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THE POWER OF ETHICS

The impact of unethical behavior in an organization can be devastating. Billions of dollars are lost as a result of workplace fraud each year. Unethical behavior often has more subtle consequences, such as reduced employee morale and lower productivity. Long term exposure to unethical behavior may encourage others to engage in other corrupt activities. In addition, the dishonesty and mistrust created when colleagues exhibit unethical behavior can contribute to a hostile work environment, unnecessary work stress and even increased health risks.

In contrast, organizations who operate in an ethical environment have employees who report higher levels of satisfaction, a more positive working environment, less stress and even better health.

Western Kentucky University is an organization with strong values of responsibility and integrity. The University encourages its employees, students and the general public to promptly report suspected or known fiscal misconduct by WKU or by WKU personnel. Fiscal misconduct refers to illegal or unethical actions taken by individuals, typically for personal gain. Acts of fiscal misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Misrepresentation of information on documents
- Forgery or alterations of documents
- Theft of University property
- Misuse, misappropriation or mismanagement of funds, supplies, equipment or other assets
- Abuse of authority
- Falsification of documents
- Any apparent violation of local, State or Federal laws
- Authorizing or receiving payment for services not performed (e.g. hours not worked)

WKU offers an ethics and compliance hotline and web site through a third party service provider to report concerns of fiscal misconduct anonymously. Names, phone numbers, IP addresses or any other identifying information is never collected by WKU personnel.

You can make a difference, create positive change and impact others across campus. To anonymously report a concern or an issue, see the following:

Toll free: 1-877-318-9178

Web site: www.wku.ethicspoint.com

WE WANT YOU



TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

HOW TO PREPARE FOR AN AUDIT



Figure 1: A common reaction to news of an impending audit.

Congratulations! Your department has been selected for an audit! What do you do next?

Many people dread the thought of going through an audit, but the overwhelmingly negative connotation is largely undeserved. Contrary to popular belief, audits are not intended to elicit terror or uncover wrongdoing. Instead, audits are designed to improve the efficiency and security of major processes and actually strengthen confidence in the department leaders. Think of the audit as an invaluable tool to improve your department.

Now that the upcoming audit seems a little less intimidating, let's discuss the steps department leaders can take to make the audit process a little easier.

Request cooperation. Notify employees of the upcoming audit and ask for their cooperation in answering questions and demonstrating departmental processes. The more information we have, the more we can help your department.

Gather important information. Specific information will be reviewed by Internal Audit as a part of the planning process, including a current organizational chart, job descriptions for key personnel, and any other department-specific information that is not readily available on the website. (E.g. newsletters, recent audits from outside regulators, etc.)

Review departmental policies. Verify that important departmental policies and procedures reflect current practices. If you find that the policies and procedures are outdated, take steps to update them.

Internal Audit exists to add value and improve the operations of the University. We look forward to getting to know you, learning about your processes and strive to help you achieve greater results.

ASK AN AUDITOR

Dear Auditor,

I just received notice that you will soon be auditing my department. Why did you decide to audit my department over all the others across campus?

Dear Reader,

Great question! Departments are chosen for audit based on an annual risk assessment performed by Administrative Council with assistance from the Office of Internal Audit. Many factors such as volume of transactions, complexity of the department, regulations related to the department, etc. are evaluated during the risk assessment process. The assessment is used to determine the upcoming fiscal year's audit plan, which is presented to the Finance & Budget Committee for approval.

You can submit a question by emailing our staff. We will choose one question per quarter to answer in the newsletter. Please place the words, Ask an Auditor in the subject line.

Contact Us

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