



12. Organize a Compliance & Ethics Week

Challenge

The goal is to emphasize the importance of compliance and ethics and to clarify the policy once again: put compliance and ethics on the map. Put compliance and ethics in a positive light. And encourage to discuss (ethical) dilemmas, clearly communicate that it is not bad if you do not know how to act, that you can discuss this with your colleagues, your management and Compliance & Ethics, and that the Compliance & Ethics department is available to help.

This instrument works well, for example, after an important incident has happened ('never waste a good crisis') and/or if the 'tone from the top' changes or when it needs to be communicated more clearly. However, you can also use it without an incident having occurred to keep the subject alive and to keep the consciousness on edge. For example, several multinationals organize a Compliance & Ethics Week in the first week of December. This is in line with the national activities of ICC (International Chamber of Commerce). With the month of December as 'gift month' to come, this is a well-chosen timing.

Solution

The (local) Compliance & Ethics Professional organizes, in consultation with the management, a Compliance & Ethics Week. It is important that during this week it becomes clear that this topic is of utmost importance to the management. It is essential if a large part of the communication is sent from top and senior management, if the management itself actively participates in the sessions and also facilitates them. If a Supervisory Board member participates in the program or actively shows his/her interest, this has a lot of impact on the level of success.

For example, the week is announced by email, via intranet and by posters, by means of videos, podcasts or other calls. You can use decoration materials like flags and for instance mugs can be handed out to each employee with the theme of the upcoming Compliance & Ethics Week depicted. Each employee is asked to attend the meetings that are being organised. and to reschedule any other appointments .

During the Compliance & Ethics Week, the local CEO sends one or two emails or other messages to all employees about the importance of compliance and ethics in the every day environment. Each day has a different key topic, build it up well. The text of the e-mails can initially be drawn up by Compliance & Ethics department and then sharpened/improved by the CEO and the Communication Department.



For example, every day there is a one hour session on compliance and ethics with all employees . This can be for all employees at the same time or in smaller groups. On day 1, for example, this could be a compliance and ethics training. On the other days there are, for example, dilemma sessions, a forum with the management team where important compliance and ethics questions are addressed, a quiz for all employees with nice prizes, good practices are being shared, or a session in which addressing each other or speaking-up is trained with the help of an external coach or actors. . If a session takes place at the end of the day, a snack can be provided, to enable the staff to reflect in an informal setting. .

Another possibility is that the (Global) Compliance & Ethics Professional has a number of 1-on-1 conversations every day with local employees who need it and also conducts conversations on his own initiative with the aim of getting a better understanding of the specific situation .

As a result of the dilemma sessions and the aforementioned conversations, a number of locations or departments can be visited where the main compliance and ethics challenges arise. This increases the visibility of the Compliance & Ethics function and shows that the challenges are taken seriously. "Get your hands dirty". For issues that cannot be solved immediately, (long-term) projects can be developed, in which the management is actively involved (and preferably takes the lead).

On the last day of The Compliance & Ethics Week , an inventory is made of outstanding action points, a large summary of all topics can be provided, and a final party takes place with, for example, a huge cake with inscription. Prizes will be awarded. A photographer can be hired to lay down the event, preferably with a poster with the theme of the week as a background.

In order to keep up the spirit , there must also be some follow-up after the Compliance & Ethics Week . For example, the CEO can thank everyone afterwards for their active participation during the Compliance & Ethics Week . Actively ask for feedback and suggestions for improvement, and check who would like to participate in the project team next year. A little later, a report of the Compliance & Ethics Week can be published, where employees can download the photos taken. The progress of the long-term projects should also be discussed from time to time and feedback to the employees should be provided.

Inspiration:

[Ban the boring and host a compliance event](#)

https://assets.corporatecompliance.org/Portals/1/PDF/Resources/past_handouts/Utilities-Energy-Compliance-Ethics/2017/201_gillett_2.pdf



Crucial to the success of the week is the support of management and the visibility of the Compliance & Ethics function.

It is also important that attention is regularly drawn to ethics and compliance and ethics. It should not be a one-off exercise.

For example, it can be turned into an annual event. An organization like the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) in the Netherlands organizes an 'Integrity Week' every year.

Actors

- The top management, such as the (local) CEO (if possible also ask Supervisory Board members to join, this has a very positive impact)
- HR Manager
- Marketing & Communication
- Other MT members or middle & senior management
- Local Compliance & Ethics Professional
- Global Compliance & Ethics Professional

It is particularly important to draw up the plan together with the business management, the Marketing & Communication department and HR.

Techniques

A different or stronger "tone from the top" or "tune in the middle", a lot of attention to compliance and ethics in a short time, coming up with solutions for difficult situations, sharing good practices, accepting that not everything can be solved immediately but ensuring a long-term plan, ensuring positive associations with compliance and demonstrating that the Compliance & Ethics department is there to help.

Show that both management and the Compliance & Ethics department find the subject and the people important. Empathy with the employees, good visibility and accessibility to all employees. Furthermore, all possible techniques and instruments that can be used.

Role Compliance Professional

Advisor, initiator, organizer, inspirator, booster and facilitator