

Effective Ethics

Reviewed by
Elizabeth Thaler-Barger

COMPLIANCE *Is Just the Beginning* explores the ethical and moral dilemmas employees face every day. The video asks viewers to employ a simple, three-step process for making ethical decisions. In the words of Robert Rosell, writer and director of *Compliance* as well as president of the company that produced it, the video helps “people sort through the complexities of a tough ethical decision and come up with a solution that is consistent with their personal and organizational values.” *Compliance* succeeds on all counts.



Simple but rich

Compliance Is Just the Beginning is divided into two programs. The three-step process for ethical decision making introduced in program one (24 minutes)

and reinforced in program two (32 minutes) comprises these three elements:

Compliance test. Investigate the laws and the rules and understand the spirit behind them.

Ripple effect. Evaluate the impact of your

decision and assume that your choice will become widely known.

Gut check. Take time to reflect on your decisions and be sure you’re staying true to your core values.

Through interviews, dramatizations carefully filmed in a context-neutral environment, and expert opinions, viewers are confronted with a variety of moral and ethical issues that are sure to hit a nerve. Several well-acted workplace scenarios and a humorous compliance parody disguised as a game show illustrate the concepts.

The actors and narrator talk directly to the viewers and effectively nudge them to think about their workplaces and the absurd rationalizations employees make to support unethical decisions: “It won’t hurt anyone.” “No one will ever know.” “Everybody’s doing it.” “They owe me.” Each scenario is followed by discussions between experts who apply the three-step process and suggest what the decision makers must do to escape disastrous consequences. The experts are impressive in their honesty, credibility, and breadth of experience.

Meant to reinforce the lessons illustrated in the first video, program two should be viewed after program one. The scenarios have universal themes, are well-acted and -scripted, and meet a high standard of realism.

Helpful materials

The facilitator guide that accompanies the videos includes handouts, post-segment discussion questions, and optional breakout activities for deeper exploration of the ethical issues. It’s a flexible guide that you

can easily expand for a full-blown training session on ethics. A CD contains classroom materials, a PowerPoint presentation of the handouts, and video transcripts for reproducing and customizing.

Compliance Is Just the Beginning product rating

Holds viewer interest	****
Acting/presenting	****
Diversity	****
Production quality	****
Value of content	****
Instructional value	****
Value for the money	****
Documentation	***.5
Overall rating	****

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We liked...

- the well-acted and -scripted, realistic scenarios
- the credible expert opinions
- the combination of structure and flexibility for facilitators conducting discussions and exercises.

Compliance Is Just the Beginning

Video/DVD, 2005

Quality Media Resources

www.qmr.com

1.800.800.5129

\$675 to \$1062.50

Included materials: facilitation guide, PowerPoint slides, handouts

Recommendation

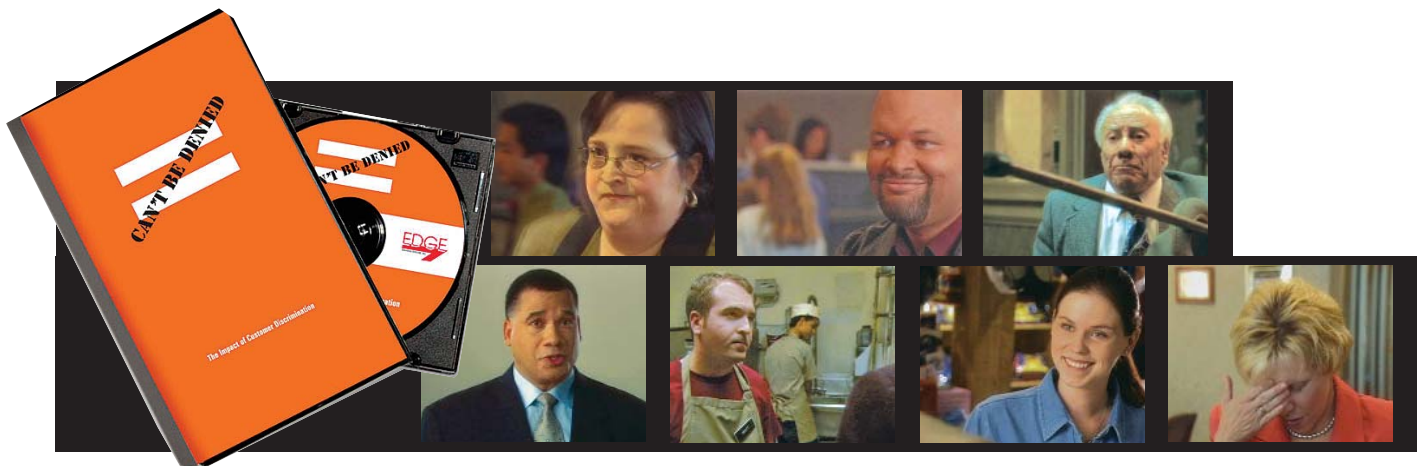
Compliance Is Just the Beginning provides the perfect backdrop to discuss company values, difficult decision making, and ethical issues affecting workers. The variety of scenarios and quality of the content take the sting out of a touchy subject.

