Writing Sample: Blog

Ethics: Making the Difficult Decisions to Protect our Reputation

On numerous occasions I have spoken to our organization on the pride I feel in how we continue to lead with execution. Across Enterprise Infrastructure we have worked tirelessly to improve the reliability, resiliency and quality of the services we provide. Each year we get better at what we do, and subsequently we are asked to do more. Our expanding role is a vote of confidence in our culture and our capabilities.

Core to the manner in which we operate is managing the inherent risks within the services we provide. It is why each year we have seen an improvement in availability of critical applications, reductions in payment errors and improved accuracy of our financial reporting, amongst improvements across nearly all processes we manage. Looking back on the 2014 VOE survey, 91% of our staff feels they are accountable to identify and escalate risks, and in fact only 2% of our staff answered negatively to this question. Your focus on managing risk and your willingness to take accountability to escalate risks shows in our performance.

However, not all employees share similar sentiments when it comes to being comfortable in speaking up when they observe unethical practices. 78% of our staff feels they can report unethical practices without fear of reprisal. Nevertheless, a full 9%, or nearly 1 in 10 of our staff, feel they cannot report unethical practices without fear of reprisal. The fact that some of our employees are afraid to report unethical practices is unsatisfactory. I know that we can do better in this area. We willingly and readily identify, manage and mitigate risks associated with delivering our services, but some of us are concerned about raising unethical practices that may impugn our reputation or worse, harm Citi's clients.

We all know what we consider as unethical behavior; and each one of us must feel 100% confident that we can raise such issues without fear of reprisal. Citi's Code of Conduct prohibits retaliation against any employee who raises a concern in good faith or who participates in an investigation. To raise an issue, you can speak to your manager. If you feel uncomfortable discussing a particular matter with your manager, there are a number of other resources available to help you, such as your manager's manager, your HR representative, or Compliance Officer. You can also contact the Citi Ethics Office in a number of ways, including by calling the Citi Ethics Hotline, a toll-free number (available 24 hours a day, seven days a week in multiple languages); or by sending an email to ethicsconcern@citi.com; or through web submission at http://www.citigroup.com/citi/investor/ethics_hotline.html. The Citi Ethics Office is a resource for you to raise such a concern regarding a possible violation of a law, regulation, Citi policy or ethical standard, ask questions regarding the best course of action in a particular situation, or learn more about potential or actual misconduct. All contacts and investigations are treated as confidentially as possible. If you have exhausted all other options or you are uncomfortable with one of those approaches, reach out directly to myself or one of my direct reports.

If you are ever made to feel you are being targeted or punished for reporting an unethical activity talk to your HR representative immediately. We encourage you to communicate concerns openly and you should never feel that by reporting unethical situations you will experience retaliation. Thus, any employee that retaliates against a colleague who has raised a concern or question is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Retaliation will not be tolerated within our organization.

Our stakeholders entrust us to conduct ourselves responsibly in everything that we do. Allowing unethical behavior to go unchecked harms the reputation of Citi, and our clients. It may seem like a difficult decision to report an unethical practice, but in the end it is quite straight forward and the right thing to do.

~ Jagdish

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Internal Mobility within Enterprise Infrastructure

Earlier this year, I shared with you my expectations on employee engagement and those efforts help drive our execution capabilities. Thank you for taking the time to read the post and share your feedback. Developing our employees is a focal point that my leadership team and I do not take lightly. Ensuring that employees have access to opportunities for development is an on-going initiative. On numerous occasions, I have mentioned how important it is to put our employees in the best possible position to succeed, the need to base job selection on skills and performance and our efforts to develop talent internally.

As you may recall, across Enterprise Infrastructure our goal was to fill 70% of C14+ roles with internal candidates in 2014. Last year we took a step in the right direction by filling 73.8% of all C14+ roles internally. We will continue to work to further improve our performance in this area and have established a goal to fill 75% of all C14+ roles internally this year.

It is important to point out that internal placement applies to both incremental roles, as well as increases in job level, such as a promotion. Regarding promotions, when a job's scope increases, sufficient to warrant a change in level, the "new" position will be posted to ensure that all qualified candidates have an opportunity for consideration. Often this includes incumbents in the prior role, who may have more requisite capabilities than other applicants. Through this process we assess whether or not applicants, including the incumbent, have the necessary skills and experience for the new role.

In reviewing our performance against our internal placement goal, and analyzing how the promotion process is handled, we identified a need to improve employee feedback associated with both processes. As a result, last year, we implemented the following changes to the internal posting process within Enterprise Infrastructure:

- If an employee applies, is phone-screened, or is interviewed for a position and does not have the qualifications to proceed to the next step in the interview process, the employee will receive feedback from the recruiter either via phone or email.
- If an employee interviews with a hiring manager for a position but is not offered the position, the hiring manager will provide specific feedback to the employee demonstrating where the employee should focus their development to better improve their candidacy for future consideration for other roles.

These changes have resulted in improved transparency to both the internal posting and promotion processes, and provided an additional opportunity for employees to receive constructive feedback on development opportunities. The goal is to equip you with actionable feedback so you can develop in certain areas that could potentially help you earn your next position.

If you have any questions please use the comment section below. I also encourage you to share your internal application experience, including what has worked well and what has not, as well as any tips on how to plan next career steps.

Regards,
Jagdish