

And why you should build your growth aspirations around it

Defining global identity, philosophy, and principles is a key first step toward international growth – and compliance should be a major component.

Compliance leads to resilience, and aids scalability. Companies that build their business on a frail compliance structure stall their growth aspirations. Entering new markets and hiring in new countries can open companies up to so much more risk. Compliance with global laws must be top of mind during this stage and all those that follow throughout their journey.

Ensuring your company and employees follow all the rules, laws, regulations, standards, and ethical practices that apply to your organization and industry is crucial, and it starts with strong leadership. What are the key aspects of making compliance an integral part of [corporate culture](#)?

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1. Connect compliance to the identity and culture of your company.

If compliance is part of your company's DNA, your team will be better positioned to navigate the regulatory complexities of different markets and maintain the integrity of their company's reputation.

Company culture is a centerpiece when it comes to employee behavior. Strong cultures have two common denominators: agreement about what is valued and shared across all levels of

the company, and the unwavering observance of those values.

A positive culture revolving around integrity acts as the bedrock of world-class ethics and compliance. Program leaders can lean on this corporate culture to make compliance synonymous with their company's identity and culture. According to [Deloitte](#), a culture of integrity is generally characterized by:

Molding your standout corporate values: Define and implement a list of core values that make up the bedrock of your company's commitment to legal and regulatory compliance, integrity, and business ethics.

Coherent and uniform messaging: Leadership messaging in relation to ethics and compliance should be in sync with operational directives and business imperatives.

Imbuing trickle-down corporate culture: When the C-suite makes a point of encouraging employees and business partners to behave legally and ethically, observing compliance and policy requirements becomes second nature within all teams.

Relaying middle managers: Front-line and mid-level supervisors are instrumental in carrying the C-suite messaging, actively turning corporate principles into day-to-day practice.

An open-feedback platform: Employees should be provided a safe space where they are comfortable enough to bring up legal, compliance, and ethics questions and concerns, with an open-door policy, without fear of retaliation.

Accountability: There must be a structure in place for senior leaders and those reporting to them to be held accountable for complying with the law and organizational policy, as well as adhere to organizational values.

Reinforcement throughout the employee life cycle: Recruitment involves intently screening potential employees on the basis of character and competence. The onboarding and

mentoring processes should immerse new employees in corporate values. Throughout the employee's development and career growth, organizational values should be reinforced constantly.

Incentives and accolades: A meritocratic structure bases promotions and rewards on your employee's adherence to ethical values. This structure should make clear not only that exemplary behavior is rewarded but also behavior that reflects poorly on the company's compliant culture will have negative consequences.

Equitable corporate policies: While agreement and consensus among all your employees is difficult to achieve, your team will be more agreeable to internal matters if managed fairly and adjudicated equitably across all company levels.

Once the blueprint of your ethics and compliance program is ready and in action, and sustained by a strong organizational structure that nurtures it, continuous monitoring and improvement will be critical. For it to be successful, compliance needs to permeate across your employee base on an equally frequent basis.

2. Make compliance part of your team's daily workflow.

Compliance is not a C-suite game. It only takes a single noncompliant collaborator to potentially jeopardize the future of a business. Learning-by-doing also applies to companies looking to build up a compliant culture through their employees' everyday tasks.

What are some of the ways company leaders can nurture values and ethics across all departments and hierarchy levels?

Mind the gap: One of the primary obstacles of compliance as a culture trait is the gap between the C-suite's own lens of corporate culture and the rest of the company. Never assume that the organization's culture is on lockdown. Get the perception pulse across your teams by using different useful tools — employee surveys, outside observers, culture-focused

performance reviews, or in-house or third-party run focus groups, to name a few.

Don't get lost in translation: Another common challenge companies face while going from local to global is when their headquarters' vision for its culture gets lost in translation among its international subsidiaries. This creates a potentially harmful distancing between the satellites and the central office. To remedy this, communicate well, communicate often. With explicit, consistent, and tailor-made messaging for each subsidiary, the headquarters' vision of values and ethics will permeate seamlessly across locations. The end goal is for everyone to be clear on the expected behaviors and the principles upholding them. Values need to be delineated beyond nationality, around universal tenants such as honesty, trust, or reliability, all three prized anywhere in the world.

Keep everyone engaged: Equate communicating to a marketing campaign: Use different content, formats, and communication channels to keep it fresh. Storytelling is a powerful component as it can keep your employees connected to your corporate values.

A company's most valued resource is their talent. Use it to not only attain your business growth objectives and KPIs, but also to help sustain the culture and values you want to see reflected within your company in a sustainable way that resists even the harshest headwinds.

3. Set the industry standard and don't back down.

Should your company fail to establish a golden compliance standard, your international growth aspirations are at risk of collapse. Take these critical steps toward becoming a model corporate compliance culture:

Focus on compliance during recruitment:

Hire talent whose values resonate with your company's compliance mission and culture. If all employees live the company's values, promoting them from within is not only much easier but also a rock-solid way to retain them. It is essential that corporate culture does not rest in the hands of a single employee or siloed group. Therein lies the importance of a fool-proof ethics and compliance program, as it can thrive beyond executive changes within the

company's C-suite.

Appeal to a cross-generational workforce:

High turnover rates stifle the development of company culture. Failing to identify the generational aspirations and preferences of your workforce can foster intergenerational tension. Many baby boomers choose to keep working even after 65, providing valuable years of expertise but [limiting promotional opportunities for younger workers](#). Meanwhile, millennials entering the workforce are often driven by a sense of purpose and looking for a collaborative culture. To offer a corporate culture that fosters retention, company leaders must find the balance that provides professional appeal for everyone. Consistent values that all generations are able and willing to get behind go a long way in strengthening that appeal.

Company leaders eager to build a compliant corporate culture with universal values that resonate across the world can rely on an Employer of Record. With this innovative global employment platform, companies can see their mission and values echo across markets and build on them as the basis for their success. Moreover, with teams of legal and HR experts available across 187 countries, Globalization Partners not only helps you build your international dream teams but also supports your company's compliance initiatives while hiring globally.

Want to know more about the most common compliance challenges inherent to global growth? Read our [comprehensive guide](#).