



How to make an engaging  
compliance culture...

*And influence people*



“Two things form the bedrock of any open society — freedom of expression and rule of law. If you don’t have those things, you don’t have a free country.”

Salman Rushdie, quoted in *The Times of India*, January 2008

# Compliance isn't working. And that's not good enough.

The Cambridge dictionary definition of compliance is 'the act of obeying an order, rule, or request.'...

yawn.

At every turn in life, we are being told what to do and when to do it. The last thing we want to do is read yet another manual packed with rules and regulations.

Have you read this compliance report? Tick.

Have you actually?

Probably not...

Who has the time, right?

There's still a widespread belief that compliance is achieved by injecting as much knowledge as possible into an individual's brain, like a sort of anti-liability vaccine.

As a consequence, mention compliance training and a collective groan circulates the room along with an overwhelming sense of boredom and obligation.

Like it or not though, compliance is necessary. You could say that the workplace is much like the world described by Salman Rushdie.

The consequences are too serious to ignore. The corrosive effects of non-compliance — on organisational cultures, on brand reputation, and on wider societal trust — affects us all.

So, compliance is necessary. But it doesn't have to be boring.

Starting at the end of 2018, we invited a number of senior compliance officers from FTSE organisations across the UK to a series of workshops exploring what a better future for workplace compliance would look like. During these sessions we looked at the power of immersive technology and storytelling to nurture influence, and thought about the way employees at differing levels could better influence others to make an engaging compliance culture.

Together we discovered that true compliance only shows up in the relationships between individuals in an organisation. People internalise compliant habits and behaviours because of the norms we establish with colleagues as an interdependent social unit. We demonstrated how compliance situations unfold through transactions and moments between people of varying levels and influence.

Eventually we concluded that the key to creating a compliance culture is enabling people at all levels to understand and express the value of compliant-first performance, thereby influencing those around them to do the same.

This report is our initial overview of the findings of these sessions, along with expert insight from key delegates at the event.

It represents the first step in an ongoing programme of events and publications redrawing the boundaries and ambitions of what a successful, engaging corporate compliance culture looks like.

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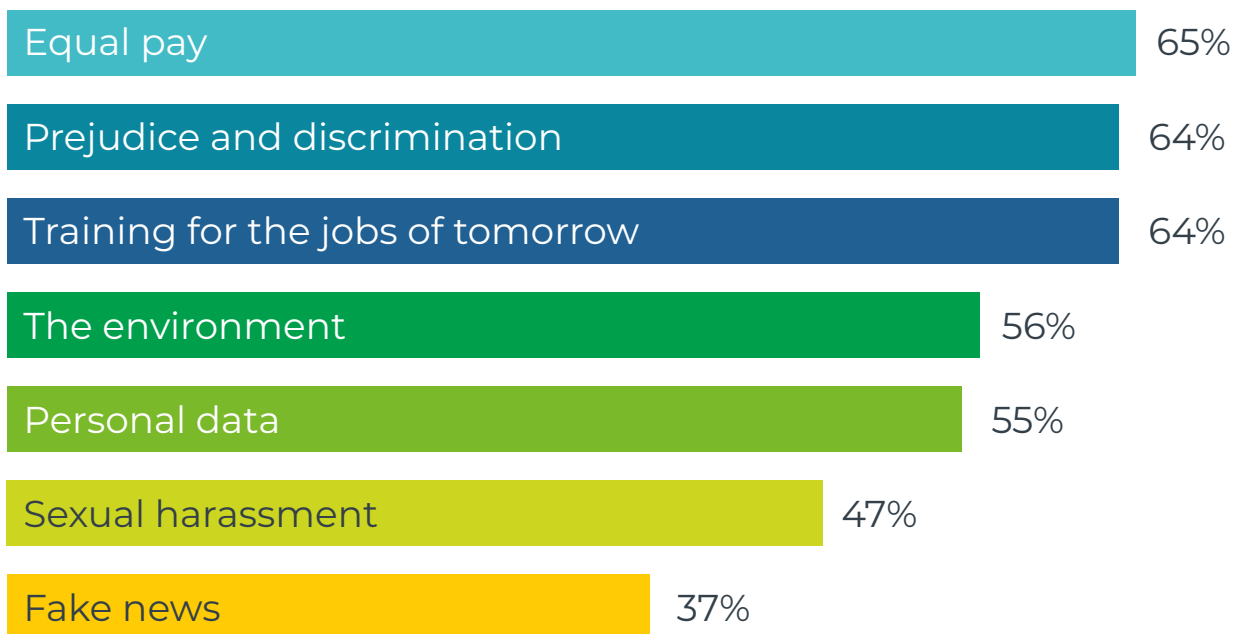


People worldwide are looking for corporate leadership and institutions they can trust.

