



## Helping a Large Professional Services Firm Develop a Culture of Tenacious Growth



### ORGANIZATION

Wipfli CPAs and Consultants



### INDUSTRY

Accounting and Consulting



### ABOUT

As a top 20 accounting and business consulting firm, Wipfli enjoys a solid reputation as an industry expert and trusted business advisor to more than 44,000 clients across a wide range of industries.

### CHALLENGE

Wipfli LLP (Wipfli) ranks among the top 20 accounting and business consulting firms in the nation. They enjoy a solid reputation as industry experts and as trusted business advisors to more than 44,000 clients across a wide range of industries. However, because the accounting side of Wipfli’s business was becoming increasingly commoditized, the firm set a key strategic initiative to deploy an integrated business model that mixed traditional accounting services with high value-add consulting and other services.

In order to achieve this vision, however, a major mindset shift within the firm was required—a shift away from the complacency of narrow service delivery to energetic attention to growth and cross-functional selling. Wipfli engaged Arbinger to help spark and enable this mindset shift within the partnership ranks and across the whole firm—a shift to what they call a “tenacious growth culture.” In addition to a mindset shift across the firm, the firm needed to be restructured in order to drive the growth the leadership envisioned.

**“Arbinger has helped us instill in our firm an outward mindset way of working. I am convinced that this will be our differentiator in the market for years and years to come.”**

**RICK DREHER**

Managing Partner | Wipfli

### SOLUTION

A successful effort to shift the mindset and culture of an entire professional services firm requires the buy-in and commitment of key leaders. Arbinger therefore began work with Wipfli by spending three days in a workshop and consulting environment with the firm’s top thirty leaders. By the end of that intensive session, the firm’s entire leadership was fully committed to instilling a tenacious growth culture utilizing Arbinger’s ideas and methodologies.

In consultation with Wipfli’s leadership, Arbinger created a customized training program for the entire firm entitled *Leading and Working the Wipfli Way*. The partners of the firm were then trained in this material. This training sparked cross-functional and regional collaboration in a very short time frame and to a degree unprecedented at this stage of the firm’s growth.

## RESULTS

In the course of this initial training, a contingent of company leaders identified \$85 million in client revenue opportunities for the next year. The next two levels of the organization identified an additional \$44 million of opportunity. The response to the program and process was so successful that Wipfli then had twenty of their key leaders complete Arbinger's train-the-trainer process and are rolling the program out to the entire firm as a key strategic initiative. As

teams have experienced success employing this new way of working, Arbinger has captured these stories in customized online video reinforcement clips that help drive ongoing momentum and sustainment across the organization. In addition, Wipfli used Arbinger methodologies to successfully reorganize the leadership structure of the firm and redefine each of the leadership roles. Wipfli views these changes as being key strategic differentiators in the marketplace.