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## Enforcement Actions Against Companies Are Likely to Continue - The Missing Element in Leadership Training

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*Oh no, not again*, I thought as I read the latest headline about Biogen's \$900 million settlement. But to be honest, it didn't surprise me. As an ethics and compliance trainer & consultant, I see many missed opportunities in how training is conducted, especially for commercial leaders. Here are two ideas on how we may be able to better train leaders and why it matters.

### **Incorporate a Blended Approach to Design and Delivery Method**

Be careful not to put all your eggs into the online ethics and compliance training basket; online training fatigue is real. In addition, one of the main drawbacks of a self-led online approach is the lack of interaction, clarity, and engagement.

A blended online and live training approach is crucial to developing a culture of ethics among leaders. Live training should not compete with your online strategic approach but rather complement it, and it offers a few advantages that can't be found elsewhere.

- **Better Interaction**

One of the undeniable advantages of live ethics training for commercial leaders is the opportunity for more significant interaction, clarity, and engagement. Clarity matters, especially when discussing ethics and compliance situations that leaders may face. Live main-stage podium presentations by the ethics and compliance team can help. Still, I often find the audience too diverse to allow meaningful discussion, and it may not be seen as a safe environment for robust conversations.

- **Improved Leader Engagement**

Live Interactive training allows for a safe place where leaders can exchange ideas and lets leaders absorb information differently. A facilitator's presence also allows real-world stories and examples to be used and the ability to personalize the training to specific issues organizations may want to address. In addition, less multitasking occurs in facilitator-led training, which increases focus and retention of the subject matter. It helps to find subject matter experts with the experiences your audience will find invaluable.

- **Increased Trust**

Ethics training should be focused on trust; it is easier to build trust when meeting in person versus training remotely. There is a shared comradery that can lead to group consensus and support.

### **Integrate Behavioral Ethics in Your Value-Based Ethics Programs.**

The next evolution for value-based ethics and compliance programs is incorporating behavioral ethics into the approach. Behavioral ethics research is flourishing because it provides insight into how individuals and groups make ethical decisions. The research gives insight into **why** good employees behave unethically, **how** they reach moral choices, and **when** unethical behavior is more likely. When incorporated into leadership training, leaders become self-aware; they can recognize unconscious rationalizations that can distort their judgment. Ethical Self-Awareness is key to keeping leaders from rationalizing a bad decision as good.

- **Don't forget about the TONE AT THE MIDDLE**

Leaders want to have these critical discussions with their direct reports but often don't have the time to figure out how. Leaders need tools to facilitate discussions with their direct reports to ensure tone at the middle. Leaders benefit by having a roadmap of how to reinforce an ethical culture and establish the right tone at the middle to ensure an ethical culture.

## CONCLUSION

Biogen's \$900 million settlement is a painful reminder that enforcement actions against pharmaceutical and medical device companies are not going away. Interactive live training for leaders should be a priority. Live training augments eLearning and meeting presentations by the ethics and compliance team and offers a fresh perspective on critical ethical issues. Without the focus on specific leadership training, violations and fines should not surprise.

[DMH Ethics and Compliance Advisors](#) is a recognized leader in ethics & compliance consulting and specializes in developing, designing, and delivering real-world ethics and compliance training. Mary Holloway, the founder of The Ethical Leadership Academy, moves your organization beyond checking the box to raising the bar and amplifies an organization's value-based ethics approach.

The Ethical Leadership Academy consists of real-world training based on behavioral ethics research and managerial and organizational behavior insight. The Ethical Leadership Academy training is not training on ethical behavior theory; it dives deep into the application and practice and provides tools for leaders to discuss critically essential ethics issues with their direct reports.

For more resources and tools, go to [www.dmhethics.com](http://www.dmhethics.com) or contact Mary Holloway at [mary@dmhethics.com](mailto:mary@dmhethics.com).

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