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# Letter from the CEO

Roy Snell

## Compliance professionals don't care

It dawned on me the other day that compliance professionals don't care, and they should not care. The compliance profession exists because we needed somebody who didn't care. Our profession exists because those who came before us cared too much.

We don't care if the law is fair or unfair; we simply interpret it the best we can and make sure it's followed. We don't care if we need more or less industry regulation; we simply make sure that people understand and follow the laws that exist today to the best of our ability. We don't spend our time running to Washington, DC to encourage the implementation of another law or to get a law changed. We just don't care. Rather than lose focus, we try to make sure that our time is spent ensuring the regulations that exist today are followed.

We don't care who, or how powerful someone is when deciding what to do about an alleged infraction. Although compliance often reduces overall organization costs, we don't care when compliance may affect revenue. We just want to get it right. We don't care how hard it is to comply. We try to minimize the operational impact and effort, but we make sure, in the end, the regulations are followed.

We don't care how many people need to be trained. We don't care if the education is difficult, or if it requires a couple of hours away from work; we just get the education done. We don't care what the outcome of an investigation will be, so long as the investigation is performed correctly. We don't care what auditing will find; we just look. We don't care who has sent in the complaint or what their motives are; we just check to see if the complaint has merit.



We don't care if a regulation is vague; we try to make it as clear as possible. We don't care if a regulation is confusing; we take the time to understand it. We don't care that there are "too many" regulations; we make sure they are followed.

Those who came before us could not resist the temptation to care. That is why our profession exists. People have many reasons and opportunities to fail because there are a lot of reasons to care. We must stay focused and resist the temptations to care.

This article may not be much help to you. The way it's worded, you probably should not show it to anyone. But frankly, I think more people need to realize why compliance is different. More people need to understand what is different now from what was done in the past. I wouldn't tell anybody that compliance doesn't care, because it would be misunderstood. However, I would approach everyday thinking in the back of my mind. The only thing I care about is to ensure that regulations are followed. And I would be very comfortable with the fact that I didn't care about anything else. I would understand that not caring is what will lead to the successful implementation of a compliance program. ■

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