “I am not too fond of multi-stories,” he says and laughs.

**Teaching as the meaning of life** He also finds his way back to sports. He starts playing wheelchair tennis, becomes the German champion. He stops playing fairly quickly despite that: “It didn’t satisfy me the way it did before my accident – it was just nicer when I was on two legs.” He starts looking for a new sport for himself and finds wheelchair rugby. And since he pursues that with the same energy as everything else, it only takes two years before he becomes a national player and then the best European player. In 2000, he flew to Sydney to represent Germany in the Paralympics. He’s invited into the sports studio – not because he can play, but because he can speak well, he says. However, Grundl discovers his true calling elsewhere. In his search for meaning, for a reason to exist, he finds teaching. He gave seminars regularly when he was a product manager. When he comes back from Australia, he decides to earn his money this way exclusively. In 2001, he starts his own business as a coach and seminar facilitator. “I was already good as a tennis instructor, and I realized that my true talent wasn’t really playing tennis, it was teaching.”

Since then, 16 years have passed. These days Grundl is a highly paid speaker and coach in Germany. He has written several books and heads up a leadership academy with 15 employees. But there’s more: There are his wife and two grown children, whom he helped raise. There is his Porsche 911 Turbo S, which he drives himself. There is also the fact that he doesn’t need assistance. Moreover, it stands by your side with advice and resource from the very first second – regardless of when and where the accident happened. An occupational disability and long-term care policy can be a meaningful supplement, particularly when dealing with long-term consequences.

**Either you sink into self-pity, or you do something.**
In late January 1959, rock legend Buddy Holly is fed up: The logistics of his Winter Dance Party tour are a catastrophe. Not only does the tour bus not have heating – and it’s -30° outside – he’s run out of clean laundry. So he charters a small private plane to have enough time to wash his laundry at the next tour stop. On 3 February, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper board the plane that is supposed to take them to North Dakota. The three stars never arrive: The plane crashes in a snowstorm. That day became sadly well-known as “the day the music died” – all because of a few pairs of underwear.

Washing can be deadly

In late January 1959, rock legend Buddy Holly is fed up: The logistics of his Winter Dance Party tour are a catastrophe. Not only does the tour bus not have heating – and it’s -30° outside – he’s run out of clean laundry. So he charters a small private plane to have enough time to wash his laundry at the next tour stop. On 3 February, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper board the plane that is supposed to take them to North Dakota. The three stars never arrive: The plane crashes in a snowstorm. That day became sadly well-known as “the day the music died” – all because of a few pairs of underwear.

A slow-healing saber wound from the American Civil War gets pharmacist John Pemberton addicted to morphine. To fight his dependence, he starts looking for an antidote and fiddles around with all sorts of substances, including cocaine and wine. But in the end, he leaves out the alcohol and carbonates his product because carbon dioxide was thought to be healthy back then. He markets it in 1886. He calls it Coca-Cola.

A death and a stroke of luck

It’s the end of 1241, and Mongolian commander Batu Khan is on the verge of conquering Europe: The Golden Horde has already reached the Adriatic, and between them and the Atlantic there is nothing that can stop them. But then, on 11 December, Ögedei Khan dies back home. Batu Khan must return to Mongolia to pay last respects to the ruler. The Mongolians withdraw, and Europe is saved.

The last one out please close the door

In 1453, Sultan Mehmed II laid siege to the city of Constantinople for 53 days when coincidence came to his aid. His troops noticed someone forgot to close a small gate to the fortress. The Osmans invaded through the gateway and hoisted their flags on the segment of wall, unleashing panic among the defenders and leading to the fall of the city. Once electric light became widespread, the end of the day shifted because, unlike candles, it can actually extend the day. And so our biorhythms lose out – to this day.

Night becomes day

People who wake up in the middle of the night and are suddenly wide awake don’t have a sleep disorder – they’re just following a habit thousands of years old. Up until the mid-19th century, it was completely normal to get up during the night for a few hours to do things by candlelight and then go back to sleep. Once electric light became widespread, the end of the day shifted because, unlike candles, it can actually extend the day. And so our biorhythms lose out – to this day.

No place in the sun

Witch hunts are a result of religious zeal? Not quite. They’re primarily the result of bad weather. During the “Little Ice Age” (15th to 19th centuries), average temperatures declined noticeably all over the world. This was especially severe between 1570 and 1630: Summers were cold and wet, and winters long and harsh. One harvest failed after another. Food was scarce, and epidemics spread. Witch hunts in Europe reached manic proportions precisely during this time – people needed scapegoats for the endless misery. And belief in witches offered such scapegoats. Thousands died just because summer was a long time coming.

All in one boat

In the 1930s, Andrew Higgins was just a small shipyard owner with a predilection for swearwords. Ten years later, he ensures that Germany and Japan lose World War II. He builds a boat that changes everything: it renders harbors unnecessary. It has a ramp in its bow, so it can drop troops directly on the beach. The landing in Normandy? Not possible without Higgins. Nor island hopping in the Pacific. Hitler calls him the “new Noah;” Eisenhower honors him as the man “who won the war for us.” And although the number of casualties from the Western Allies’ invasions was high, the Higgins boat saves thousands of lives because it enables fast landing and deployment. To this day, the Higgins boat is the only piece of US military equipment that bears the name of its inventor.
The comfort of happy memories

Getting old brings gradual changes along with it. Hardly perceptible from one day to the next – and yet so fundamental that we have to give up more and more of the life we’re used to.

A visit with an elderly woman.

Her favorite place is by the window with a view of the playground at the kindergarten next door. “It’s always fun to watch the munchkins when they’re out playing,” says Therese Huber, smiling. The playground is under the big beech tree across from the Kreszentia-Stift nursing home in Munich. The 91-year-old has lived here for a good 12 years. Not of her own volition, but not against her will either. She received an unpleasant letter 12 years ago: a termination notice for her apartment because the landlord needed it for his own use. “The tenants association told me I had very little chance of finding an affordable new apartment. Most landlords prefer younger renters,” she says without resentment. So she was glad an acquaintance from her church had set up a viewing appointment for her at the Kreszentia-Stift without asking her first. The home is only about four kilometers from her old apartment, and Therese Huber liked the idea of going into a nursing home run by nuns. The senior citizen grew up close to Scheyern Benedictine Abbey in Upper Bavaria. Being close to the church was and still is important to her.

