STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Methods For Delivering Effective Compliance Training

Richard P. Kusserow | December 2023

Compliance education and training programs are critical for compliance programs. Education and training programs must have the right content and be presented in a manner that increases employee retention of the lessons. There are many methods by which training can be delivered, and choosing the right type should involve budget, audience, location, time frame, and goals. Training should not just provide a lot of rules and information but be presented engagingly or interestingly. The objective is to provide information in a manner that allows participants to retain and apply the lessons in their daily activities. Regardless of the method adopted for training, it is important that trainees view the material as relevant to their work environment. The following discusses some of these methods.

1. **PowerPoint Lecture Approach** is a very common approach. It has the benefit of being recorded, allowing employees to access the information at any time and any location. However, it is not the most effective teaching method for compliance training, especially for employees working remotely. Also, the amount of content needed to address compliance program operation, the Code of Conduct, policies, and applicable laws/regulations may result in dozens of slides that can be deadening to participants. It is best to use this approach to provide more limited information, such as updates on laws, regulations, and organization policies.

2. **Instructor-Led Training (ILT)** is the style of facilitated classroom training delivered by trained instructors. Most people are familiar with it, and it is particularly effective with trainers skilled in facilitating the process. It is delivered in a classroom setting with the program using a lecture-style presentation with supporting visual elements. Direct interaction with trainers and employees permits answering questions, reinforcing key messages, and providing immediate feedback on issues raised regarding the work environment and operations. There are downsides to this method including (a) being the

costliest in terms of having to use dedicated space and pulling employees from their duties to undergo the training; (b) training classes are limited in size, resulting in many sessions; (c) is dependent on having knowledgeable and effective presenters, and (d) it may leave out many employees who are working remotely. The trend had already been well underway to limit ILT in favor of other delivery methods, but this movement was accelerated by the COVID-19 Pandemic, when face-to-face training became impractical, especially with significant increases in employees working remotely. However, ILT can still play a major role in new employee orientation and more complex specialized lessons.

3. **Virtual Instructor-Led Training (VILT)** is increasingly common. It involves the instructor providing online training and is delivered with the instructor and learners in different locations. It permits reaching a larger, more distributed audience without the expense of travel or accommodation. In today's environment, traditional ILT has been giving way to VILT, which was accelerated by COVID-19 when face-to-face training became unavailable. Benefits of VILT include increasing their audience reach, boosting capacity, and being more economical. For employees, it offers a flexible learning experience and helps to save time and improve knowledge retention.

4. **Online Learning Management Systems (LMS)** are an increasingly common method of delivering training. It can deliver sophisticated training at a lower cost than traditional training. It can enable employees to digest information in an easy-to-understand format that is easier to retain and can be accessed at any time. Investing in video training is a one-time cost on video production that can be used until your processes are outdated. It enables employees to learn at times convenient to them, without hindering their workplace productivity. Access is through a computer, smartphone, or tablet with an Internet connection without going to a physical location. Learners' content viewing can be tracked along with test results. Employees don't need to finish the session in a single session or on a strict timetable and can schedule at their convenience. This approach provides better knowledge retention and measuring training effectiveness. However,

video training does not offer the in-person level of human contact and can be time-consuming when updating information changes. Pre-purchased training videos may seem easy, but content specific to the organization may be lacking. As such, many organizations find ways of adding some material to pre-packaged content specific to the organization.

5. **Talking Head Video Presentations** are sometimes used. However, they are among the least effective means for full compliance program training; and can be expensive to produce. Their best use can be introducing the training program, preferably by the CEO in a personal message. Other than that, they can be counterproductive. If this approach is used, the video should be limited to 8-12 minutes. Evidence suggests that the attention span of participants declines sharply after that.

6. **Webinars** provide opportunities for learning about compliance-related matters. They can be extremely valuable for those with compliance responsibilities, enabling them to keep up to date on the ever-changing legal and regulatory environment and provide new ideas for making compliance programs more effective. However, they are not a substitute for full employee training on compliance.

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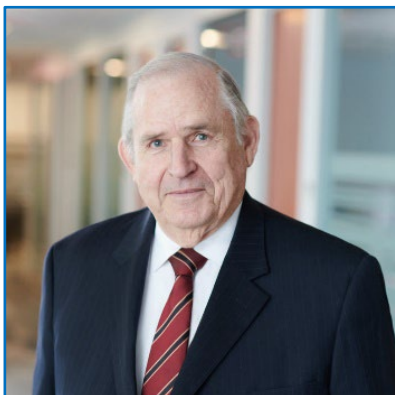
About the Author

Richard P. Kusserow established Strategic Management Services, LLC, after retiring from being the DHHS Inspector General, and has assisted over 2,000 health care organizations and entities in developing, implementing and assessing compliance programs.