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How compliance functions can help (or harm) growth

by Billy Hughes and Dian Zhang

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Oftentimes during our conversations with CCOs who are looking to launch a new training course, update a policy, or revamp their third-party due diligence process, their biggest challenge isn't picking the right vendor or writing the content. Rather, it's selling the value of the project to skeptical leaders and even more skeptical employees.

To some extent that skepticism is warranted. Research from CEB, now Gartner, shows 61% of employees saying their workload has meaningfully increased in the last few years. Moreover, these employees receive compliance-related requests from an average of 11 different assurance functions. The word "compliance" evokes such an eye roll from some employees that it's the working title of an upcoming comedy series on FX.^[1] Compliance is still seen by many as a function that creates paperwork, stalls new initiatives, and is far too risk averse—what we call a "growth anchor."

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