



## **Ethics Talk featuring Aryn Thawer, Head of Global Compliance & Integrity, LinkedIn Corporation**

### **An Effective Compliance Officer**

I started my career as a corporate attorney and transitioned to a compliance role at eBay prior to joining LinkedIn. And I really learned on the job what it meant to be a compliance officer, and the areas of focus around the key elements of an effective compliance program and that's what I really hold my craft around.

### **Compliance at LinkedIn**

At LinkedIn, perhaps more than other conventional companies, we really get pressed to innovate. Just like the business innovates, they expect us to innovate along side them. So what that means is we really think about how we scale our operations, how we create efficiencies, and how we deliver content training guidance in ways that really resonate and that you can measure. For me, I think, rather than having a conventional program we really are breaking down all the current conventions and restarting and building something that's really that's uniquely designed for LinkedIn.

### **Using Innovative Techniques to Keep Employees Engaged**

At LinkedIn, talent is our number one operating priority and the reason we say that is because we're a recruiting talent company. For us, it's really critical for professional development and employee transformation that we arm our employees with the skills they need to do their jobs effectively. From my perspective, compliance isn't just about compliance; it's about making a professional manager better, right? Allowing an employee to transform to the next level so they can look around corners, they can see the same risks that we see in a compliance role. So for us, what we must do is we must customize the set that we build. Our employee base is, I think, on average about twenty-seven years old. So we have a tremendous opportunity being to educate them on the issues that they need to understand in order to flag the risks. We're not asking them to solve the risks; we're asking them to flag the risks. So we customize our training and we build it in a way that is digestible. I think the old methods of training - the 90's type videos - just don't work for us because we're a technology company, so the bar is set a lot higher for us. So what we do is we employ many of the same techniques that our marketing folks do, that our learning and development folks employ to build really customized bespoke training for our employees and it has to be just in time. We try to figure out ways that we can implement our training



in the workflow so that its relevant at the time employees need it rather than really separated from their day to day.

### **Social Media: How Compliance Supports Leadership**

The questions that we get from the business about compliance integrity really revolve around the freedom to operate their businesses and to disrupt the status quo. What I mean by that is that our business today in flex, in that social media is a relatively new phenomenon. The laws in this space haven't been cemented and so we're working in a lot of grey and nuanced areas. So, what they're looking from us is guidance on what that regulatory landscape is in this new world that we're operating in and what can and cant they do. For us, that really ties back to our culture because our culture really serves as the guidepost for us in the absence of data privacy laws that have been solidified over years or in the absence of security frameworks for cyber attacks, things like that. So, they're looking at us for guidance and we're looking to arm them with information and with knowledge around what steps they can take to better drive our business forward.

### **Creating and Sustaining a Culture of Transparency**

I work at a social media company and the one thing the Internet has done is it's really increased transparency around the world, right? And so as folks who work in the industry we realize that transparency is critical to our speed and execution in the business. It really starts at the top. At LinkedIn our leaders, on a biweekly basis, they get out in front of the entire business and we do an operating review every two weeks. So that means all our employees around the globe are connected, they understand what's going on and our leaders are accountable to them because we have a Q&A period at the end of each session where employees can speak up and talk about the issues that they're faced with and directly deal with the leaders who are responsible. So that really is what sets the tone for us in terms of transparency, but I think what really sets us apart is that we emphasize collaboration and we emphasize transparency because we know how important it is for us to execute quickly.

### **Collaboration at LinkedIn**

Collaboration really is an ability to work cross functionally. We work in such an interdependent company that in order to execute on any project, you may have five or ten different teams working on something. So in order to collaborate there has to be a clear set of roles and responsibilities that every body understands. We know who the decision maker is; we know who the responsible parties are and who the advisors are. So having



that role clarity and definition really helps with collaboration because it increases the speed of decision-making.

### **Transparency as a Differentiator**

Every company has some kind of big hairy audacious goal and so what I feel like is that sometimes companies miss out on tying in their culture and values to demonstrate how they can help the company achieve those ambitious targets and so what we focus on is really showing how our culture is a tool and a competitive advantage for us to get to our big goals.