In Denial

Reviewed by Bill Ellet

THE TOPIC of this DVD is very specific: denial of service. The opening person-on-the-street interviews identify customers who are likely to receive less-than-perfect service or be denied outright. Affected individuals include those in an ethnic or racial minority group, homosexuals, and the elderly.

The DVD illustrates the causes (prejudice and stereotypes) and the conse-



quences of denial of service through a series of effective vignettes. Along with the interviews, these segments are the best part of the program.

In one vignette, an African-American man waits in line at a bank to open an account and is rudely referred by a teller operating on stereotypes to an officer in the lobby. The officer tries to brush him off until she glances at the cashier's check he has brought with him,

which is made out for six figures. The man, however, decides he'd rather do business at a bank that doesn't employ individuals who project their negative stereotypes onto him.

Edge Training likes to turn its cameras on real people to bring a

refreshing dose of reality into its instructional content. Always good at producing instructional vignettes, the company rarely stoops to contrived or transparently artificial situations. Those strengths remain true for this program as well.

I was a little confused about the audience, however. At times, the program seems to be addressing primarily supervisors. At other times, it seems to be talking to frontline employees. I found such straddling awkward at times. In addition, the script is occasionally heavy-handed. It emphasizes the legal liability of discriminatory customer service, but I think the program would be more convincing to the average worker if it focused more on the business case.

Support documents

The leader guide and participant materials are included on the DVD as PDFs. The leader guide isn't long or fancy, but it gets the job done. It sticks closely to the video and makes some good suggestions for teaching the content in a classroom. Conceivably, this program could be used for self-study; however, I couldn't find any support materials for this use.

Can't Be Denied product rating

Holds viewer interest	****
Acting/presenting	***
Diversity	***.5
Production quality	***.5
Value of content	***.5
Instructional value	***.5
Value for the money	***.5
Documentation	***
Overall rating	***.5

Bill Ellet is editor of *Training Media Review*; wellet@tmreview.com.

Service Learning

Reviewed by Lynn Monaco

AFTER WATCHING this video, you'll want to buy copies to hand out at the stores where you shop. The content is priceless—truly relevant to situations that everyone has experienced as a customer.

The video begins by posing the question, "What's the toughest part of customer service?" It then presents five customer service situations that we've all been in, involving a bank teller, a hardware store clerk, a banquet hall party planner, an insurance phone rep, and a clerk at the registry of motor vehicles.

The situations are classic and can be summed up in one sentence each:

- "It's policy, there's nothing I can do."
- "It's not my department."
- "I've heard this all before."
- "Let me transfer you."
- "I'm happy to help, but . . ."

The video uses the standard teaching method of showing the wrong way to handle the situation, which results in everyone being dissatisfied, and then demonstrating a better way. It's a relief not to see a talking head or hear a voiceover. I prefer to watch scenarios: Show me, don't tell me.

Each scenario has two or three learning

We liked...

- the attitude of the DVD
- the realism of the vignettes.

Could be better...

- The straddling of audiences was awkward in places.
- The emphasis on legal liability was heavy-handed.
- The modules aren't adequate for stand-alone use.

We liked...

- the relevance of the lessons
- the lack of voiceovers or talking heads.

Could be better...

- The lessons are so basic that they're almost platitudes, but they really are what works in customer service.

Can't Be Denied

Video/DVD, 2005, 19 minutes

Edge Training Systems

www.edgetraining.com

800.476.1405

\$695

Included materials: leader guide, participant guide

Recommendation

Does your organization discriminate in its customer service, or want to try to head off the problem before it occurs? *Can't Be Denied* provides effective instruction on this issue.

points that are displayed on the screen, introducing tips such as following:

- Gather information.
- Look for a solution.
- Suggest alternatives.
- Give your full attention.
- If you can't help, find someone who can.
- Own the customer's problem.

All of those statements are so simple and basic that they verge on platitudes, but they really are the essence of good customer service. The video shows how each employee can turn the situation around and then ends with a summary of the lessons learned stated concretely:

- Work with the policies to solve problems.
- Take customers directly to what they need.
- Treat every customer as your customer.

- Take the time to really listen.
- Help customers define their needs. Because we didn't receive the support materials for this product, we can't evaluate them.

So Help Me, Employee Edition

Video/DVD, 2005, 16 minutes

LearnCom

www.learncom.com

800.622.3610

\$695

Included materials: leader guide, PowerPoint slides

Recommendation

I recommend this video for basic customer service training. Although it doesn't break new ground, its concepts are presented briefly and efficiently.

So Help Me, Employee Edition product rating

Holds viewer interest	***.5
Acting/presenting	***.5
Diversity	** .5
Production quality	***.5
Value of content	***.5
Instructional value	***.5
Value for the money	***.5
Overall rating	***.5

Lynn M. Monaco has served in a variety of training positions, including vice president of training and development. She is currently a corporate training consultant in the areas of organization development and change management; monacol@aol.com.

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