

CEP Magazine – November 2022



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The whole truth

By James Byrne

One of the most challenging aspects of developing and sustaining an effective ethics and compliance program is discovering how different program elements complement each other to expand your program and establish a positive, inclusive culture.

Like tackling a giant jigsaw puzzle, building an effective ethics and compliance program requires thoughtful observation, patience, trial and error, and willingness to try new combinations. Once the pieces all come together, you can celebrate the inspirational picture that emerges.

What began at Lockheed Martin in 1995 as a largely compliance-based ethics program to prevent and detect criminal conduct and identify waste, fraud, and abuse is maturing into a richer, value-based program that empowers employees to own their ethical workplace and act when something is amiss.

Multiple program elements work together to become force multipliers and maintain a strong ethical work environment. Here are some best practices to consider.

Establish core value: Tone at the top

Starting with leadership, a company's values form the basis for establishing behavioral expectations and compliance requirements. A positive, diverse, open, and inclusive work environment starts with a culture where employees can ask questions or report potential violations transparently and without fear of retaliation. This is only achieved with buy-in and commitment from every leader and employee.

Our core values—do what's right, respect others, and perform with excellence—are easy to understand and have proven to be quite memorable for employees.

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