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# Ethics and compliance is the immune system for your organization

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By Jeshua Suk

Jeshua Suk ([jeshua.suk@bp.com](mailto:jeshua.suk@bp.com)) is an Ethics & Compliance Advisor with bp in Chicago, Illinois, USA.

If you're anything like me, it's common to get some version of, "So what exactly does ethics and compliance do?" from friends, family, and even coworkers. It's a great question with a lot of right answers! Some of us may answer with a brisk recap of company policies and regulatory enforcement appetite. Others may focus on effective speak-up cultures and training strategies. And yet I've found one simple analogy consistently helps folks from the C-suite to the front lines understand the value that effective ethics and compliance (E&C) programs can offer: E&C is the immune system for your organization.

If we think of an organization as a human body, I believe we can draw the following parallels:

1. **C-suite leadership is the brain:** Thinking two steps ahead, assessing the competitive landscape, synthesizing many variables at once to maximize utility.
2. **Mid-level management is the nervous system:** Transmitting signals from the brain, touching all parts of the organization, sending data back to optimize decision-making.
3. **Frontline workers are the muscles:** Moving products, turning valves, flexing the commercial engine, and making the enterprise move.
4. **E&C together are the immune system:** Let's break this down a bit further, shall we?

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