

Podcast: *HR Bartender*

Episode: Meric Bloch Explains the Intersection of Ethics and Compliance

Summary:

Welcome to the *HR Bartender* podcast! Join this casual conversation to get practical advice on being a better employee, manager, and leader. In today's episode, Sharlyn Lauby, author of the *HR Bartender* blog and host of this podcast, is back for season 3 of the podcast focused on ethics. Her guest is Meric Bloch, Strategic Advisor for Winter Investigations. His experience includes roles as an ethics and compliance officer for 3 multinational Fortune 500 companies and the healthcare system. He has designed, implemented and managed companies' workplace investigation processes worldwide. He has conducted over 800 internal investigations of fraud and serious workplace misconduct, developed the Winter Method for workplace investigations and has trained thousands of HR and compliance professionals to conduct investigations. He is also the author of three books, has published numerous articles and is a frequent speaker on the workplace investigations process.

To begin, Meric identifies the key thing he does when faced with an ethical dilemma. As an investigator, the top things that come to mind when thinking about ethics are fairness, respect and dignity. When ethics is integrated as part of the investigation, the end result is a much better, credible and trustworthy process. Then, he explains the difference between ethics and compliance. Compliance is actually the easy part, as its guidelines are clearly laid out in the form of a company handbook. Ethics goes more towards the values and moral principles that lie beyond the compliance clauses. Everything we know about ethics is usually taught to us by our parents and teachers at a young age. The key for organizations is in how they take ethical values which everyone knows and bring them into the practicalities of professional life. Next, Meric offers pointers for organizations in regards to when they should be conducting training for best results. The best training translates ethics into the company's compliance expectations through teachable moments. Through these teachable moments, it is important that trainees are made aware of the thinking process on both sides of the argument.

Next, we explore the idea of helping the organization understand the connection between ethics, training and investigations. How can HR professionals help the organization understand the ethical way to conduct themselves? When speaking with management about ethics, HR must put these very important ideas into terms that managers can relate to and understand. Oftentimes, Meric has found, people don't actually know that they are doing something ethically wrong. The key distinction of ethics which investigators do is enforce internal rules. Before wrapping up, Meric unpacks the idea that ethics can change over time. When it comes to ethics, he explains, some things are universal truths, while others are more subjective. For example, companies may prohibit behaviors within the workplace that are perfectly acceptable outside of it. Sharlyn closes out the episode with her final take away from her conversation with Meric by highlighting the importance of bringing the practicality component to training.

Connect with Meric on [LinkedIn](#).

Connect with Sharlyn on [LinkedIn](#) and check out her [HR Bartender Blog](#).

