

ARTHUR J. GALLAGHER



CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

“One tenet of The Gallagher Way, which defines what we believe in and how we do business, is that ‘loyalty and respect are earned—not dictated.’ I believe that our success stems from the effectiveness of our leaders. And we continue to win because we develop leaders at all levels.”

J. Patrick Gallagher, Jr., CEO, Arthur J. Gallagher & Co

Meeting the Needs of Rapid Growth Through Gallagher’s Leadership Pipeline


Arthur J. Gallagher & Co., one of the world’s largest insurance brokerage and risk management services firms, provides a full range of retail and wholesale property/casualty brokerage and alternative risk transfer services globally, as well as employee benefit brokerage, consulting, and actuarial services. Gallagher also offers claims and information management, risk control consulting, and appraisal services to clients around the world. In part through significant merger and acquisition activity, the company has grown rapidly. To fulfill its commitment to growing talent from within, the company recognized the need to accelerate its leadership pipeline and began exploring leadership development tools and programs.

Moving the Company’s Vision Forward

For Gallagher, it was essential that leadership development provide more than tactical leadership skills. Leaders need to focus on increasing their comfort with and confidence in their emerging roles and responsibilities. Gallagher chose Harvard Business Publishing to help the company foster a mind-set that would empower leaders to learn and grow as they contribute to moving the company’s vision forward.

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AT A GLANCE

 Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Growth trajectory demanded an accelerated approach to building leadership capabilities and bench strength.

AUDIENCE

To date, 142 branch managers and emerging leaders; additional 100 employees planned in 2014

OFFERING AND SERVICES USED

Breakthrough Leadership Program, customized for Gallagher

IMPACT

- > 90% of participants report improved ability to lead
- > Anticipated performance improvement for participants
- > Expanded career opportunities

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 **HARVARD
BUSINESS
PUBLISHING**

“This is a world-class program that, thanks to Harvard Business Publishing’s flexibility, we’ve been able to make our own.”

Wendy Greeson, Director Global Leadership Development/
Organizational Development

Gallagher-izing *Breakthrough Leadership*

Gallagher wanted a tried and proven development program. With offerings based on expert research from Harvard Business School, a blended approach, and a focus on learning over time, Harvard Business Publishing was the clear choice. It was also important for Gallagher to customize the program, and Harvard Business Publishing proved a flexible partner. Among the “Gallagher-ized” program elements were a face-to-face kickoff that included a simulation exercise, the extensive involvement of the Gallagher executive team, and biweekly phone calls for the study groups.

Building Participant Accountability

For its first three cohorts, Gallagher selected 142 individuals—primarily branch managers—from throughout its geographies. Each participant received a personal letter from the CEO laying out the company’s expectation that participants would be fully engaged and work collaboratively with other cohort members. Gallagher made it clear that this is not “just” a learning event, but a critical part of their leadership journey. Every session required preparation and active participation. By holding participants accountable, Gallagher has experienced some of the highest *Breakthrough Leadership* completion rates on record.

Providing Support Along the Way

While emphasizing accountability, Gallagher also recognizes the balance between what individuals are personally responsible for and the need to provide support along the way. Gallagher’s talent management group has played a key role in the success of the program. Their close involvement with participants has enabled them to solicit feedback throughout the program and respond accordingly. When participants voiced concerns about their ability to complete their coursework while working to make their numbers during the year’s final quarter, the timeline was extended to ensure that participants could meet their goals and successfully complete the program. Cohort members have embraced *Breakthrough Leadership*. Two additional cohorts are planned.

GALLAGHER EXECUTIVES GO ALL IN

CEO J. Patrick (Pat) Gallagher, Jr., his direct reports, and fourteen executive sponsors are closely involved in the *Breakthrough Leadership* initiative. For starters, the in-person kickoff is opened by the CEO and attended by the executive sponsors. This event includes CEO and sponsor dinners that provide participants an opportunity to meet the company’s leaders. It also underscores the value the company places on leadership development—and on the individuals they see as key to the organization’s future success.

Each webinar session is co-facilitated by one of the executive sponsors, and other sponsors often attend. Even Pat Gallagher has logged in, and seeing his name on the online attendee list has been a strong motivator. Executive sponsors are also asked to provide feedback on the program, are engaged in actively tracking the progress of individual participants, and take part in biweekly study group phone calls. This is in keeping with another tenet of The Gallagher Way: senior executives earning loyalty and respect by going all in on this important program.

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