Life as she knew it got left behind

For Huber, moving into her new home meant starting to say goodbye to her independence. She left behind more than just the majority of her furniture and many mementos. Above all she lost a significant portion of her independence with the move. Just recently she was running her household on her own, went shopping regularly, cooked for herself – and if she cooked a little extra, then for her neighbors, too. She cleaned, did her laundry. Her home was always spotless. No wonder – housework shaped a major portion of her life: As a building caretaker in Munich’s ritzy Königinstraße area, she didn’t limit herself to cleaning the stairwell and ensuring that the building and garden stayed in good shape. Since the mid-1950s, she worked more as a jack-of-all-trades in the big villa that was occupied by four renters after post-WWII reconstruction. Looking back on it now, she considers this one of the best times of her life, even though there was always a lot to do – the residents had high standards, as befitted the location. She cooked for the guests, served meals, cleaned and took care of the building’s equipment. She even took care of the students – to whom the owner rented a room in the building superintendent’s apartment – like a mother. Huber lived mostly happily with her husband and daughter in the semi-basement apartment. The residents’ little cares and hardships were in good hands with her – whether it was one renter’s worries about her cancer diagnosis or a lady’s secret visits to another renter.

Her life was a lot quieter when she retired and moved into a small one-bedroom apartment in Munich-Maxvorstadt. But without a job to do Therese Huber liked to work, for her family and for others. But in old age, the work and the need both fade. Just like her whole life.

www.allianzdeutschland.de/kundenbericht

Author: Christian Merten  Photography: Markus Burke

Getting old brings gradual changes along with it. Hardly perceptible from one day to the next – and yet so fundamental that we have to give up more and more of the life we’re used to. A visit with an elderly woman.

* Name changed by the editors
having nothing left to do except run her own household wasn’t enough for her in the early 1990s. So she helped out at the butcher shop next door: accepting deliveries in the wee hours of the morning, frying burger patties before lunchtime – called “Fleischpflanzerl” by Bavarian locals. And on weekends she baked a cake for the butcher’s family. She didn’t get bored. She was still needed. And even though her daughter lived further away, at least she had a substitute family of sorts – and was a substitute granny for the butcher’s children.

The tasks start to dwindle

But moving into the nursing home changed all that out of necessity. She left her substitute family and work behind. At 79, she didn’t feel the need anymore to work for other people. Yet she would have liked to continue doing her own housework. But single rooms with a bathroom at the Kreszentia-Stift aren’t set up that way. A bed and nightstand, a small table, three chairs, a small shelf with a TV, refrigerator, armchair and armoire are all that fit in the 20-square-meter room. There’s no space for a kitchenette. And even if there was, it wouldn’t be allowed: even burning a candle is prohibited in the rooms for safety reasons. Now if you want to set the mood, you have to use LED lights shaped like candles.

“It was really good that I moved here,” says Huber. She thoroughly appreciates the conveniences of the all-round care at the retirement home. These days it would be difficult for her to stand at the stove for long. And until six months ago, she was one of the few there who still washed her own laundry. Now she’s glad someone else is doing it for her. But she’s not truly happy about it: Food from the big kitchen is never the same as home-cooked. And the laundry doesn’t smell quite the way she likes it to. To say nothing of the ironing – it’s never done the way she did it for herself. “But it doesn’t matter,” she says with good humor. “The main thing is that everything is taken care of. And I’m well cared for.”

She lost another piece of independence a few months ago. Therese Huber was never good on her feet, because she contracted polio when she was a year old. So she never really learned to run, but she could certainly walk on her own. She started using a cane to help her feel secure when she got older. At the Kreszentia-Stift, it wasn’t long before she needed a walker to get around safely. Now she prefers to be pushed in a wheelchair. Just last spring, all she really needed was moral support when she went shopping for goodies at the nearby supermarket. Now she doesn’t dare to go the few hundred meters to the store.

More and more from her old life is disappearing. Her own household isn’t the only thing she’s lost. Technological progress doesn’t make it any easier for her to take part in major developments. For example, it was a big challenge when her old tube TV died three years ago and her daughter gave her a new flat screen TV: What was she supposed to do with all those buttons on the remote control? Why can’t she just switch...
4.5 million people will need care in the year 2050. Of those, 60% of the men and 70% of the women will be 85 years old or older.

When it comes to prevention, it’s never too early and never too late. When can we – when should we – take action? Mental and social activity can at least delay the onset. We shouldn’t indulge the illusion that we can prevent dementia. But it certainly doesn’t hurt to do more.

Professor Kurz, the saying goes: He who rests, rusts. How much truth is in that statement? It’s true for both our physical as well as mental condition. So what role does being challenged play? Challenged is good, overwhelmed is not. Taking on new tasks keeps us young. As we age, our physical and mental abilities decline slowly, but steadily. What can we do to counter that? Get moderate but regular exercise starting in middle age. Physically, that means doing 40 minutes of aerobic activity three times a week. That means your pulse and breathing are elevated, and it’s difficult to sing while doing it. I don’t have quantitative recommendations for cognitive activity, but it’s certainly good to focus on intellectually challenging things several times a week. It doesn’t matter what: play computer games or a musical instrument, learn a new language, paint, do sudoku puzzles, play bridge. Just don’t watch TV. By the way: Athletic activity has a positive effect on the brain similar to medications. So there’s no reason not to engage in regular athletic activity as a supplement. Social activity is also important. Talking and sharing with others, doing something together, interacting with people can also counter aging. But we shouldn’t indulge the illusion that we can prevent dementia this way. However, the studies all indicate that physical, mental and social activity can at least delay the onset.

When can we – when should we – take action? When it comes to prevention, it’s never too early and never too late.
Final resting place: While cemeteries are reporting increased vacancies, other forms of burial are booming—such as burial forests.

Professor Fischer, are cemeteries obsolete?
Well, not quite, but there’s competition now. Cremation and urn burials as well as natural interment in a burial forest are two rising trends. In other countries, water burials in lakes, rivers and the ocean are becoming more popular, as are mountain burials.

