

# Ryan Whitehill

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INTEGRIS HEALTH

### MORE ABOUT ME

#### What is the most interesting thing about you?

I realized in my 30's what I wanted my life after compliance to look like. I knew it was going to take many years, a lot of materials and a lot of physical labor to make it happen, so I decided to start right away and slowly work towards the goal. I sold my house in town, bought an old, unloved farm just beyond the Northern Dallas suburbs and started my journey towards one day opening a winery and event venue. After my compliance work during the week and on weekends, you'll find me outside in work boots and jeans doing chores on the farm.

#### Skydiving, sunbathing or sightseeing?

Sunbathing while doing chores and working on my amazing farmer's tan.

#### What is one thing you could not go a day without? (Not including necessities)

Being outside. To see the sun rise, to see if I see any animal shapes in the clouds, to watch the sun set, or to see where Orion is positioned in the night sky.

## Q&A

### THE SECRET SAUCE OF COMPLIANCE

#### What is your secret sauce for compliance?

My secret sauce for compliance is to fully lean in to the mission of the organization and to help the organization be successful. That's what motivates me. I work hard to let my partners in operations, my various compliance committees and my board know that we are on the team and we are here to help guide, safeguard and support the organization with where we're at today as well as where we're going in the future. When we can start a conversation with "We want to grow just like you do. We want to be successful and we want to do it in the right way", it helps everyone see you as a true partner who's there to help.

#### The challenges of a compliance officer are never-ending – how do you personally stay motivated?

Switching from a keyboard and computer screen in an office to doing farm chores outside in the dust and dirt and sunshine gives me time to decompress and think about the day. I have some of my best ideas while I'm riding a tractor in a field. The physical labor helps wear my body out so I sleep well, and I especially love the fact that the results of the farm work are almost always tangible. You can look back at the end of a dirty, sweaty day and see what you accomplished. You don't always get that immediate sense of accomplishment with your compliance work.

#### Is technology and automation the answer to an understaffed compliance team?

I think technology and automation is a great tool for compliance teams of any size. Budgets are always tight, and I don't like to wait for solutions, so I always first look for solutions in software or systems the organization has already purchased or has a license for whenever possible. Using what we already have keeps my program moving fast, keeps me from going through the slow-moving budget approval process, and I think it's fun to be able to show off our ability to be financially resourceful.

#### What unique compliance challenges does your company face?

Right now, around 4,000 of the 6,000 hospitals in the country are losing money and are struggling financially. Contributing factors to that include labor shortages; the price of contract labor; supply chain disruption with products being unavailable and increasing costs due to inflation; and diminished patient volumes. For us to make it in the long term, we must have the right strategies and we must move quickly. That includes being the employer of choice in our area, enhancing evidence-based care, growing and expanding how we deliver care in a smart way, being more consumer friendly with technology and having a realistic path forward. The compliance department plays an important role in many items that fall within those strategies, so it's an exciting time to figure out how to evolve, all while making sure our existing operations are working as they should.

#### What does it mean to be an ethical company in 2022?

Being an ethical company in 2022 means that you're dedicated to creating an intentional culture and being a learning organization. You have a mission of why you exist, you have a vision of what you aspire to do and be, you have defined the values of how you will do your work, you have competencies that lay out the skills you need to succeed and to develop, you have an operating structure that sets up your organization for success, and you have a culture of continuous improvement.

You understand that while you strive for perfection in all areas, opportunities will always appear and reacting to those opportunities by focusing on the process and not the person is how you will "fail fast and grow quickly".

#### What makes a GREAT compliance leader?

A great compliance leader is calm, collaborative, and understands that at the end of the day, compliance must live in operations, so it's best to get operations involved in the solution. A great compliance leader asks, "What would great look like?" because they know their organization is filled with amazing people who have an incredible amount of experience and insight who would love to share their thoughts and ideas.

#### To what degree do you feel in-person contact is important for the running of a compliance program?

I think it's incredibly important for your organization to see your face and for you to have a presence. It's how you build trust, it's how you let them know you're committed to the success of the organization, it's how you work through problems and it's how you sometimes convey the seriousness of the situation.

We've set our department up with individuals who are in our corporate office and also have a few remote members on the team. By adding expertise from individuals outside our market, we're able to bring on the talent and experience we wouldn't otherwise be able to get.

#### What is the work achievement that you're most proud of?

Getting the INTEGRIS Health compliance program where it's at in such a short period of time is something that really makes me smile. When I joined the organization two and a half years ago, the compliance function had grown stale and essentially fallen apart. At my two-year work anniversary, we completed an external compliance program effectiveness review to check on the progress of our program. The external auditor was blown away with how much more advanced our program is from what they normally see from their other clients and how we were able to implement it in such a short period of time. I'm very proud of that.

### THE RESULTS ARE IN

On LinkedIn we asked:

If you're able to, how likely are you to get a second job to augment your income in 2023?

Already have one	12%
Likely	27%
Unlikely	34%
Prefer to find a better paid first job	26%

NEED OUR HELP FILLING A POSITION OR LOOKING FOR ONE YOURSELF?

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DECEMBER 2022