



Joy Hayes

VP ETHICS AND COMPLIANCE
ACTIVISION BLIZZARD

MORE ABOUT ME

If money and location were no object, what would your perfect day involve?

I would combine three of my favorite things – I'd bring together all my favorite people to a beautiful outdoor spot and enjoy some great food together.

If you could go back to witness one historical event, what would it be?

I love that the discovery of penicillin started with a mistake (a contaminated culture plate for another experiment), and that it generated a curious reaction from Dr. Alexander Fleming that led to valuable knowledge. Aside from the fact that I would enjoy witnessing the mental process, there is nothing I enjoy more than seeing someone's unbridled joy when they make a meaningful discovery.

Which TV show or movie can you watch over and over and never get bored of?

The Princess Bride? Inconceivable!

The house is on fire and every person and animal is out safely – which item would you dash back in to save?

While I wouldn't risk my safety to retrieve it, I would cry a lot if I lost my original oil painting by Florida artist Bruce Marsh.

Asked & Answered

THE SECRET SAUCE OF COMPLIANCE

What is your secret sauce for compliance?

Empowering top talent. I've earned a reputation for drawing and retaining hard-working individuals who are familiar with best practices and unafraid of trying new things – all while closely monitoring what works and what doesn't so they can tweak their approach as needed.

I jump at opportunities to hire people with experience and strengths that surpass my own and who demonstrate moral courage – and I treat them with respect. I share information relevant to their work whenever I'm able, empower them to make decisions, ensure they get credit and exposure when they've done good work, and provide aid and top cover.

How do you “sell” compliance to other leaders?

I make the business case by coming armed with high-return solutions for mitigating risks as well as examples of enforcement penalties and lost business resulting from compromised consumer trust. But even good stewards of the company are prone to think about themselves, so I also think about what's in it for them personally – their financial position, their career, their reputation, and their self-image.

Well-designed financial incentives and career advancement processes play a key role in motivating good behavior, but it's at least as important to foster habits that help employees think about how their actions affect others. Nobody wants to see themselves as a liar or a thief. Boiling down key decision points to foundational values and demonstrating what's at stake – for them, their employees, our customers, our broader community – makes it difficult for employees to rationalize self-serving decisions that harm others.

Why did you decide that a career in compliance was right for you?

Moral courage is my superpower. I'm known for speaking up when nobody else will – and I strive to do so with both grace and grit. If I have a concern about a proposed path ahead, I outline the second- and third-order effects and what they mean for the business and our broader stakeholders. I also understand that changing course means having an alternative, so I propose solutions and commit to putting my own labor behind them. My strengths are well-suited to the challenges faced by ethics and compliance leaders every day.

What is the best advice you ever received on how to run a compliance program?

It isn't enough to tell people what to do – you need to ensure they understand what's expected of them and that they're empowered and motivated to do it.

Employees can find some rules to be complex or non-intuitive, so the internal review process needs to support clear and timely communication. Policies and other internal communications must be able to withstand scrutiny from regulatory authorities – but the primary audience is our employees, who deserve guidance they can understand.

In addition, employees must understand not only what they must do but also why it's important. If they understand how a failure to follow the rules can harm others, they're much more likely to make the right decisions and even apply good decision-making practices to situations not covered by the rules.

What makes a successful compliance leader?

You must be excellent at understanding and influencing people. When you rely too heavily on force, you inevitably face non-compliance, or worse – malicious compliance.

Compliance jobs often come with a high degree of stress – what is something practical you do to maintain a feeling of control?

I remind myself that in the end, my character is all I really have. High performers can lose their jobs. People with healthy habits can get terminal illnesses. People who are good with money can lose it. In our line of work, our decisions affect the welfare of many, and we have a responsibility to push for what's right even if it comes at a personal cost.

In these stressful, high-stakes moments, I remind myself that I can control what I do, even if I can't control how the situation unfolds. And in those moments where I make mistakes, I re-center myself by asking – What's the right next step? I also make a point to work for and hire people who have the same relentless focus on doing what's right, who are courageous enough to challenge me and others when they see something can be better, and who are humble enough to recognize their own mistakes and opportunities to grow.

THE RESULTS

On LinkedIn, we asked...

At your company, have employee misconduct cases increased as a result of a more flexible working culture?

Yes significantly	7%
Yes to some extent	11%
Unchanged	50%
Decreased	32%

LOOKING TO FILL A COMPLIANCE JOB OR LOOKING FOR ONE YOURSELF?

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