Where do these trends come from?
In the past, the clergy had more influence on burials. Today, with so many people no longer affiliated with a church, this is no longer the case. In metropolitan areas such as Hamburg, more than half of burials are not religious. In rural, predominantly Catholic areas, the clerical liturgies are still dominant. The traditional elements of a funeral, such as speeches, music or certain songs are still maintained, although the content is more individualized these days. Now it’s more popular to play the deceased’s favorite songs and more people give funeral speeches.

What’s behind this development?
Today’s society is marked by individualization. Familial structures and social institutions, such as the church or trade associations, are losing significance, whereas mobility and voluntary organizations for sports, leisure and culture are becoming more important. This creates more flexible social structures. So, cemeteries with their strong ties to church and family have lost their singular importance as the site for grief and remembrance.

How is this changing cemeteries?
There’s financial pressure since they’re receiving fewer fees. Since tens of thousands of people are being cremated, cemetery managers are having to deal with excess space. They still need to maintain their grounds, which is typically taken care of through fees. They’re reacting to this trend by offering alternative burial forms, such as burial forests within cemeteries.

Other European countries offer many more possibilities for natural burials, as well as for aerial burials or cremation memorial diamonds.

Why is this different in Germany?
In Germany, burials are still subject to state law and are highly bureaucratic. In this country, community and church cemetery organizations are still so powerful and well-positioned that in 2003, they were able to block the proposed repeal of the requirement to bury the dead in a cemetery in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. However, in Bremen, as of January 2015, you can now have your ashes buried in your front yard or scattered in designated areas. So far, less than 100 people have taken advantage of this option.

How we deal with death is changing: It’s becoming more individual, but also more public and digital.
A conversation about being buried with pets, diamond burials and the desire for dignity.
When referring to persons in general, we have used the masculine form this document for reasons of readability. However, all persons are always spoken to in their feminine form in this document for reasons of politeness. When referring to persons in general, we have used references to persons in general.

The French historian Philippe Ariès noted in the 1970s that death seems to have disappeared from daily life in industrial countries over the last half century. Why aren't people dying at home anymore?

First, you need to define what a dignified funeral is and what it should cost, although dignity is not linked to cost.

In certain countries, people can now be buried with their pet, but this is still strictly regulated. The animal must be cremated before the owner's death and can be added to the grave when the owner dies. This is in response to the pet cemeteries that have been sprouting up like mushrooms locally. Local governments are hoping this will help them win back clientele.

What else is new about how we deal with death?

Digital grieving is new. We've noticed that people grieve for quite a long time in their Facebook profiles and in many different ways. Social media somehow causes us to show more emotion and display our grief more publicly. Beyond that, we see that grief is entering the public realm more.

Besides crosses on road signs as early examples, we're seeing expressions of grief for private individuals in public spaces more often. For example, for crime victims, we see more makeshift memorials with candles and condolence cards than we used to.

The importance of healthy food:

When referring to persons in general, we have used references to persons in general.

The concept of a dignified funeral is a lengthy historic development that goes hand-in-hand with the institutionalization of illness, dying, and death. Since the advent of hospitals in the 18th century, they increasingly became the place where people died, and more recently, retirement homes have joined this trend. In Germany, 70 to 80 percent of deaths occur in such institutions. This is due to growing professionalization of nursing care and medical progress on one hand, and with the loosening of family ties across generations on the other.

What does responsible preparation for your own death involve in this day and age?

You should have a living will and care directives. Moreover, you should specify who will cover the cost of the funeral, of course. Many funeral homes offer optional services such as a savings account. I think it's important to tell family members how you would like to be buried, too.

A funeral is expensive, and death benefits have been phased out. How can less affluent households even afford a dignified funeral?

First, you need to define what a dignified funeral is and what it should cost, although dignity is not linked to cost.

In certain countries, people can now be buried with their pet, but this is still strictly regulated. The animal must be cremated before the owner's death and can be added to the grave when the owner dies. This is in response to the pet cemeteries that have been sprouting up like mushrooms locally. Local governments are hoping this will help them win back clientele.
We place customers at the center of everything we do

The Board of Management Allianz Deutschland AG

Masthead

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Result for the customer 2017

This is how you rated us
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Masthead
Our goal: to delight our customers!

Overall satisfaction with Allianz improved slightly in 2017 and is above the market average. But we are still a long way from reaching our goal.

What we want
We want to address all these needs. And our customers are not only satisfied, but also enthusiastic. What does that mean? We want to exceed our customers’ expectations to such an extent that they give us the highest mark in terms of satisfaction and actively recommend us to friends and acquaintances.

Where we stand
We measure exactly where we are positioned in the market, both in terms of satisfaction and recommendations. When it comes to satisfaction, we use a public study to create the greatest possible transparency. In 2017, we performed slightly better than the market, as shown in chart 1.3. This is gratifying because customer satisfaction is the currency in which we measure our performance.

The willingness to recommend others is also very important. On the one hand, it is a very good indicator of high satisfaction, after all, we only recommend things that we are really convinced about. On the other hand, a high willingness to recommend our business to others strengthens our business. We therefore measure them against more than 60 different customer experiences – from consulting to claims settlement. Individual examples are shown in graph 1.2.

Our customers are exceptionally satisfied with most of our contact points. On a referral scale from 0 to 10, they often give us a 9 or 10, in technical jargon, such customers are called promoters; detractors are customers who rate between 0 and 6. The corresponding index, the “Net Promoter Score” (NPS), is derived as follows: Proportion of promoters – Percentage of detractors = Net Promoter Score.

On a scale from –100 to +100, our NPS reaches an average value of +56 over our 60 contact points, but these values were collated following a concrete contact with Allianz. If one asks customers, on the other hand, one special feature of the insurance business is that they often have little contact with customers, and so there is no concrete experience with Allianz in the recent past. However, the longer ago the positive experience, the less often people give a recommendation. The Net Promoter Score then drops quickly to the negative. It is therefore important for us to improve relevant positive contacts.

What we do
This is why Allianz initiated numerous programs and measures in 2017, such as optimizing our handling processes, revising our written communication and providing online services to our customers. Last but not least, since 2016 we have also had a Chief Customer Officer (CCO) who takes care of our customers and their satisfaction on a full-time basis. He is responsible for quality control from the customer’s point of view and thus plays a central role in product and service development: The CCO thoroughly tests products before they reach the market and also examines our processes from the point of view of our main person, our customer. We are only at the beginning of our journey of improvement and still have a lot we want to achieve.
Allianz in figures

Overview of our customers, agents and employees as well as the solutions we offer.

