

CEP Magazine – February 2021 The case for considering your legacy now

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According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, five years is the average number of years managers and professionals stay at one job.^[1] Think about where you are in that cycle. Whether you're at the beginning or the end, it's never too early to start thinking about your legacy.

Legacy connotes “that which lingers after a person has left.” To make the biggest impact now, it helps to think about what you want to do that will be important or remembered. You can think about your compliance legacy in three ways.

1) The compliance program

When it comes to improving your program, where does your skill lie? Do you write clear and concise policies? Do you give training sessions that people enjoy? Do you have close relationships with board members? Whatever your strongest skill, consciously use it so that you leave the program better than you found it. Policies will be in place for years, good training will stay with the employees, and board members who understand compliance will be priceless for those who come into the company after you.

2) The culture

Consider how you can best affect culture with your program. If you rebrand “compliance” as “ethics and compliance,” perhaps people will think of the function differently in the future. If you focus on preventing retaliation by checking in regularly with whistleblowers after their complaints have been resolved, perhaps you can encourage people to speak up more often. Or maybe you can highlight the importance of respect and inclusion during Compliance & Ethics Week, thereby encouraging people to bring their best selves to work now and in the future.

3) Your team

If you're a manager, think now about how you want your team to remember you. Do you want to be remembered for the encouragement you gave? Perhaps you want your team to be grateful to you for pushing them out of their comfort zones to stretch their skill set. If you're not a manager, consider how you can encourage your coworkers to see compliance and ethics in a more positive light.

Time passes quickly, and before you know it, it will be time to take a new role. By focusing on how you want to be

remembered and what you want to accomplish before you leave, you'll build yourself into the person you need to be to leave the legacy you envision.

1 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Industry," *Employee Tenure in 2020*, September 22, 2020, <https://bit.ly/2Kak2bH>.

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