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6 Ways to Achieve Compliance without an Audit

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No doubt there is a need for compliance audits. I do them. You do them. Almost every regulatory & compliance lawyer and consulting company that exists does them. In fact, some state and federal laws mandate that you do a compliance audit. You can do them internally, you can do them externally, and you can run yourself in circles trying to make someone who matters realize the value in implementing changes that result from the audit.

Realistically, there are only so many traffic signals and stop signs you can yield to. In the first of a recurring series of Compliance Corner posts, we're going to look at 6 practical tips you can implement without a formal compliance audit that will either stave off the regulators, or make a couple of zeros drop off their demand (I mean before the decimal point). Even if you've had a terrible experience interacting with a government agency, and you just don't buy that these efforts will matter to them, these tips will help you to build better relationships with your customers.

1. **Google yourself every month and implement a strategy to make your visibility more positive**. Do positive or negative reviews come up? What are your customers, the media, & competitors saying about you? Remember what comes up for you is what comes up for them (the regulators). Make your visibility mater.
2. **Improve your BBB rating.** The BBB has guidelines for how they rate. Learn them. Get to know your local office. Having no BBB rating can be as damaging as having a negative BBB rating.
3. **Have a method to track and resolve consumer complaints, and address the root cause of systemic trends.** Invest in understanding complaint issues and data tracking systems. Invest in personnel (internal or external) to respond generously to complaints. Remember the rule your entrepreneurial uncle taught you way-back-when: The customer is always right.
4. **Check in with your employees who are on the ground.** Make time to understand what kind of a culture your employees work in. While you can never satisfy every employee, remember, these are the people who make the best whistleblowers. You should be aware of what employees might whistle blow about before it happens.
5. **Find a customer service role model to emulate.** Companies need mentors too. Think through all the transactions you have in a month. Dial your 1-800 number, visit your online site and mobile application, and

visit a brick & mortar location (if you have one) once per quarter. Rate yourself. How does your company rank in all those transactional experiences? Be honest with yourself and the decision makers around you.

6. **Set the tone at the top.** Simply papering policies won't do it. You need the people around you to be invested in the kind of compliance culture you want.

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Topics

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