20.4 million

customers

2.05 policies

A private customer has on average

98.5% of customers live within 10 km of their nearest Allianz agent

City 45.53%

Urban space 25.86%

Country 28.61%

6,339,728 60 years and older

7,305,571 40–59 years

4,172,018 20–39 years

727,276 0–19 years

Age information if available

67% employees with customer contact

6,000 brokers and independent sales partners

2,246 branches of banking partners

26,789

employees

49.38% female

50.62% male

17.2 years average length of service

49.38% female

50.62% male

8,337 general and main agents

1,008 trainees

March Most common month of birth

Sabine Most common first names

and Michael for both sexes

Müller

Corporate customers 1.9 million

March Most common month of birth

Sabine Most common first names

and Thomas for both sexes

Müller

Trainees 1,008
Solutions
So that we can meet our customers' needs as well as possible, we offer a variety of insurances from all areas.

Health insurance
- Travel
- Private comprehensive health insurance
- Supplementary health insurance
- Nursing care insurance

Non-life and accident insurance
- Personal liability insurance
- Pet owner liability insurance
- Domestic liability
- Household contents insurance
- Joint household contents and domestic liability
- Legal insurance
- Home insurance / contents insurance
- (not homeowners insurance)
- Vehicle insurance
- Animal health insurance
- Accident insurance
- Art insurance – ArtPrivat

Life insurance
- Private pension provision
- Survivorship provision
- Income / nursing care provision
- Child insurance
- Wealth
- Company pension scheme

Benefits
Selected facts about benefits and claims for our customers

Health
- 350,875 reimbursed dental cleaning sessions
- €118 million premium reimbursements
- 137,206 reimbursed visual aids
- 27 invoices in Chinese characters
- 1.3 million reimbursed massages

Health is our most important asset. This applies around the globe. Allianz’s health insurance services are correspondingly diverse.

For decades, customers have been providing life insurance policies to ensure that they and their relatives are well provided for during and after their working life and that misfortunes are cushioned financially.

Non-life and accident insurance
- €220.7 million for storm-damaged property
- €67.8 million for hail damage
- €8.5 million for damage to mobile phones
- €67.8 million for damage to vehicles
- €13.9 million for bicycle thefts
- €18.9 million for damage to glass
- €1.8 million for bicycle thefts

The smartphone has become an expensive companion. And nature shows its power in many a storm. Many damage risks lurk in everyday life.
Background and details

Every year in "Result for the customer," we publish how satisfied our customers were with us in the customer-relevant areas of products, advice, service, communication and claims.

PRODUCTS

Overall rating in 2017 2.1

2015 — 2.1
2016 — 2.2

The quality of our products is the basis for the satisfaction and trust of our customers. This is why we see to consistent customer orientation at all stages of product development. In this way, we ensure that we meet changing needs with our new and enhanced offers. In addition, the role of Chief Customer Officer has been established – he keeps an eye on customer needs and, together with Allianz customers, checks the products before they are launched on the market. In 2017, the numerous positive product ratings for life, health and non-life insurance confirmed that we are on the right track.

Allianz's financial strength is of great importance to our product range. This strength enables optimal solutions and gives our customers security. The current company ratings show that this pays off.

3.1.1 / Customer satisfaction

The question “How satisfied are you overall with the insurance product you have at Allianz?” was answered by more than 46 % of the customers with "very satisfied" and by 22 % with "completely satisfied." This can also be seen from the score of 2.1, which we could keep relatively constant over the last three years.

3.1.2 / Selected corporate and product ratings (as of 31 December 2017*)

Allianz’s range of products enables me to have insurance that is tailored to my very personal life situation.”

Fabian Bacheler, 23, Allianz customer since birth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPANY RATINGS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
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<tr>
<td>FIV – Institut für Vorsorge und Pensionsplanung, life insurance rating: company quality</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan &amp; Morgan, life insurance company rating</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morgan &amp; Morgan, stress test</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Europe’s financially strongest life insurer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus-Money, Finanztest</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3.1.4 / Allianz Private Krankenversicherungs-AG (APKV): Financial strength as a competitive factor

High net interest rates and a high valuation reserve ratio are indicators of a company’s successful capital investment strategy. APKV’s net interest rate lies significantly above the return of 10-year federal bonds and the inflation rate. APKV’s valuation reserve ratio has been clearly above the market average for years. An above-average “provision for premium refunds” (German acronym: RfB) allows APKV to pay out high premium refunds and to stabilize premiums as customers get older. High RfB reserves will also make funds available for premium-reducing measures and premium refunds.

### 3.1.5 / Reimbursement rate for health insurance claims

As before, we reimburse, without deductions, 92 percent of submitted receipts. In about four percent of cases, there is a deduction on the submitted claims are not insured due to respective contractual agreements.

### 3.1.6 / Speed of reimbursement for health insurance claims

At the end of 2017, delays in the processing of contracts and benefits by Allianz Krankenversicherung unfortunately led to longer waiting times for reimbursement. The reason for this was the conversion of the IT system, in which a total of more than 2 million contracts, over 300 million bookings and around 30 million cases of reimbursement have been transferred to a new system since summer 2017.

#### 3.1.7 / Customer-oriented product development

Allianz’s product development follows a clearly defined process in which all company functions involved are systematically included at an early stage. It is our aim to develop future-oriented and innovative products with the greatest possible customer focus. For this reason, customer requirements are obtained from potential customers in various phases by means of customer tests and taken into account in product design. Our launched products are continuously checked and further developed. The regulatory requirements of the Insurance Distribution Directive (IDD) of the EU are taken into account in the entire process as soon as they come into force.

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**Source:** Statistisches Bundesamt

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**Source:** Bundesbank, WX3950

**Source:** Statistisches Bundesamt

***Graph refers to the Klassik pension plan concept

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**Source:** Statistisches Bundesamt

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**Source:** Statistisches Bundesamt

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**Source:** Allianz Deutschland

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**Source:** Allianz Deutschland
The German Insurance Association (GDV) reformed the Code of Practice for the sale of insurance products to private customers in 2013. The Code now places a greater focus on the quality of advice, sales and service. The overview shows how Allianz implemented the requirements in the GDV Code. The suitability and effectiveness of measures taken were confirmed in 2016 by auditing firm PwC.

