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MORE ABOUT ME

If you could tell your past self one thing, what would it be?

Learn as much as possible, be patient, and enjoy each phase of your life.

The interview for your dream job ends with a solo karaoke performance – which song would you perform?

Livin' On Prayer by Bon Jovi

What is the most beautiful place you've ever seen in person?

I have been to a lot of places but nothing takes my breath away quite like Fenway Park.

What is your biggest ever extravagance?

With two very expensive teenagers, I haven't splurged on something in a while. I am not one for buying expensive material items. I prefer experiences and a 10 day trip to Italy with my wife was probably the last extravagant purchase.



Asked & Answered

THE SECRET SAUCE OF COMPLIANCE

What is your secret sauce for compliance?

My secret sauce is that there is no secret sauce. I know that's a cliché but to lead an impactful and relevant compliance program, you need to function like a Swiss army knife.

There is no magic bullet and it certainly isn't paint by numbers. Knowing the laws and regulations that govern your industry is simply the price of admission. So much more is required of anyone in a compliance role. A strong compliance professional must have a dynamic skill set (strategic mindset, leadership, excellent communication skills, platform skills, an understanding of the business) and a hands-on approach no matter what level you are at. This means knowing your business, operations, and strategy just as well as your colleagues do and speaking their language. It means being focused on operating and leading your business, not just leading a compliance program. It means working to establish a culture where everyone understands why compliance matters, why there are policies, processes, and structure around certain activities, and why the company is better by doing the right things.

It means being committed to innovation, which can be a scary word for compliance professionals - innovation in how you engage the Board, leadership, the sales force, marketing, medical affairs, healthcare professionals, etc. The compliance profession has evolved dramatically over the past 20 years and my goal is always to surprise colleagues with my understanding of the business, my commitment to helping them execute their initiatives, and my willingness to listen to new ideas and approaches. My ultimate goal is for the business to view me as an ally and someone who helps make their business better by being their partner.

To what extent are you concerned about Compliance Officer liability?

I would be lying if I said I didn't worry. On one hand, if I lead a strong, robust compliance program, help to establish and reinforce a culture of doing the right things, and drive thoughtful decision making, I believe that I am meeting the expectations of regulators and can stand behind my work. On the other hand, I worry that I don't know what I don't know and that I am the face of the program. We all know that things will go wrong from time to time and, ultimately, regulators will look to the Compliance Officer for answers as to what happened and why.

I strive to ensure that I can always defend the choices that my company makes and that a meaningful discussion on potential risks always occurs, and appropriate documentation exists.

What is the ideal relationship between Compliance and Legal teams?

I know this may be controversial, but in my view it is imperative that we recognize that these are two different functions with two different remits, particularly in the pharmaceutical industry. I frequently see companies use the terms "legal" and "compliance" interchangeably. This gets even murkier because compliance reports into legal in many companies and legal may see compliance as a subset of their universe. I know this is a source of frustration among compliance professionals. But having been on both sides, legal and compliance operate differently and see the business through different lenses. Until everyone understands the difference between the two roles, it is hard to establish the right relationship between the two groups. That being said, there is no doubt that legal and compliance teams should work in tandem and lean on each other. Compliance needs a strong legal partner to help interpret laws and external requirements, provide risk assessments, support investigations, and be a sounding board overall.

To what extent should a compliance and ethics program have coverage of off-channel communications?

All company communications, formal or informal, should be subject to the same fundamental standards and principles as they all can be viewed as "company" communications. I think sometimes we lose control of the communications that happen outside of the typical modalities, which have built in governance and oversight. Yet off-channel communications are just as important, and maybe even riskier, because they tend to happen in a more casual, informal manner, which means the word choices may not be as precise. The sheer volume of text messages, which have become the "go to" mode of communication, can be overwhelming to monitor so the rules of engagement need to be part of standard training plans for all relevant personnel.

Is Artificial Intelligence a pro or a con to the compliance profession and why?

I think that Artificial intelligence will have a benefit for the compliance profession. But we need to fully figure out what it entails and how it can be integrated. There are unintended consequences to new technology that we don't always know in advance. Since most compliance teams are under-resourced and budget-constrained, I welcome anything that can make our lives easier. That being said, compliance is a human function - it requires people who do the work day in and day out. AI cannot replace the true impact compliance makes with respect to executing a compliance program, helping operate a company, and advising business teams on their strategic and tactical initiatives.

THE POLL RESULTS

We asked....

Have you ever interviewed with another company as a strategic way to leverage additional compensation from your current employer?

Yes

22%

No

78%

LOOKING TO HIRE IN COMPLIANCE OR LOOKING FOR A JOB YOURSELF?

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