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Whoever fits in the compliance officer cap, let that person wear it

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Compliance officers provide oversight and administer the organization's compliance program as the repository of corporate ethical norms, rules, and codes of conduct. However, the job hazard inherent in performing this role within an organization is often swept under the rug. First, taking up the role of a compliance officer requires discipline and self-awareness. A compliance officer must be the right person for the job. Certifications in compliance may not be good enough, and good personal ethics and moral standards that are compatible with the organization is a key requirement. An overly ambitious person may not be fit for the compliance office; these compliance officers may give in to subtle compromise in order to further their own career at the expense of the organization. The ability of a compliance officer to discharge the obligations of the compliance office without constraints or loyalty to any person or group must be preserved.

A compliance program can be compromised through a compliance officer whose position has been secured for the wrong reasons. In this situation, the compliance officer will always be out to protect the interest of the powers that appointed him or her, and this will undermine the credibility of compliance functions. Appointing a person who is morally depraved to head the compliance department will be counterproductive and bring the compliance program into disrepute. The overall image and perception of the candidate must be taken into consideration when appointing a compliance officer. In a situation where employees do not trust the compliance officer or where the compliance officer has been found wanting in personal values and conduct, it becomes difficult for employees to follow the direction given by the compliance officer with serious conviction. Two requirements are key for the compliance officer: ethical qualifications and knowledge qualifications.

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