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## Three candles for Axa's Discovery

Victoria Young

A dealer group program has celebrated three years of helping top-performing financial advisers start and run their own business.

Since Axa established the Discovery scheme in June 2003, it has recruited around 145 advisers from 100 businesses.

"Over the past three years Discovery has proven its ability to fast-track business success," Axa Discovery national manager Michael Meysztowicz said.

"High-quality advisers who meet our selection and performance criteria can be confident they'll reach their business goals faster thanks to the support we provide."

Melbourne-based Freedom Financial Planning is one Discovery success story.

By accessing its client base help, finance and business establishment advice, former bank financial

planners Ryan Dupuis, Mark Struik and Richard Unmack set the business up in October 2003.

"We'd been talking about starting our own business for about a year, but managers kept telling us and our colleagues we'd struggle without income if we left the bank and set up on our own," Dupuis said.

The practice now has an employee financial adviser, two paraplanners and about \$59 million in funds under management.

The planners have monthly meetings with a practice development manager, have created a corporatised business and engage in marketing their services.

In five years they plan to have three employed financial planners writing around \$5 million in business each year.

Another growth option is acquisition. □