

Teri Cotton Santos

CHIEF COMPLIANCE OFFICER
HF SINCLAIR



MORE ABOUT ME

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

I would keep my morning routine which includes a morning meditation, catching up on the latest news, working out and enjoying my coffee. I'd spend my evening enjoying dinner with my family and listening to music.

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

The March on Washington in 1963 where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr delivered the "I Have a Dream" speech.

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

Casablanca. Humphrey Bogart was so cool!

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

My iPhone—I have become incredibly dependent upon it.

Asked & Answered

THE SECRET SAUCE OF COMPLIANCE

What is your secret sauce for compliance?

It begins with having a strong set of personal values and then leaning into those to drive the ethics and compliance program.

For example, one of my personal values is integrity and to me that means a number of things. Doing the right thing even when no one is looking, following through on my commitments and operating with transparency and treating people with respect. So in all of my interactions I strive to engage in those behaviors so that the way in which my colleagues experience me and the compliance program is positive. They know that they can trust the program because it is transparent, consistent, treats them with respect and is credible.

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

Get to know the business. Risk is contextual and prioritizing how to manage risk requires a knowledge of the organization's priorities, products, customers and operations.

Organizations that operate in multiple jurisdictions have different risk profiles than businesses that operate in only one. Organizations that are business to business have different risk profiles than businesses that are direct to consumer. Organizations in highly regulated industries have different risk profiles than organizations that don't.

The mandate of a compliance program can be very large and can outpace its resources. Knowing where to focus the program's efforts is key to providing the best value to the business and can only be done by getting to know the business.

How do you "sell" compliance to other leaders?

Increasingly, I am finding it is not a hard sell. Most leaders understand the importance of operating with integrity and are supportive and accepting of counsel from compliance professionals. I think where some leaders may have concerns is around whether compliance will add extra, and in their view, unnecessary burden to getting things done.

For this reason, it is important to always think about ways in which the compliance program can reduce the burden on employees while continuing to be effective.

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

Many years ago, a peer gave me excellent career advice - rather than thinking of my career as a series of titles, that I should think about the experiences I want to have in my career and the skills I want to leverage. Leading a compliance program enables me to leverage the things I like most about being a lawyer - problem solving, navigating uncertainty and advocacy. For me it was a natural evolution.

What makes a successful compliance leader?

Both the pace of regulatory change and the complexity of the regulatory environment continue to rate high among business leaders' top risk concerns. Compliance leaders can play an important role in helping their organizations navigate regulatory change.

To do this successfully, a compliance leader must have the ability to predict, interpret and prioritize regulatory change for their organizations. This enables the compliance program to remain proactive and ahead of the curve.

How important is data analytics to a compliance program in 2023?

Data analytics are very important. They can be predictive and they can help identify program gaps. Enforcement authorities have also emphasized the importance of using data to manage risk.

To what extent is it the compliance leader's responsibility oversee ESG at their company?

Compliance leaders have an important skillset that enables them to play an effective role in helping their company manage ESG issues.

These include the ability to identify and manage risk, governance expertise and working across an enterprise to drive initiatives or change. Many of the issues that compliance leaders oversee are ESG issues including data privacy, human rights and business ethics.

Finally, what is something practical you do to maintain a feeling of control?

I like to make lists and action plans. When I can get my thoughts on paper, I find them easier to manage.

THE RESULTS

On LinkedIn, we asked...

Hiring Managers: When candidates send thank you notes after interviews, do you respond?

Yes	45%
No	45%
Only if they're progressing	10%

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

Please click the links below:

[HIRING A COMPLIANCE PROFESSIONAL?](#)

[CURRENT JOB OPENINGS](#)

AUGUST 2023