# ONLINE EVENT

# Integrity in the Health Sector in Times of Crisis – Key Takeaways

#Health #Integrity #Brazil #COVID19

Friday, 24 July 2020

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Corruption represents an important obstacle to economic and social development and the maintenance of a sustainable business environment. In times of crisis, characterised by unpredictability, urgency, health threats and the need for a non-routine organisational posture, the risks can be greater. Companies of all sizes are affected and the dilemmas faced are many. This event focused on discussing the key challenges that companies in the health sector are facing. Their survival depends on how quickly they adapt to the new dynamics in order to maintain business continuity and ensure citizens' health. You can find the full video for the event here in Portuguese language.

**Speakers:**

- Paula Oda, Project Coordinator for Business Practices and Public Policies, Instituto Ethos (presenter)
- Priscilla Franklim Martins, Executive Director, Abramed
- Eduardo Winston Silva, President of the Administrative Committee, Instituto Ética Saúde
- Luiz Eduardo Lemes, Manager for Ethics and Compliance, Takeda Brazil

## Challenges of the Health Sector

- Unprecedented worldwide competition and lack of inputs.
- Price pressures.
- Ensuring the quality of products when purchasing inputs.
- Unpredictability, daily-changing conditions and the need for fast decisions creates challenges for decision-makers.
- Dealing with donations as it entails combining the reputation of the brands and requires time for proper checks.
- Accelerated decisions in contracts and negotiations leave room for frauds and corruption.
- Overflow of resources to the health sector create incentives for ill-intentioned individuals and companies to focus their fraudulent attempts on this sector.
- Companies of all sizes face the same level of risk, but larger companies are more exposed as they do more transactions in a day.
- Making sure that integrity and ethics are part of the debate.
- Adapting and relaxing procedures while keeping as much as possible existing controls and acting ethically.
- False perception of compliance programmes as being complicated, expensive and exclusive for large companies.

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## Best practices

- Creation of an assistance channel for procurement agents from private and public enterprises.
- Collaboration between companies to gather information on suppliers and avoid abusive prices.
- Companies with integrity at the core of their values find it easier to minimise risks even when relaxing procedures.
- Companies that have been active in the sector for a long time have an incentive to not want to risk their long-term reputation for short-term advantages and can thus act as positive influencers.

## Recommendations

- Promoting debate on topics related to integrity in the sector is key to create an ethical environment and sensitise relevant actors, from employees to the public sector and civil society.
- Slowing down negotiations and contracts is of utmost importance to avoid risks.
- Crisis should be used as an opportunity to rethink a company's values, consolidate them and show that a company acts with transparency and integrity.
- There is a need to demystify integrity programmes as they can be very simple and cheap.
- Compliance officers should be seen as partners, not as an extra burden, and should be close to the business to understand the issues faced by employees in their daily work.
- Integrity programmes have to be built over time, practiced and should be uncomplicated and intuitive; the most important aspect is functionality and that they are perceived as transparent.
- Employees will only accept and assimilate compliance programmes if they are given a rationale for the rules.
- Employees do not need to be experts on compliance, but rather engaged and educated in integrity.
- A culture of integrity has to be lived from the bottom-up but senior management has to lead by example.