



## Compliance, policy and business information principles

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Principles or codes of behavior by a business are often inclusive of some aspects information but do not deal with the special requirements of business information content access, management and use that will support best practice everywhere in the business.

Business information principles may include:

- access to information in a timely and responsive manner;
- the right of the business to deny access to some information;
- ethical handling of all information;
- the right of individuals to protect their personal information;
- the right of employers to determine how information will be managed;
- clear and unambiguous directions to staff in the way that information should be managed;
- the rights of the business to full disclosure of the activities of staff with regards to information;
- clear and unambiguous guidelines for the use of data in the work environment including appropriate manuals where information is used.

In order to determine its own business information principles, each organization will need to be very sure about its stakeholders and their needs. This means that a principle such as 'access to information in a timely and responsive manner' will have different implications for clients and customers than for owners, the senior management team, middle managers, teams and individuals.

Having identified its business information principles, an organization is able to check each time a new project is planned and established and make sure that the needs of every person or group have been acknowledged and accounted for.



Translating principles into policy and conversely identifying the principles behind the policy is essential for compliance. An example of this is in privacy legislation where there is plenty of evidence that whenever the principle of the 'right of individuals to protect their personal information' has been ignored in the business there will be an opportunity for breach of privacy compliance by staff who don't think it applies to what they do.

Identifying principles for the use and management of business information is like creating a culture where codes of conduct are respected and seen as driving the business. If principles are translated into policy and become the background to compliance, the business is working towards a culture of compliance.

A culture of compliance is where all managers and workers know instinctively that the business has a set of rules that are designed in the best interest of its people, its customers or clients and the sector or industry it serves.

Without a culture of compliance why would everyone bother to do the right thing when that might at some time be less convenient or outside their comfort zone? Without a culture of compliance, how much time is going to be used up by the business and its management team on direct supervision and constant retraining?

Protecting the interests of the business is about having its policy and everything that is needed for compliance provided at the place where the work is being carried out. On an intelligent network, policy based on business information principles supports compliance there where the people are working.

Sharing the information and sharing the policy is all that it takes to ensure that everyone is on the same page. Being on the same page is having a culture of compliance making the business productive and safe.

Business information organization and the intelligent network is the focus for business information principles and the policy that follows. This will work for your business only if the way that you organize and control your business information is a matter of business management and not the result of the default setup on the computer system it bought or decisions made by the network administrator.



It is time to ask whether there is a better way.

Check out the **Ten Steps to Best Business** now and see what it offers in managing your policy in conjunction with creating business information principles and then creating a culture of compliance in your business.

<http://www.tensteps.com.au>