

## **What Makes a Great Compliance Leader?**

FABIANA LACERCA-ALLEN

SVP Compliance, Aimmune Therapeutics, USA

BRENDA CRABTREE

Associate Director, Compliance Auditing and Monitoring, Aimmune Therapeutics, USA

LAURA HAMM

Director Corporate Compliance, Compliance, Aimmune Therapeutics, Inc., USA

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LISA MARES

Executive Assistant, Compliance, Aimmune Therapeutics, Inc., USA

*M. Fabiana Lacerca-Allen contributed the following section. Fabiana has over 30 years of experience in legal and compliance roles, working for leading American companies such as Aimmune, Elan, Mylan, Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, Microsoft, Merck, and AT&T. She has extensive experience in the pharmaceutical industry in leadership roles managing legal and compliance teams and has presented extensively on leadership and management in times of crisis and compliance.*

### **I. You lead others with compassion and emotional intelligence**

Be the kind of leader that you admire and respect. Be kind and loving towards yourself and others. People follow those leaders they can relate to and those they respect, not only for their capabilities but for their human characteristics.

Great leaders exercise emotional intelligence, and they are very adept at understanding their strengths and weaknesses as well as those around them and can assess a situation pretty accurately and in a timely fashion. In other words, they are intuitive. And though they listen to the advice given by others, they make their own decisions and do not hesitate to stand for what is right.

It is key to remain calm under pressure and not to act out of panic. Anticipating risk, assessing a situation, and being able to stay calm allows for strategic thinking and seamless execution.

It is also important that you display cognitive and emotional empathy, understanding other people's perspectives and feelings, so you can relate to them effectively. It is key that you keep your feelings and behaviors in check; however, passion and courage to do what is right are positive attributes of great leaders.

It is important to play to win, know how to lose, and take on things courageously: be strong, capable, and confident. But there is a fine line between confidence and arrogance, and the ability to be assertive needs to be tempered by grace.

Lastly, every leader, great or otherwise, leads by example. People will look to you and will try to emulate your behavior. Your leadership and behavior are key in fostering an environment where people feel inspired.

*Laura Hamm contributed the following section. Laura is a former educator who has worked as a compliance professional for the past ten years. As a global Compliance Officer, Laura has witnessed the evolution of international regulations and recognizes the importance of cross-border collaboration to meet global business goals. Laura is passionate about integrating compliance into business DNA and empowering business partners to achieve objectives with high integrity.*

## **II. You positively influence others through true listening**

*Great leaders are good listeners.*

Great leaders listen, truly listen, to those around them. So often we wait for others to finish speaking so we can respond, often thinking of what we want to say next instead of hearing their thoughts.

True listening is a skill to be honed and can be practiced! Good listeners are truly present; in a live meeting the phone is down, and the listener is making eye contact with the speaker. On the phone, the listener is not multitasking (tempting as it may be in today's fast paced environment).

With the prevalence of remote conferencing and telecommuting, great leaders do not underestimate the power of the video meeting. Yes, initially people groan when they know they will be on video, but the level of engagement, attentive listening, and teambuilding that video meetings provide cannot be underestimated. Thanks to 2020's COVID-19, most of our colleagues are now well accustomed to video conferencing, promoting more face-to-face virtual interactions across the globe than ever before. Great leaders recognize the engagement opportunities during times of crisis and integrate those practices post-crisis and beyond.

Good listeners, those who truly listen to colleagues, superiors, and more junior employees, have a complete and holistic understanding of their environment. Using this understanding supports another vital leadership quality: influencing others.

*Great leaders positively influence others – even without official authority.*

Those with official authority can influence through mandates and dictations. In Compliance, it can be an easy trap to use the power of the Compliance office as means to drive behavior. Mandating change through top-down authority does work – in short term, and, more importantly, at the risk of jeopardizing the culture of open communication and collaborative reputation you want to promote. Great leaders capitalize on learnings gained through authentic listening to influence others and can influence even without official authority. Great leaders can come from the most junior ranks – if someone feels heard, they are far more open to listening to an idea in return.

For example, you hear consistent frustration about a Compliance process. Rather than mandate that compliance is required and that the process must continue as-is, a great leader listens to constructively identify the root cause of pain points (an overly administrative form? more approvers required than necessary to meet requirements?) and gathers feedback from stakeholders on potential solutions – great leaders do not implement change without considering cascading implications (perhaps that seemingly superfluous approver satisfies another functional requirement). Compliance is still required, but there may be opportunity to improve a process. Stakeholder buy-in, and the feeling that those impacted had a voice, is invaluable. Then, when the tough or unpopular decisions arise and change-by-mandate is necessary, the credibility built through true listening cements the open communication and collaborative culture a great leader has fostered.

