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rolling in**

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Letter from the CEO



Roy Snell

The Pointer Sisters

I think what separates compliance from all other disciplines is that we focus on the process of finding and fixing problems. The reason that compliance exists as a profession is because those who came before us, as bright and talented as they were, simply pointed to the problems. Very few could finish the process of fixing. That was always someone else's job. The "Pointer Sisters" would analyze, study, audit, and write great reports. They would do risk assessments, interviews, and surveys. However, when it came to fixing the problem, they came up a little short. Hence...the compliance profession.

We need to be ever mindful of why we are here, and that is not only to find problems, but also to fix them.

The reason people want to analyze, as opposed to fix, is that many people feel that it's better to know everything before you make a decision. It is very easy for them to justify looking and studying and gathering more pieces of information. How can you argue with that? I'll tell you how: because while you are studying, problems are going unresolved. Not taking action promptly can be very costly. The Pointer Sisters will tell you, "How can you argue with getting more information." It's the old ready, aim, aim, aim, aim, aim. Nobody wants to fire.

Why don't they want to fire? Because it often hurts. Studying a problem is easier than telling somebody they can't do something they want to do.

A risk assessment is more fun than discipline. Surveys are more interesting than arguing with someone about their compliance problem. If the Pointer Sisters could have finished the job, there would be no compliance profession. The problem is that some of these people are now in the compliance profession, and they will dilute our effectiveness.

We need to be ever mindful of why we are here, and that is not only to find problems, but also to fix them. We cannot let the Pointer Sisters turn our profession into the analysis paralysis profession. We need to make sure that we do not lose our focus. We need to avoid the temptation to become like all those before us who could not finish the job. Let's keep the "fixing part" of our job and our profession at the forefront of our minds as we manage the growth and development of our profession. ■

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