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Transparency keeps compliance and ethics trending

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The purpose of corporate ethics and compliance has been on my mind a lot recently. After reflecting on it for weeks, the most straightforward, fundamental answer that I could come up with doesn't focus explicitly on integrity, culture, values, or risk. To me, ethics and compliance professionals exist to be a net positive in their office, organization, and industry; to give more than they take; and to be proactively conscious of their team's corporate footprint. I know that ethics and compliance are not always a shared responsibility; they are different sides of the same coin, yin and yang, intrinsically connected in spirit, if not in practice.

This month marks my fifth anniversary working in the field of corporate ethics and compliance. I never went to law school or pursued the other common prerequisites of an ethics and compliance professional. Instead, in 2015, I accepted a marketing job in this industry, starting down a path I had no idea even existed as an option until a month prior. Nearly 2,000 days later, I've had the opportunity to attend conferences and events hosted by the SCCE and other groups around the United States. Through these events, social media, and other channels, I've met and spoken with hundreds of people from unique backgrounds that all find themselves connected through a shared bond of this career—a career that is relatively nascent in the corporate infrastructure we all operate within.

As a marketer, it's my professional obligation to get to know each compliance and ethics professional well—the hopes and aspirations, challenges, and frustrations. Part of why I love marketing as a career is because it allows me to use creativity, writing, and design to solve different business problems. The responsibility to create content is an excuse for me to talk to you about your work and provide a platform or channel to share and help amplify those insights and perspectives. I've been compelled by the idea that my 50-hour work week can help make the world a better place, whether directly or indirectly; in essence, I can be a part of that net positive.

I've spoken to many compliance professionals that believe powerful, consistent communications are essential to overall progress and that an organization's outward transparency can lead to a more effective program. Purpose, intent, strategy, scale, and deliberately identifying your goals and aligning your actions are all part of influencing behavior. You don't see a successful brand release an advertisement one day during one commercial break and expect to compel consumers to purchase the product. Repetition and reinforcement aren't a bad thing; they are essential to pushing things forward meaningfully. This also helps us remember why we do what we do and, in doing so, perhaps positively influence those around us.

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