*Brenda Crabtree contributed the following sections. Brenda is a former US Naval Officer and attorney who has led teams both in the field and in the office. She greatly enjoys working as a compliance professional because she feels very strongly about helping others do the right thing.*

### **III. You ensure the people you lead are treated with respect**

*Good leaders respect the people they lead.*

Some people in leadership positions act as if they know everything and don't need to listen to, or respect, those who report to them. These people make very poor leaders because they fail to see the value in respecting others, and as a result, they struggle to retain talented employees.

A colleague of mine in the Navy once told me that "respect goes up and down the chain," and that phrase has stuck with me. When you treat those you lead with respect, this cultivates a culture in which people feel valued and makes it much easier for those whom you lead to in turn respect you and follow your instructions, even if they disagree. This "chain" of respect is much stronger when the consideration is reciprocal, creating an environment that can withstand disagreement and confrontation.

*Great leaders not only respect those they lead but also ensure that those they lead are treated with respect by others.*

To be a great leader it is not enough to treat those whom you lead with respect. Great leaders foster a positive working environment by ensuring that others in their organization also treat their team with respect.

Being a great leader requires that you proactively manage and engage with your team and that you understand and assist, when needed, with struggles they may be facing in the organization. Leaders who become aware of situations in which someone on their team is being unjustly disrespected but choose to ignore the situation because it may be difficult or unpleasant to intervene are complicit in showing disrespect to this teammate. It takes a great leader to recognize when someone on the team is being treated unfairly and then to step in or assist in responding, as appropriate, to ensure that team members are not only respected within the team environment, but also within the organization as a whole.

### **IV. You resolve conflicts with others**

People come to leaders with various problems, including conflicts with others. While peers may provide a means to vent about conflicts, great leaders not only listen and understand the issue, but also know how to provide the necessary support to help resolve conflicts. In Compliance it is especially important to understand how to resolve conflicts because the Compliance function touches on, and collaborates with, every other function in an organization. And the Compliance function is often brought in to help resolve conflicts that have arisen within an organization and may involve multiple internal stakeholders with competing business interests.

To be successful at conflict resolution, great leaders must have both interpersonal and negotiation skills and know how to leverage these skills to recognize when and how they should provide external support for, or directly intervene in, a conflict. For example, in certain situations, a great leader may recognize that she/he should not get directly involved but rather provide advice on how to resolve the conflict in a professional manner.

In other situations, a great leader may acknowledge that her/his direct intervention is necessary to successfully resolve the conflict. In these situations, great leaders use their negotiation skills to ensure that both sides of the conflict feel their point of view is adequately heard and considered. Successful negotiation doesn't mean giving in to either side, but rather it means developing a complete understanding of the issue and helping both sides reach a solution.

Great leaders also know when and how to be decisive. For example, there may be certain situations in which business, ethical, or other constraints do not allow for negotiation. In these situations, great leaders must know when and how to assert the necessary authority to make a decision that may not be popular or favorable. And great leaders must be willing to take responsibility for their decisions.

*Lisa Mares contributed the following sections. Lisa has worked in various capacities within Human Resources such as business planning, communications, and project management. She is an administrative professional who has lived and worked internationally for the past eight years. Lisa believes that strong leadership begins with awareness around one's own motivation and knowing one's core values.*

#### **V. You bring out the best in people, and people feel relaxed working with you**

Great leaders bring out the best in people and make them feel relaxed because they foster an environment that is open for dynamic dialogue and freedom of expression. For example, great leaders can regularly encourage the people they manage to think about their goals and the things that inspire them to come to work each day, and to practice self-awareness. Great leaders can urge their teams to deeply reflect on the unique qualities and attributes they bring to the team and to apply these attributes without fear of judgment. And most importantly, great leaders can emphasize the value of using their instincts. A great leader aims to develop a team that displays emotional intelligence. The ability to display emotional intelligence is quintessential for well rounded, high-functioning teams.

In order to promote active dialogue and free expression, it is crucial that great leaders listen effectively.

As Laura described above, active listening takes work because we know there is a difference between “hearing” someone and “listening.” When actively listening, we aim to connect, empathize, and truly understand what someone is feeling. When we focus our attention in this way, we make people feel respected and valued, and therefore positive changes are likely to ensue.

Below are some ways great leaders can show their teams that they are interested in each member's goals and contributions:

- Look the speaker in the eyes; be free of personal distractions.
- Take time to process what someone says by pausing to reflect momentarily.
- Actively listen by thinking about the information you are receiving rather than thinking about what you will say in response.
- Try not to interrupt. Ask thoughtful and well-articulated questions.
- Know when it is time for you to speak; affirm what you've heard and move forward.

