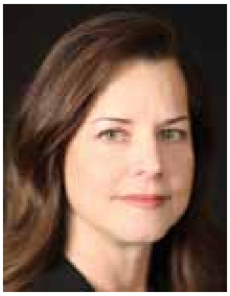

Julie Gibbs
director,
BPE Global
jgibbs@bpeglobal.com

Training by organization

Training on trade compliance is often not as effective as it should be. We've all attended the mandatory trainings where policies and regulations are regurgitated and attendees go away with nothing more than a handout. Occasionally though, a training course will really add value.

This article focuses on tricks and tips to create a value added training course ensuring that "trade compliance" gets through to everyone.

Just like any undertaking, it is important to set aside a certain period of time to do some planning in advance. At least annually, you should go through a training strategy session to identify the primary objectives for the year. Your objectives might be to raise overall awareness, highlight a new risk area that's been identified or prepare for an upcoming Focused Assessment or C-TPAT validation. Formulate a checklist that includes these types of objectives and be sure to align it with regional and product line groups if appropriate. Invite other functions to participate in the checklist review. Activities such as mergers and acquisitions, new product development, new market entry, or other such activities might drive training needs.

Trends are showing that people are not taking one-off classes on their own time or initiative. They are actually responding positively to corporate-sponsored classes. By hosting your own training, you gain ownership by communicating in terms your attendees understand, and using case studies and real-life examples. You should clarify up front how they can immediately use the knowledge they gain, and what it will do for them. And always provide them with easy-to-use resources for future reference.

Depending on the level of executive support, and your organizational structure, consider grouping certain departments together for the training such as: Procurement and Logistics, Tax and Finance, Sales and Marketing, etc. Then you can really tailor the presentation to your audience. Develop a clear summary of the training for these groups so they clearly understand why they have been targeted for the training. A good example would be: "Export Controls and Deemed Exports will provide Senior Scientists the information they need to identify potentially controlled items or technology, and help them understand what restrictions are associated with those controls."

Consider culture when scheduling and developing training. Don't assume that all locations work the same hours as yours. Consider when they might be most receptive to training. For example, even though U.S. companies might start their days at 8a.m., starting a training at 8a.m. in a large Asian city will almost certainly flop. Take into consideration that in many large cities, workers have a long commute!

You'll also want to develop clear and compelling "training objectives." These should be in the attendee's terms, and include what specific actions the attendee can take after completing the course. A bad example would be "learn what Global Trade Compliance means." A good example would be "understand why an order would go on compliance hold and who you should contact."

Once you have identified your training objectives and clearly called out who should be an attendee, it is time to develop targeted content. Consider developing content in terms of depth and detail based on the attendees, such as a high-level overview for new employee orientations verses in-depth process training for trade compliance professionals.

Most attendees outside of the trade compliance field do not have time for a lengthy training session. If you can, utilize other people's training sessions to deliver your content such as an ethics training or other compliance related topic. Also, present concepts in a very focused manner such as a solution to a specific business problem. Talking about trade compliance in general will not stick with anyone. And always review the relevant concepts quickly at the end of the training.

Keep people engaged in the training session. Depending on your corporate culture, consider doing brief quizzes throughout or at the end of the course. Be sure to offer links and resources to get information that supports the answer. Always conduct post-training surveys to see how people received the information. Surveys are the key to the continuous improvement of your training courses. Try to respond quickly to any feedback you receive and don't just focus on how to change it for next year.

Finally, monitor your compliance metrics to see if they've improved since the training. A higher level of compliance should be the ultimate goal and improved metrics will help substantiate training costs to upper management.

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