### 3.2.1 / Customer satisfaction

Positive customer feedback regarding our advisory services also went up in 2017. With an overall score of 2.1, we were able to further improve upon previous years. More than 60 percent of customers are “completely satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the advisory services provided by their Allianz advisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Year 2015—2016: 2.2

- **1.4%** completely satisfied
- **11%** very satisfied
- **36.6%** satisfied
- **32.1%** less satisfied
- **15.9%** disappointed

#### Year 2016—2017: 2.1

- **1.5%** completely satisfied
- **16%** very satisfied
- **36.5%** satisfied
- **40.7%** less satisfied
- **14.3%** disappointed

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### 3.2.2 / Code of Practice for Quality in Sales

The new “Code of Practice and Guidelines for Quality in Sales” (Pro3) was launched in 2011. It aims to improve the quality of advice, sales and service. The code is designed to ensure that brokers and Allianz agents provide comprehensive information about the products they sell and provide accurate advice, and that the customer's interests are taken into account. The assessment, described as “Customer satisfaction,” is based on customer feedback surveys conducted by the auditing company PwC.

### 01 Clear and comprehensive insurance products

The comprehensibility of Allianz products and all documents is continuously checked by quality assurance. Allianz agents are trained to provide comprehensive information materials and to explain the products in such a manner that customers can understand them. This creates transparency and trust.

### 02 The focus is on customers’ needs

The Allianz agent will identify, analyse and assess a customer’s needs. To do this, agents have access to the latest analytical tools and consulting and rating calculation tools of the Pro3 system. Providing sound advice is also part of the sales management.

### 03 Adhering to compliance guidelines

In 2011, Allianz published an in-house code of practice for its agents as well as brokers. Allianz also monitors compliance with these provisions pertaining to anti-corruption and anti-money laundering measures, as well as data privacy violations and anti-competitive behavior.

### 04 Consulting documents upon signing a contract

Every time Allianz agents sign an agreement, they document the customer’s consent at the consultation meeting. The detailed report contains all key components of the consulting service, making it transparent and verifiable.

### 05 Advising the customer after the contract is signed

Allianz agents shall continue to advise the customer after an insurance contract has been signed, such as in the case of claim or benefit. The advice the agents give is solely based on the customer’s interest in new circumstances.

### 06 Taking into account the customer’s interests in regard to solicitation and coverage adjustments

For existing insurance policies, Allianz agents can adjust coverage by means of an amendment given by the IHK (Chamber of Commerce and Industry). The new “Gut beraten” continuing education initiative ensures, through a point system, that these individuals receive additional professional training on a regular basis.

### 07 Specific credentials of agents, brokers and advisors

Allianz agents and brokers who work with Allianz are required to notify customers when first meeting them about their status as intermediaries. Agents carry an official Allianz business card and are trained to provide comprehensive information materials and to explain the products in such a manner that customers can understand them. This creates transparency and trust.

### 08 The value of a highly qualified broker

Agents and brokers have passed their initial training by means of an examination given by the IHK (Chamber of Commerce and Industry). The new “Gut beraten” continuing education initiative ensures, through a point system, that these individuals receive additional professional training on a regular basis.

### 09 Additional compensation received from insurance brokers

Sales-related agreements between Allianz and independent brokers are negotiated in such a way that customers are not put at a disadvantage or influenced by such arrangements.

### 10 Note regarding the Ombudsman system

Allianz ensures that it responds fully, correctly and in a timely manner to every complaint as part of the complaints management process. Agents may refer to the independent Ombudsman (Insurance Ombudsman) who can make decisions about complaints involving up to €10,000 without taking the matter to court.

---

### To see PwC’s complete audit report, please go to:

- www.gdv.de/resource/00a56976b53139/00a56976b53939/9369bcf74d3b507edd22515d9351102e/allianz-beratungs--und-vertriebs--ag-pro3-funktionsbericht--1212446064-data.pdf

---

For me, the relationship of trust with my agency is very important. There I feel well looked after and understood.”

Marie-Lena Urban, 32, Allianz customer since 2010
S

simple and easy-to-understand documents, more communication by telephone, and the continuous optimization of our internal processes – this was the focus of our work last year, and it has enabled us to improve more than 140 customer issues, from the filing of applications to the payment of benefits.

It is particularly important for customers in contact with us that an employee takes care of customers’ concerns from start to finish. It is exactly this desire for continuous support that we have followed.

### Willingness to recommend to others in the service area

Each year, Allianz conducts more than 200,000 customer interviews to measure satisfaction and customers’ willingness to recommend its products and services. The chart shows the results for eight service events compared to the last 3 years.

#### Continuous improvement

We systematically check completed customer requests for processing quality. In 2017, we developed and implemented improvements in more than 400,000 cases in all divisions and operating units.

**400,963**

tested cases with the aim of continuous quality improvement.

---

**I think it’s great that Allianz’s client advisors take their time to answer my questions in an easy-to-understand and competent manner.**

Gökhan Koc, 23, Allianz customer since 2017
I find 'Meine Allianz' practical, because the paperwork has come to an end, thanks to the online portal, and all documents can be viewed online!

Stefan Sigmund, 36, Allianz customer since 2008

COMMUNICATION
Overall rating in 2017

3.4.1 Customer satisfaction

The graphic shows the development of the results in the area of information and advertising letters. Unfortunately, we have not been able to improve in the last three years, as the score of 2.6 in comparison with the last three years shows. Nevertheless, just under 30% of customers can answer the question with "very satisfied" and 10% with "completely satisfied."

3.4.2 Communication as self-service

One example of the changes in the communication behavior of Allianz customers is the success of "Allianz hilft." (Allianz helps). This forum answers customer questions, reaching many readers. If the answers are easy to understand, further contact with the customer is usually no longer necessary.

