

Future Leaders Learning Programme Puts Business Analysis at Core at The Hanover

The Hanover Insurance Group, Inc.(NYSE: THG) is a leading property and casualty insurance provider based in Worcester, Massachusetts in the United States. The company distributes its products through independent agents across the country. Established in 1852, The Hanover has grown to rank among the top 30 property and casualty insurers in the United States with more than 4,000 employees.

The Challenge

One of the core skill sets identified as being critical to The Hanover's continued business success is that of business analysis. For the past five years, The Hanover has partnered with TwentyEighty Strategy Execution to deliver instructor-led learning to business analysts in its technology division. There were, however, business analysts in the business areas if the company as well.

HQ Location: Worcester, MA, USA
Employee Size: 26,000
Industry: Finance
Activity: Insurance provider

With approximately 200 business analysts across the company, The Hanover's leadership sought to formalize an enterprise wide strategy for positioning the business analyst role as a pipeline for analytical and operational roles. With the implementation of its Future Leaders Programme in 2009, work was begun on developing a consistent profile for entry-level business analyst talent at The Hanover.

The Strategy

With approximately 200 business analysts stretching across multiple lines of business, bringing enterprise-wide focus to this role as a career-growth opportunity is a winning strategy. Planning for the programme focused on a number of key strategic goals, including:

- Identifying and effectively recruiting outstanding university students and recent graduates
- Determining a consistent, common approach and language around business analysis
- Delivering learning through a range of modalities to ensure skills and knowledge are reinforced and effectively applied

"We believe that offering a range of learning opportunities greatly increases the programme's success. By combining what we could offer in-house with TwentyEighty Strategy Execution's various, interactive modalities, we have achieved a robust solution"

The Hanover chose to partner with us to guide the development and implementation of this new programme.

Ken Joseph,
Business Learning Manager
The Hanover

"It was clear that TwentyEighty Strategy Execution was the ideal choice as our partner for this programme," said Irene Brank, Assistant Vice President and Director of The Hanover's Future Leaders Programme. **"Their direction, commitment and support have helped us chart the path to this initiative."**

The Solution

The Hanover and TwentyEighty Strategy Execution began by mapping a set of core competencies for the Future Leaders Programme, which was divided into two broad career focus areas: business management and risk management. Assessment tools to effectively benchmark and evaluate the progress of programme participants were also developed.

Once recruited into the two-year programme, candidates are assigned an IT or non-IT career track. At the conclusion of

the two years, candidates will find placement in a role that allows them to continue to grow their career. To ensure participants have the skills and knowledge they need to be leaders, the Future Leaders Programme guides participants through a range of learning opportunities:

- Traditional instructor-led classroom curricula
- Reinforcement workshops delivered in person and via webinars
- A participant forum promoting formal group interaction, including programme coaches
- Corporate-wide access to online reference materials
- Practical, on-the-job application of new skills and knowledge
- Continued mentoring after programme completion

The programme's design ensures that learning and reinforcement take place before, during and after classroom training. Pre-class webinars create a foundation that prepares participants for specific learning events and reinforcement workshops conducted after courses further reinforce key competencies.

"We believe that offering a range of learning opportunities greatly increases the programme's success," said Ken Joseph, Business Learning Manager, The Hanover. "By combining what we could offer in-house with TwentyEighty Strategy Execution's various, interactive modalities, we've achieved a robust solution."

The Future Leaders Programme also offers coaching and mentoring, as well as the opportunity to earn professional and technical certifications including Actuarial, Business Analysis, and INS certifications.

As university graduates progress through the programme, the company's current leaders also undergo targeted learning based upon position and role, which promotes consistent knowledge across the organisation. These include:

- Traditional, instructor-led classroom courses
- Executive level workshops and webinars that overview key programme knowledge areas
- Skill specific workshops and webinars

Results

The Future Leaders Programme builds upon the success of TwentyEighty Strategy Execution's outstanding partnership with The Hanover, which has demonstrated:

- Significant improvements in project completions and adherence to budgets
- A dramatic reduction in project change requests
- A reduction in project errors
- Faster time to market for new products

While still in the early stages, the Future Leaders Programme has begun to deliver decisive impact by:

- Charting a clear and fast track for new leadership
- Defining a consistent approach and language around business analysis
- Improving recruiting and retention
- Increasing organisation-wide competency in business analysis

Each year, approximately 75 future leaders are accepted into the programme. At this rate almost 10 percent of the company will have completed the leadership programme in the next five years.

"The programme is already delivering clear benefits to us. Much of the benefit is a direct result of the emphasis we are placing on business analysis for decision making, which is changing the way our company approaches its decisions."

Greg Tranter,
Senior Vice President and COO
The Hanover

Planning Forward

The Hanover and TwentyEighty Strategy Execution are identifying ways to further enrich the programme. Specific considerations include:

- Enhancing The Hanover's company-wide business analysis methodology
- The addition to the core learning programme of a "live" practicum project
- Inclusion of a set of business consulting and skills curricula focused on such topics as financial literacy, critical thinking and leading organisational change
- Inclusion of additional project management specific curricula
- Executive workshops to refine the mentoring skills of those managing Future Leaders Programme participants to help them more effectively reinforce the programme's competencies
- Ongoing individual and organisational assessments to add value and uncover areas for greater learning emphasis

"Despite the early stage status of the programme, it's already delivering clear benefits to us. Much of the benefit is a direct result of the emphasis we're placing on business analysis for decision making, which is changing the way our company approaches its decisions."

Greg Tranter,
Senior Vice President and COO
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