# 76%

People who say that CEOs should take the lead on change rather than waiting for government to impose it

Percent who agree CEOs can create positive change in:



# 71%

of employees agree

It's critically important for my CEO to respond to challenging times:

- Industry issues
- Political events
- National crises
- Employee-driven issues

Source: 2019 Edelman Trust Barometer global report  
[https://www.edelman.com/sites/g/files/aatuss191/files/2019-03/2019\\_Edelman\\_Trust\\_Barometer\\_Global\\_Report.pdf](https://www.edelman.com/sites/g/files/aatuss191/files/2019-03/2019_Edelman_Trust_Barometer_Global_Report.pdf)





## Cascading compliance from the top down:

### Setting the tone with the executive board

A set of values, beliefs and principles are at the root of any business, and the only way to ensure compliance culture doesn't get left behind is to give compliance a seat on the board. The next challenge is for the board and executive team to really understand and recognise the value of compliance, communicating its importance to leaders, and encouraging them to consult if they need support.

At our first compliance workshop, Learning Manager Elaine Sharpe said:

*"It's really important to have the tone from the top that compliance is integral to the way that people operate in an organisation. But we need to make sure individuals are aware of their personal responsibilities and, critically, that it's a strength to consult. Consultation is not a weakness. In fact, it's one of the key things in our compliance area — to consult when you need help."*

If senior management begin to approach compliance as an enabler for key organisational objectives, they can begin to shift any fear- or boredom-based language around compliance towards a more positive tone.

## Line managers:

### Moving beyond the 'tick box' model

A key challenge for line managers is finding the time and space to empower and enable employees to do the right thing. As it stands compliance is viewed as a necessity, but not a priority for leadership, who are busy trying to meet bottom line objectives and hit targets.

It's an after-thought, a 'must do' activity that line managers simply get out of the way or rush through so they can focus on more important areas.

This disengaged compliance culture is the prevailing norm in large-scale, high-value, heavily regulated industries.

It causes excessive risk, poor performance, lack of trust and organisational vulnerability.

To better influence others, line managers need to:

- Clear time in their diary to focus on compliance learning
- Put emphasis on what people are doing right to encourage engagement
- Ensure non-compliant employees truly understand why it's important
- Shift their thinking from a 'tick box' approach to building better habits
- Continually build a narrative about values within the company.



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## The compliance team: Establishing influence through creativity

It's only at this advanced stage that the compliance culture solution finally arrives at the department that shoulders official responsibility.

The compliance team generally get a bad rap and are cornered into the same 'boring' category as compliance itself. This is mainly because they tend to rear their heads when there is a bunch of intimidating paperwork or a 50-slide training manual to get through but also because they too have lost their way with the true value of compliance. This dip in motivation is then likely to lead to a drop in job performance as they question why the extent of their influence has weakened.



The best way to address this challenge is to explore fresh compliance learning techniques and implement blended solutions that are informative but also engaging for employees. At the same workshop last year Risk Control and Compliance Director Alberto Coppo explained:

*“To make training fun and more accessible, use videos, real-life examples, maybe cartoons or interactive training where you have multiple answers and it leads you onto a path. So, really make the experience more pleasant rather than making employees go through the same old 50 pages of slides... Just make it fun and accessible.”*

Avoid technical language and bring compliance to life with creative techniques, and colleagues will soon begin to see the compliance team in a more positive light.

This will then have a positive impact on morale and motivate the team to become champions on compliance to both the executive committee and line managers.





## Your colleagues and You: Seeing the bigger picture every day

Workers are sandwiched in the middle, between what regulators require and how managers interpret senior leadership priorities. This is why, if you have all of the above in place, it should create a healthy environment to nurture a compliance culture that will feed down across the business. The executive board have set the tone and now see the value, the line managers feel comfortable influencing their teams and consulting when they need to, and the compliance team are employing innovative techniques to engage staff.

To truly enable business-wide engagement in compliance, consider ways you can help people to take ownership of the reputation and culture of the business. Make compliance less of a chore and more of a natural presence in the working day.

Risk Management Senior Manager Richard Goldsmith put it well when he said:

*“Compliance is something that people are wary of and not particularly interested in, but if we can change things up to be part of their everyday working life and something they just do as second nature, then it’s important to them as well as to the business.”*



Take ownership of the reputation and culture of the business. Make compliance less of a chore and more of a natural presence in the working day.



## Breathing life back into workplace compliance

We are moving way beyond the need for novel-sized manuals that brought about a 'tick box' model for compliance. The future of compliance is very much moving into the realms of learning and development.

Businesses are innovating with gamification, video training, creative workshops — there are plenty of opportunities to put life back into workplace compliance. It's time to craft the future of compliance training.

And it isn't boring at all.





## Don't take our word for it

- Hear it direct from the experts who have joined us at our [Compliance Learning Studio Sessions](#).
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