3.4.3 Communication channels

The communication needs of our customers are changing and present us with new challenges. Where just a few years ago a letter was the means of choice, our customers now prefer to contact us by telephone, email or other digital channels. We accompany our customers and prospective customers, prepare content to suit the respective situation and the preferred channels and thus create satisfactory customer experiences.
The way in which we, as an insurance company, process claims and settle them through payment is one of the key quality criteria for our customers. Fortunately, the year 2017 was spared very large loss events, such as floods, even though many medium and large storms – primarily in northeastern Germany – caused damage, especially to buildings. The front-running storms were Paul in June and Xavier in October.

In addition to cash benefits, services for our customers are becoming increasingly important in the event of a claim. Allianz Tradesmen Service takes over the complete damage management on site and takes care of repair work from start to finish. At the beginning of July, we were also needed on site after the G20 summit in Hamburg. We were able to assess the sometimes-dramatic damage to cars and buildings very quickly and help our customers.

More and more often we are also available digitally for customers. For example, our customers used the Allianz Schaden-Assistent (Claims Assistant) app for car insurance 13,381 times to photograph and evaluate damage.

### Claim Processing

#### Claims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># Average</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Time Required from Creation of Claim File to First Payment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(business days in %)</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 1 business day</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 2 – 5 business days</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 6 – 10 business days</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 11 – 20 business days</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 21 – 30 business days</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 31 – 50 business days</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 51 – 75 business days</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 &gt; 75 business days</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Willingness to Recommend Us to Others in the Area of Claims

Each year, Allianz conducts more than 200,000 customer interviews to measure satisfaction and customers’ willingness to recommend its products and services. Customer feedback is always based on a concrete contact. The graph shows the results for five of these scenarios in the claims area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of cases</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(scale from –100 to +100)</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Settlement Rate

95% of the claims are settled; this figure is equivalent to about 2,329,000 claims. Usually, Allianz’s claims settlement process runs smoothly. This is also in our interest, because it increases customer satisfaction.

Ingrid Fritz, 65, Allianz customer for over 40 years

Our major water damage was paid for by Allianz within a few days. This has shown us that we are in good hands.”
For society

Allianz Deutschland AG is aware of its social responsibility and wants to give something back to society.

Together with its employees and representatives, Allianz is especially committed to helping children and young people, and is also active in environmental and cultural areas. The Allianz children’s foundation, Stiftung Allianz für Kinder, together with four regional children’s charities, focuses on supporting young people with special needs. The company’s environmental foundation mainly supports projects that focus on nature and, in particular, on sustainable environmental protection.

In the field of culture and art, the Allianz Cultural Foundation contributes to the development of a European identity and at the same time promotes regional cultural projects. Many of these initiatives and projects are made possible by the strong commitment and expertise of our employees.

Complaints report

We see complaints as an opportunity to make improvements. That’s why we take them seriously and deal with them thoroughly.

Complaints are an important indicator of the quality of our work, because they show how and where we can improve it. Every complaint focuses on the best possible solution for the customer. To this end, we are increasingly seeking direct initial contact and attempting to resolve complaints much more frequently by telephone. Our customers should perceive us positively, especially in the event of a complaint – as people who attend to issues quickly and actively seek solutions.

In addition, we continuously improve products and processes for all customers on the basis of customer feedback. In the past year, for example, adjustments were made to the online insurance folder “Meine Allianz,” and automated technical measures were set up to check the correctness of written communications.

5.1 Complaints sent to BaFin and the Ombudsman

Both BaFin (Federal Financial Supervisory Authority) as well as the neutral insurance Ombudsman allow for formal complaint procedures. On an individual basis, BaFin can issue formal notices or generally perform supervisory audits. The Ombudsman reviews actual decisions made by the insurance company within the scope of an arbitration process. Its decisions are binding for the insurance company.

5.1.1 Number of complaints

In 2017, the BaFin complaints showed a differentiated development at Allianz companies. While the number of complaints in property insurance continues to fall, there has been a slight increase in the life insurance segment, following a sharp decline. In the course of an IT conversion, there were delays in processing customer requests in the case of such patients. This led to a significant increase. The number of Ombudsman complaints continues to decline slightly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>510</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BaFin** (number of complaints, sorted by Allianz company):

- 3 Property: 205
- 2 Life: 110
- 1 Health: 110

**Ombudsman** (number of complaints, sorted by Allianz company):

- 1 Property: 1,541
- 2 Life: 425
- 3 Health: 407

*Source: internal count, since official BaFin statistics will not be published until May 2018*
5.1.2 Comparative rates of complaints

Due to a change in the IT system, the BaFin complaint rate in the health care sector increased in 2017. The rates of Ombudsman complaints have fallen slightly in annual terms.

Ombudsman
The insurance Ombudsman and the Ombudsman for private health insurance also report on trends regarding complaints filed with them.


BaFin
Every year, the insurance supervisory authority publishes detailed, company-specific complaint statistics.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Life</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>(per 100,000 contracts)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Satisfaction with complaint-handling procedures

All in all, our customers are very satisfied with the handling of their complaints. They perceived the handling of complaints as fast, appreciative and committed.

Property Contract (Score ranges from 1 to 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speed</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Property Claims (Score ranges from 1 to 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speed</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Health (Score ranges from 1 to 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speed</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4 Major causes of complaints

In all divisions, most complaints were about comprehensibility and speed. The overall total number of complaints has decreased again.

5.5 Complaint resolution

In a large number of cases, we were able to fully or partially resolve the complaints. Particularly in cases of complaints about comprehensibility and processing time we were able to find a remedy.

5.3 Average complaint-processing time

On an annual basis, we were able to reduce the average time taken to deal with complaints in all lines of business.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Life</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>In total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(time in business days)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If no figure is shown for a service parameter, then it is 0%.

5.6 Comprehensive data on complaints

In all divisions, most complaints were about comprehensibility and speed. The overall total number of complaints has decreased again.

