

Chapter 4

Building Culture for Sustaining Information Governance

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ABSTRACT

The chapter explains what information governance is and why it is important. The problem is identified that organizations know information governance is important but many fail to implement governance or do so poorly. The author questions why companies fail to recognize the benefit of a cultural approach to addressing this critical gap. The chapter introduces the concept that information governance is integral for every organization. The chapter provides insight into hiring, training, professional development, emotional intelligence, and soft skills to build a thriving organization. The chapter explores the need for a positive and dedicated approach to leadership. The chapter explores communication, operational efficiencies, board governance approaches, and examines compliance. Lastly, the chapter explores risk and why organizations must implement a risk management strategy. A conclusion summarizes the need for information governance to build a successful culture that adopts an information governance strategy to be successful.

INTRODUCTION

What is governance; why is it important? Governance is a set of rules regarding how decisions are made that help an individual to continuously act in the best interests of the company. Governance, when done well, can improve the performance of the company by enabling the organization to become stable, productive, and take advantage of opportunities. It can reduce risk, facilitate quicker approaches to company growth, and protect the organization from dangers. Selecting an appropriate governance framework can strengthen the organization from the business process perspective and should be selected based off the industry, specific needs, and nature of the information technology operations being performed. Information governance is an indispensable part of the responsibilities for every organization conducting business in today's competitive and security-centric setting. The question remains: "Why do so many

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organizations struggle to implement an effective governance program, if they even have a program at all?” In the technology industry, the benefits of culture, emotional intelligence, and soft skills are often overlooked because the focus is on analytical skillsets. These same skills are equally important when it comes to sustaining a governance program. The program is only successful when the program incorporates both analytical and soft skills. The analytical side of the program must focus on data or information. Information and data governance are terms that are often used interchangeably but have subtle nuances. Information governance is the management of data resources or assets through the lifecycle by exploring data through acquisition, creation, transportation, storage, use, curation, and the deletion of data utilized by the organization. Data management follows a hierarchical higher-order construct and progresses from low-level operations towards more managerial functions; this is seen through overarching concepts like information governance (Vojvodic & Hitz, 2022). It would be advantageous to thoroughly explore how the industry can realize the benefits of a thriving culture to supplement the adoption of a viable information governance program. Organizations must actively take part in purposefully building the environment appropriate for their business; this includes cultivating customs and values as part of a cultural development strategy. Effective governance provides value to traditional information management by expanding its span vertically—through alignment with business stakeholders, and horizontally—through cross-functional handling of data issues (Vojvodic & Hitz, 2022). Information technology is essential for organizations’ support, viability, and expansion; despite the increasing significance, its usage for benefits and control in the business world remains a problem for corporate management and stakeholders (Singh & Alhulail, 2023). The main purpose of an effective governance program includes accuracy, integrity, safety, compliance, availability, and value addition obligatory for a healthy corporate environment to succeed in this fast-paced global economy.

Strategy and policy are just words on paper. The documents mean nothing if employees do not understand the significance, importance, or the intended outcomes of these items. Both are ineffective if corporate culture does not support the meaning of the initiative. The question to ask is how organizations can help employees understand the necessity and the value of addition of policies that can sometimes make their work more difficult. We must help employees understand why it is important to them, but we must also help them to care about it. If the individual is not directly involved with the strategy and policy setting, it removes them from the sense of ownership that allows an individual to feel naturally integrated into a process. Obviously, not all employees can be involved in the policy setting activities, which simply would not work.

The best way to help employees feel connected is to ensure the adoption of change is integrated into the culture. It can be exponentially more difficult to create a cultural shift rather than just starting fresh with a new group of people. Unfortunately, for many organizations the ability to start anew is simply not an option. One simply cannot replace everyone in the organization and expect things to run smoothly. The question of how to create a valuable cultural shift must be addressed. This is the only way to help the workforce build governance into the core of the organization. Employees should have a strong sense of purpose, have socially accepted normal behaviors and values, and a healthy dose of motivation to ensure the business plans are engrained into the regular everyday work environment using instinctive behaviors. Instinctive behaviors are those habits that employees perform naturally on a consistent and repetitive basis, often without much thought or effort. These are the behaviors that one just automatically does. There has been an abundance of research exploring governance, but gaps exist in how to deploy data or information governance and what strategic actions to take as the volume of data increases considerably over time (Zhang et al., 2022). Information governance is crucial in minimizing risks, ensuring the proper

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