



Enabling Collaboration between Corporate and Sales in a Growing Title Insurance Company



ORGANIZATION

Alliant National Title Insurance Company



INDUSTRY

Title Insurance Underwriting



ABOUT

Alliant National is a Colorado-based company providing secure title insurance through a network of independent agents.

CHALLENGE

Alliant National Title Insurance Company was founded in 2005 to provide title insurance services such as underwriting and claims processing to independent title agents across the U.S. Like all insurance companies, Alliant National faces a constant tension between managing risk and developing sales. In Alliant National's case, however, that tension led to two opposing factions, each led by one of the company's two founders. This tension had snowballed and by 2012 it was threatening the company's very existence.

Alliant National had tried several times to reconcile the two sides of the business, but those attempts failed. Even worse, most of those efforts provoked skepticism, mistrust, and hesitancy and also served to reinforce each side's perception that their position was the right one.

“Arbinger’s tools provided a format to consider all stakeholders and how we interact with each other in the company and with our customers. This allowed for different parts of the organization to both see and align our people to a unified big picture.”

BOB GRUBB

President and Chief Executive Officer

SOLUTION

In 2013, one of the Alliant National founders read Arbinger's *The Anatomy of Peace* and realized the inward mindset problem described in the book was what was plaguing the company. He purchased copies of the book and distributed them to the senior leadership team, hoping they would draw a similar conclusion. They did, and decided to bring Arbinger in to work with the company.

After assessing the situation, Arbinger conducted a two-day workshop for the senior leadership team. The workshop gave Alliant National's leaders the tools and personal insights that allowed them to immediately understand how they were each invested in and perpetuating the conflict, making it possible for them to quickly start addressing and defusing the tension. Beyond resolving this

debilitating conflict, Alliant National’s leaders also used the tools they learned in the workshop to embed an outward mindset in their day-to-day work, enabling them to work more effectively and with a greater emphasis on results. Within the year, Arbinger trained a senior executive as an internal facilitator, equipping her to train and support the rest of the company to understand and use the Arbinger tools.

“Alliant National is a fun place to work! The culture is not one of conflict. Planning is more creative. People are energized and excited about the future. Our unity throughout the company is attractive to potential employees. People want to be a part of Alliant National because of how we work!”

BOB GRUBB
President and Chief Executive Officer

Arbinger consultants then led Alliant National’s senior leadership through its Strategic Planning and Execution process. As part of this process, they redefined the company’s objectives and reconceived its work to ensure they were in service of the objectives of Alliant National’s key stakeholders. They then recalibrated their own roles and company functions to ensure they supported each other as well as the overall company goals.

Having accomplished that, Alliant National’s senior leaders then developed detailed personal work plans that ensured each individual’s work truly served those who were impacted by their efforts: their supervisors, co-workers, employees, and their core customers—the independent agents.

RESULTS

The impact of this work and of embedding an outward mindset within Alliant National has been dramatic. Conflicts still occasionally arise, but when they do, they are handled in a positive manner. There is a sense of openness to new ideas and collaboration between risk management and sales. Implementation of the Arbinger frameworks has successfully reduced conflicting objectives among employees, aligned resources to achieve corporate goals, and created personal responsibility. With employees engaged in this way of working, they have been able to powerfully redirect their focus to accomplish objectives in ways that make others and the organization successful.

The overarching impact of all this work has been to form a single team pursuing the common goal of serving independent agents. As a result, Alliant National has grown at a rate nearly twice that of its competitors, received the official “Great Place to Work” designation, and is now one of the top ten title insurance underwriters in the United States.

“The sky is truly the limit in terms of how Arbinger’s tools will help us as individuals, teams, and as a company trying to make a difference.”

DAVID SINCLAIR
Chief Operating Officer

Perhaps the most telling result is that one of the founders felt comfortable enough to retire, placing the future of the company (and his retirement) in the hands of the other founders.