* Source: internal count, since official BaFin statistics will not be published until May 2018
Customer orientation measured systematically

**Process Indicators**
- **Products**
  - Continuous measurement of:
    - Accessibility
    - Wait time

- **Advice**
  - Media resonance analysis:
    - Regular evaluation of media reports

- **Service**
  - Systematic collection of indicators regarding:
    - Processing time
    - Regulatory complexity

- **Claims**
  - Evaluation of all standard-issued letters
    - Comprehensibility, content and style
    - Media resonance analysis:
      - Regular evaluation of media reports

- **Benefits**
  - Claims analysis:
    - Regular evaluation of claims

**Test Customers**
- **Test customer visits to agencies**
  - Analyzing the consulting processes
  - Verifying product recommendations

- **Test customer calls to operations and claims**
  - Analyzing telephone behavior and processes

**External Auditors**
- **External product ratings**
  - Products: Life, health and property
  - Ratings from independent agencies

- **External ratings regarding service quality**
  - Ratings from independent agencies

**Allianz Customers**
- **Allianz customers’ feedback on relevant business transactions and measurement of their satisfaction with customer service through an agency**
  - Continuous surveys
  - More than 200,000 customer feedback comments per year regarding over 60 specific business transactions
  - More than 200,000 inquiries per year regarding customer satisfaction with customer service through an agency
  - Additional systematic evaluation of recorded customer complaints
  - Analysis of cancellations
  - Exams Online Rating System

**Cross-Check of the Population**
- **Measuring customer satisfaction across the population at large**
  - Study conducted annually
  - Customers and non-customers
  - More than 10,000 private customers in telephone interviews

- **Measuring the general public’s willingness to recommend us**
  - Continuous survey
  - Customers and non-customers
  - Measurement in the second half of 2017, with 8,600 interviews, including 2,400 Allianz customers
When referring to persons in general, we have used the masculine form in this document for reasons of readability. However, all persons are always spoken to in the spirit of equal treatment.

I. Our goal: to delight our customers

1.1 The needs of Allianz customers

1.1.1 Representation survey in the Tolenalp online panel, n=400 Allianz customers.

1.2 Willingness to recommend us to others with regard to selected points of contact

Will be grouped to recommend (Net Promoter Score) based on customer satisfaction survey with experience in all 60 contact points: internal survey.

1.3 Customers’ overall satisfaction with Allianz

Customer satisfaction

Unless otherwise stated, the comprehensive source for all satisfaction values has been the KUBIS Versicherungsstudie, which has been carried out by MIR insights since 2017. To this end, more than 10,000 private customers were surveyed. The sample size of Allianz corresponds to 404 customers in 2017. Satisfaction ratings are measured on a five-level rating scale: 1) completely satisfied, 2) very satisfied, 3) satisfied, 4) less satisfied, 5) dissatisfied.

II. Allianz in figures

2.1 Customers

2.1.1 Customer properties:

For customers: internal evaluation; the number of customers, 28.4 million relates to Allianz private customers.

A private customer is a named person, who has a contact with Allianz which has taken out a contract, or which has been taken out of his or her behalf and is therefore relevant to the cooperation.

Business customers are those customers who have taken out business contracts with Allianz.

Proportion of private customers with representatives

Balance 2017: 9% deviation from the previous year.

As a result of the division of Allianz by insurance in 2017, a division of private customers by settlement structures is made in accordance with Act Zone segmentation. This includes areas, intermediated or directly to consumers, by means of population numbers and population density. Urbanized areas include municipalities with a population of 100,000 to 250,000 and a population density of 250 to 400 inhabitants per km within a 15 km radius.

2.2 Employees

Inforgraphic for Employees: SAP HR data status 2017/Allianz Deutschland Gruppe excluding Oldenburgische Landesbank and Münchener and Münchener Genossenschaft AG employees with regular customer contact; internal evaluation, based on basic functional analyses, excluding prescriptions, temporary staff and employees undergoing training.


2.3 Solutions & benefits

Inforgraphic for Solutions and benefits: internal evaluation; premium reduction: Basis is the amount claimed, expenses for health claims: basis is property insurance without use of force.

III. Background & details

3.1 Products

3.1.1 Customer satisfaction

Rating scores of the last three years: BLI study (w=-5), agreement to the statement: Questionnaire: “How satisfied are you overall with the insurance products you have taken out with [selected insurance company]?” Private customers in the last two years. On a five-point scale: 1) completely satisfied, 2) very satisfied, 3) satisfied, 4) less satisfied, 5) dissatisfied.

3.1.2 2017 rating per product and region

Below are the scores of the rating and test cards, including the number of ratings and test results that are the same as, or better than, those of Allianz.

II.1.3.8 Life

Product: Allianz Leben

Ratings (5 stars): Excellent, Very good, Good, Fair, Poor.

2017 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2016 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2015 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2014 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2013 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2012 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2011 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2010 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2009 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2008 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2007 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2006 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2005 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2004 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2003 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2002 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2001 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

2000 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1999 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1998 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1997 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1996 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1995 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1994 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1993 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1992 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1991 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1990 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1989 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1988 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1987 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1986 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1985 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1984 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1983 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1982 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1981 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1980 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1979 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1978 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1977 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1976 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1975 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1974 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1973 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1972 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1971 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1970 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1969 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1968 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.

1967 rating (W-MM): 100/100 – excellent.
Allianz: Result for the customer 2017
www.allianzdeutschland.de/kundenbericht

V. Complaint report

We used the figures available to us from our internal management systems and from the internal evaluation. Evaluation cut-off date: 01/02/2018

1. Complaints sent to BaFin and the Ombudsmann

Federal Financial Supervisory Authority (BaFin): For 2013 to 2015, we used the official figures of BaFin statistics, available at www.bafin.de. For 2017, we used the numbers from our internal count, as the official figures of BaFin statistics will be published only in May 2017. Figures may differ slightly compared to official figures in statistics due to different limits, such as dates; Ombudsman: contains only permissible complaints, i.e., compliance with the Ombudsman’s rules of procedure; industry figures are available at www.morgenundmorgen.de; www.allianz.de/kundenbericht

3. Satisfaction with complaints-handling procedures

Internal evaluation, in agreement with the statement “Allianz responded quickly to my complaint” (speed), “I felt that Allianz treated my complaint seriously” (respect), and “I had the feeling that someone personally took care of my complaint” (commitment) on a five-point scale: 1) strongly agree, 2) agree somewhat, 3) agree in some respects, 4) disagree somewhat, 5) strongly disagree.

4. Average complaint-processing time

Internal evaluation, based on all complaints settled in 2017. Information on previous work phases.

5. Major causes of complaints

Internal evaluation, based on all complaints record- ed in 2017.

