

Compliance & Ethics Professional

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CEO of Compliance Wave,
Red Bank, New Jersey

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by Roy Snell, CHC, CCEP-F

Questions that leadership should ask the compliance officer

Please don't hesitate to call me about anything any time.

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Below are some questions leadership should ask the compliance officer and a suggestion about how to implement these questions in your organization. You need to collaborate with leadership to pick a subset of the questions to implement. Then over time you can add, edit, and delete questions.



Snell

- ▶ Is there anyone interfering with your ability to implement any of the elements of an effective compliance program?
- ▶ Is there anyone interfering with your ability to prevent, find, or fix this organization's legal, policy, or ethical issues?
- ▶ Do you have any responsibilities outside of compliance and ethics that could cause you to have a conflict?
- ▶ Do you report to anyone who has any responsibilities that could cause conflicts of interest for the compliance program?
- ▶ Is anyone with a conflict of interest guiding or directing the compliance and ethics program?

- ▶ Are there any issues that have been reported to you that are not being addressed?
- ▶ Has any issue been outstanding beyond a reasonable amount of time?
- ▶ Have we ever had an outside evaluation of our compliance and ethics program?
- ▶ Are we staying abreast of current trends in enforcement and effective compliance program management?

You need to collaborate with leadership to pick a subset of the questions to implement. Then over time you can add, edit, and delete questions.

- ▶ Are there any areas where our compliance program lags industry best practices?
- ▶ Are we anticipating any potential new legal risks in the near future?
- ▶ Are there any substantive compliance issues currently under investigation?

- ▶ What issues are the enforcement community currently reviewing/ investigating in our industry, and where do we stand on those issues?
- ▶ How do you evaluate our organization's ethical culture?
- ▶ Is there anything that leadership can do to help further develop, maintain, or support the compliance and ethics program?
- ▶ Is there any further compliance and ethics education that you think leadership should attend?
- ▶ Do we need more compliance and ethics expertise on our governing body?
- ▶ Do you have a good working relationship and independent access to internal and external legal counsel, consultants, and auditors?

- ▶ Are you getting cooperation on compliance training, and what type of feedback are you getting from the training?
- ▶ What are you most concerned about?
- ▶ Do you feel that everyone in this organization feels comfortable reporting potential issues, and do they have a reasonable opportunity/mechanism to share their concerns about a policy, legal, or ethical infraction with you?

The governing body and leadership can engage in an effective dialogue with the compliance professional with some version of the suggested leadership questions. I would not try to do this all at once. Once your organization develops this best practice, you can begin to add, delete, and edit questions to make your list more robust. *

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