

# ethikos

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## A definition of ethics in business

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## Ethics in the workplace:

If you don't measure improvement,  
you won't improve

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# Corporate Compliance & Ethics Week: Top Ten list for success

BY BILL WONG, WALTER JOHNSON, AND FRANK RUELAS

**O**n September 18, 1985, something historic was broadcast on late-night TV. It was innovative, witty, and full of humor. On this day, David Letterman of the *Late Night with David Letterman* show presented his first “Top Ten” segment called “The Top Ten Things That Almost Rhyme with Peas.”<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this article, we will not go over that list. However, fast forward 30 years, people and business in all areas of discipline are still using this montage in everyday situations.

Corporate Compliance & Ethics Week (CC&E Week) is scheduled from November 1–7 in 2015.<sup>2</sup> As compliance professionals, this would be a great opportunity to promote the compliance program, to recognize accomplishments from earlier portions of the year; to share current changes in policies, rules, and regulations; and to promote objectives for the following year. As CC&E Week is fast approaching, the authors recommend our “Top Ten List” for a successful observance.



## **10 Find a strong advocate of compliance.**

Depending on the size and scope of the intended celebration, a CEO or president of an organization would be an ideal ally. Having the proclamation and support from the top adds validity and legitimacy to the celebration.

## **9 Create a budget and stick to it.**

Costs can quickly escalate with flyers, promotional giveaways, banners, and celebration materials. Make your content easy to copy and distribute. Using lavish or high-end produced copy not only raises costs, but can add additional steps in creating your content. To reduce cost, collaborate with HR, Sales, Marketing, and/or Public Relations to provide services and/or materials to assist with remaining within budget.

## **8 Sponsor a community-wide event.**

Instigate a poem-writing or essay contest for employees. The theme or topic should be generic, such as “What does compliance mean to me?” or “What is compliance?” The winning essay could be rewarded with a small token prize and featured in a newsletter.

## **7 Advertise.**

To get the most bang for your advertising buck, display posters and flyers promoting the theme of CC&E Week in high-traffic areas. For organizations with multiple locations, be sure to distribute posters and flyers before CC&E Week. It may be impossible to be at every location during the beginning of the event, so identify a liaison to assist with displaying promotional items. In addition, it would help to publish an article

two weeks in advance in a local or regional newspaper and/or local blog promoting the event.

## **6 Assemble a high-performing team.**

The team will not necessarily consist of only compliance professionals. In fact, it should consist of other departments within your organization to build relationships. Representatives from other areas, such as Marketing, Legal, Human Resources, Information Technology, Health Information Management, Patient Financial Services, and Risk/Quality Management would be ideal committee members. Each specialty can offer unique insights, ideas, and different perspectives in creating a successful event. As brilliant or clever as you may be, you can only come up with so many unique or interesting ideas.

## **5 Take advantage of modern technology.**

With the explosion of World Wide Web and social media sites (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, YouTube, and LinkedIn), this would be an ideal area to concentrate on when advertising for the celebration. It is cost effective and has potential to reach a wide audience without any additional cost.

## **4 Compliance training.**

Conduct annual education and training leading up to CC&E Week. Keep things lively. No one wants to read a boring, drawn out message. Be direct and to the point. Sharing participation results and opportunities for improvement can be a discussion topic for the week. Compliance training video can be

shown throughout the event bringing awareness to new compliance issues.

### 3 Game time.

Games are a good way to make learning fun. Activities based on popular game shows such as *Wheel of Fortune*, *Jeopardy*, and *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* are good to emulate. There are currently many templates on the Internet. One would only need minimal technological skills to add compliance content to these templates.

### 2 Freebies.

Everyone loves a freebie. Distribute reusable bags with handouts promoting awareness of the compliance program, corporate code of conduct, conflict of interests, and hotline. Pens, highlighters, magnets, and mugs with compliance hotline telephone number are a great way of gaining exposure. In addition, this is an excellent opportunity for employees to meet members of the compliance team. Putting a face to a name would increase the likelihood of someone reporting a potential violation. If available, have all compliance employees wear a uniform color shirt or T-shirt. Make the compliance professional easy to find for questions and to give employees their bag of freebies.

And Number 1: Drum roll, please...

### 1 Have fun.

This is a time of celebration and recognition. Emphasize the positive by highlighting accomplishments made throughout the year. Make it lively and fresh. Don't treat it as an extension of a committee or meeting, but rather as an annual, celebratory

event. Although every day of the week will should be celebrated, pick one day to have some formal celebration with light snacks, hors d'oeuvres, and refreshments.



There is no magic formula for having an effective CC&E Week. What makes one celebration from another successful is up to the individual and organization. What is important is to know that CC&E Week is a great opportunity to promote the compliance program. By hosting activities that are fun, engaging, and informative, compliance officers can promote awareness. By relying on our Top Test List, compliance officers can remain within scope and budget while accomplishing program objectives. ■

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#### ENDNOTES

- 1 "Late Show Top Ten List" can be found here at [wikipedia.org/wiki/late\\_show\\_top\\_ten\\_list](http://wikipedia.org/wiki/late_show_top_ten_list)
- 2 Roy Snell: "Corporate Compliance & Ethics Week is moving." Letter from the CEO, *Compliance Today*. April 2015, page 5.