3.5.2

2) very satisfied, 3) satisfied, 4) less satisfied, 5) dissatisfied.

3.5.1

Excellent (1.0) – 71 companies examined, seven of which rated with “very good”; associated certificate valid until 30.09.2018.

3.3.5

Allianz Lebensversicherungs-AG: “Guaranteed and opportunities for profit as competitive factors” are being published for the last time in Result for the customer 2017. Information in terms of working days.

3.3.3

Customer satisfaction by post

Rat

Contact by telephone

“...you were satisfied with your last contact by the phone” (see 1.3). Agreement to the statement: Question = “How satisfied were you with your last contact by the phone with the [selected insurance company]? On a five-point scale: 1) completely satisfied, 2) very satisfied, 3) satisfied, 4) less satisfied, 5) dissatisfied.

3.3.2

Customer satisfaction by input

Rat

“...you were satisfied with your last contact through the [selected insurance company]?” (see 1.3). Agreement to the statement: Question = “How satisfied were you with your last contact by telephone with the [selected insurance company]? On a five-point scale: 1) completely satisfied, 2) very satisfied, 3) satisfied, 4) less satisfied, 5) dissatisfied.

3.3.1

Customer satisfaction by post

Rat

“...you were satisfied with your last contact by post” (see 1.3). Agreement to the statement: Question = “How satisfied were you with the [selected insurance company]?” (see 1.3). Agreement to the statement: Question = “How satisfied were you with your last contact by post” (see 1.3). Agreement to the statement: Question = “You were satisfied with your last contact by post with the [selected insurance company]?” On a five-point scale: 1) completely satisfied, 2) very satisfied, 3) satisfied, 4) less satisfied, 5) dissatisfied.

3.3.2.2

Internal evaluation: 2015 to 2017; only customer service calls that were picked up at the maximum call-up time were counted.

3.3.2.1

Time on hold on the phone

Internal evaluation 2015 to 2017; only customer service calls that were picked up at the maximum call-up time were counted.

3.3.2.0

The graphic “Simple resolution of pending issues” from Result for the customer 2016 is shown in graph 3.4.3.

3.4.2

Communication as self-service

Number of users: internal evaluation

3.4.1

Customer satisfaction

Ratings scores of the last three years: 10/2015 study (see 1.5), agreement to the statement: Question = “...you were satisfied with your last contact through the [selected insurance company]?” (see 1.3). Agreement to the statement: Question = “...you were satisfied with your last contact through the [selected insurance company]?” (see 1.3). Agreement to the statement: Question = “You were satisfied with your last contact through the [selected insurance company]?” (see 1.3). Agreement to the statement: Question = “You were satisfied with your last contact through the [selected insurance company]?” (see 1.3). Agreement to the statement: Question = “You were satisfied with your last contact through the [selected insurance company]?” (see 1.3). Agreement to the statement: Question = “...you were satisfied with your last contact through the [selected insurance company]?” (see 1.3). 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KPMG on “Result for the customer 2017”

The KPMG auditing firm performs the “Result for the customer” audit every year. Allianz is committed to the report’s professional nature and meeting its obligation to provide accurate information.

In a letter of instruction dated 21 December 2017, we were tasked to perform a business audit of the 2017 results for the customers of Allianz Deutschland AG (“Result for the customer”) to ascertain with sufficient certainty whether:

- the data published on pages 5, 10, 14, 16 to 18 and 20 of the separate “This is how you rated us” pull-out section of “Result for the customer 2017” corresponds to the results of the KUBUS Versicherung study carried out by MSR Insights in 2017 and the overall score thus results from the satisfaction ratings obtained.

- the areas of activity, namely Products, Advice, Service, Claims/Benefits and Communication, illustrated and evaluated in the separate “This is how you rated us” pull-out section of “Result for the customer 2017”, correspond to the internally established customer-focus structure.

- the information disclosed on pages 5-25 of the separate “This is how you rated us” pull-out section of “Result for the customer 2017” are in agreement with evaluations by complaint management and the customers’ internal evaluations.

Responsibility of the auditor

Our mission is to perform a business audit, and based on that, to provide a sufficiently reliable assessment of whether the aforementioned audited areas can be rated as positive. We conducted our business audit according to the International Standard on Assurance Engagements 3000 ("Assurance Engagements Other Than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information" (ISAE 3000)) as a “Reasonable Assurance Engagement.” Accordingly, the audit is to be planned and executed in such a manner that we can confirm with sufficient reliability after conducting a critical appraisal that the statements made in “Result for the customer 2017” are relevant in regard to the aspects mentioned above. An audit of the aforementioned areas of “Result for the customer 2017” consists of performing audit procedures to obtain audit-based evidence so that an assessment of the statements in “Result for the customer” can be made in regard to the aforementioned areas. The audit procedures are selected at the auditor’s discretion. In conducting the audit of the aforementioned sections of the “Result for the customer 2017,” we carried out the following audit procedures among others:

- Comparison of the values provided in the mentioned pages of the customer survey with the results of the performed study by KUBUS Versicherung.

- Examination of the documentation and task procedures pertaining to the customer focus program.

- Comparison of the figures listed on the mentioned pages in “Complaint report” and “Background information and details” against the evaluations generated by complaint management and the customer’s internal evaluations.

- The accuracy and completeness of the customer satisfaction and customer benefit data are subject to inherent limitations that stem from how the data was collected and compiled. Our Assurance Report should therefore be read in connection with the procedures used regarding the customer survey and satisfaction metrics. In addition, the statements contained in “Result for the customer 2017” were made in the past and are subject to the unavoidable risk that the portrayal of customer focus conveyed according to the established criteria cannot be extrapolated to the future due to changed circumstances.

Assessment

Based upon the findings of the aforementioned audit procedures that were carried out, and taking into account the aforementioned specifics of the audit’s subject matter, we have come to the following conclusions:

- The data published on pages 5-25 in the separate “This is how you rated us” pull-out section of “Result for the customer 2017” matches the evaluations made by complaint management and the customer’s internal evaluations.

Munich, 23 January 2018
KPMG AG
Auditing firm

Andreas Dielehner
Auditor
Rainer Pfaffenzeller
Auditor

Auditing firm
We place customers at the center of everything we do

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