

ethikos Volume 32, Number 3. May 01, 2018 Ethics, your Code, and using training to reinforce an ethical culture

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At the start of 2017, who could have predicted that 2018 would end with the uncovering of systemic workplace misconduct and abuse in the entertainment industry? The stories emerging over the past months demonstrate what can happen when an unethical and hostile work environment is not only tolerated, but accepted as a way of doing business.

Who knows what 2018 holds, but are you prepared? Is your code of conduct (Code) robust enough to ensure your company can withstand the next major ethical scandal? Does your Code clearly communicate the importance you place on acting ethically at all times? Do your employees embrace an ethical culture and understand the importance of always living by your Code?

Ethics and your code of conduct

Your Code plays a central role in creating an ethical culture at your company and sets the guidelines for how your company expects your employees to act. So how do you ensure this Code is communicated effectively to your workforce and, equally important, that your workforce comprehends the importance of the Code and takes it upon themselves to live by the Code?

Companies use communication strategies, leadership messaging, etc., to communicate and emphasize the importance of their Code, as well as requiring employees to take training on the Code. In most cases, new hires must take training on the Code within the first couple weeks of starting, and everyone else usually must take the training every year or every two years.

So how can you use your ethics training, or training on your Code, to reinforce your ethical culture and help employees understand the importance of acting ethically? Let's look at five key tactics you can employ.

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