#### **VI. You manage your own stress**

As a leader, managing stress is pivotal to maintaining balance, in both one's personal and professional spheres. Great leaders must be able to manage their own stress in order to have the focus and presence of mind to then help their team manage stress. As stated above, great leaders lead by example, and leaders can't expect their team members to manage stress if the leaders themselves are unable to do so.

Below are some pillars that leaders can use to manage stress:

- Set clearly defined boundaries between work and personal life. And practice what you preach – if you tell your team you value balance, you must be prepared to support their boundaries as well.
- Set regularly scheduled time for nourishing endeavors, such as meditation, yoga, or other forms of exercise; spend time with family and friends; do volunteer work; or participate in a spiritual practice.

- Maintain healthy eating and lifestyle activities. For example, plan vacations designed to unplug and connect with nature.
- Take on new challenges and goals. For example, possibly taking courses or looking at other ways to become more knowledgeable about subjects you are passionate about.

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**M. Fabiana Lacerca-Allen** has over 30 years of experience in legal and compliance roles, working for leading American companies such as Aimmune, Elan, Mylan, Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, Microsoft, Merck, and AT&T. She has counseled and litigated in the field of international business transactions and international environmental law. She has extensive experience in the pharmaceutical industry in leadership roles in charge of legal and compliance teams. She has counseled and represented clients on a broad range of questions, including strategic business initiatives ensuring compliance with laws and regulations, and corporate policy. Ms. Lacerca-Allen has provided legal support and strategic advice on opportunities and trends in law particularly within the government sector, as well as with major and strategic corporate accounts. Fabiana has established policies and oversight on key areas of compliance affecting international markets, and she has been able to positively impact the perception of compliance, creating compliance training programs and relevant standard operating procedures and has been involved in validating and aiding due diligence in the compliance industry, frequently being requested as speaker and participant in forums. She has been recognized in the industry by *Hispanic Executive Magazine* in 2013, <http://hispanicexecutive.com/2013/fabiana-lacerca-allen/>; recognized as 2015 Women in Leadership, Inspiring Leaders: <http://www.theguardian.com/women-in-leadership/2015/may/12/know-who-you-want-to-be-kidnapped-with-and-four-more-tips-for-leaders>; served as Chair to the Bay Area Ethics & Compliance Association (BECA); and served as Co Chair for CBI, an Advanstar company serving the Life Sciences industry. Ms. Lacerca-Allen was invited to join the Gioja Research Institute while she was a student researching on environmental law. She was recipient of 1992 UCLA's tuition waiver based on merit and recognition, and she represented UCLA in the Roscoe Foundation National Essay Contest submitting a paper on Global Warming.

**Laura Hamm** is the Compliance Director at Aimmune Therapeutics. Before joining Aimmune, Laura was the Compliance Officer of medical device manufacturer Stryker's Neurovascular division, a nearly \$1B business, and Stryker's only global division. At Stryker, Laura oversaw all elements of Neurovascular's compliance program. As a global Compliance Officer, Laura has witnessed the evolution of international regulations, and recognizes the importance of cross-border collaboration to meet global business goals. Laura is passionate about integrating compliance into business DNA, and empowering business partners to achieve objectives with high integrity. Prior to industry, Laura was an educator in the California public school system, focusing on literacy in low-income communities.

**Brenda Crabtree** is the Associate Director, Compliance Auditing and Monitoring at Aimmune Therapeutics. Prior to this, Brenda worked as an intellectual property attorney for biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies and advised pharmaceutical and medical device companies on various compliance matters including corporate policy and strategy, privacy, transparency, and fair market value. Brenda is a humanitarian who began her career in public service as a U.S. Naval Officer, and she applies her strong sense of "doing the right thing" to her work as a compliance professional.

**Lisa Mares** brings over 15 years of Executive Assistant experience and has been instrumental in the following areas: Strategic Business Planning, Communications, Project Management, Operations, and Human Resources. Lisa holds a Bachelor of Science in

Organizational Behavior and Leadership from the University of San Francisco and a Master of Science in Business Administration with a focus in Human Resource Management.

**Aimmune** was created in response to a united call to action from the leading minds and key stakeholders in food allergy who met at an advocacy-sponsored research retreat in 2011 to reach consensus on the direction of food allergy treatment research. Among the outcomes of the retreat, the group concluded that a standard oral immunotherapy (OIT) approach needed to be established, and associated products needed to be developed. When no pharmaceutical company showed interest in developing an OIT treatment, the food allergy community formed Aimmune. Today, Aimmune is working to fulfill the 2011 shared vision of developing a peanut allergy treatment and making it available to allergists for patients worldwide.