

Nomination: 7543

Government Contractor's Creative Solution to Ethics Training

Page: General Information

Provide information about the company to be considered for the award. If you will be nominating an individual, specify the nominee's employer.

Name of Organization/Company

AMERICAN SYSTEMS

Additional Contacts

I do not wish to list additional contacts

Page: Entry Information

Entry Title

Government Contractor's Creative Solution to Ethics Training

Category

B01 - B59 Achievement > B07 - Achievement in Compliance Training

Achievement Submission Format

Written Answers

a. Briefly describe the nominated organization: its history and past performance (up to 200 words). Required

As a 100% employee-owned government contractor, AMERICAN SYSTEMS has a strong ethics-based culture. It's vital that our 1,500+ employee-owners understand the importance of ethics compliance when doing business with the government.

We require our employees to complete an annual Ethics Compliance Training Program. This program consists of reviewing our Code of Business Ethics & Conduct policy annually and completing interactive video-based lessons with challenging questions that are released throughout the year.

These videos are the most unique part of our training curriculum. They are 100% Made for Employee-Owners, by Employee-Owners. From our CEO to call center operators, our employee-owners not only write the scripts, but they also star in and produce the video training. This helps to foster our culture of employee-ownership.

We have had an Ethics Compliance program for more than a decade and previously purchased training from outside vendors with less than desirable results. Ethics Compliance training was once avoided by employees, but it now has become a "favorite" activity that is often voluntarily repeated! Once we started producing the training ourselves, we've seen high engagement and consistency in completion rates within the first week of release (attachment A).

b. Outline the team's or organization's achievements since the beginning of 2021 that you wish to bring to the judges' attention (up to 250 words). Required

As a result of the COVID pandemic, AMERICAN SYSTEMS has moved to a mostly remote workforce. While some may see this move as a challenge for the video production team, we saw it as an opportunity to explore new techniques, and to involve even more employee-owners from different locations than previously had been possible.

Microsoft Teams allowed us to involve employee-owners from across the country without the cost of travel. In a vignette focused on various timesheet compliance topics, we met with and recorded each individual's piece using Teams' background replacement feature. Our talented video editor was able to bring all the clips together to create a Hollywood Squares themed vignette (Video 1).

Excited by the opportunity to involve more employees from across the country, we further explored alternative methods...and locations...for filming. In a vignette themed to the popular TV show, 24, we discussed honest time reporting while working remotely. For this vignette, we asked an employee-owner in Florida to film himself with his iPhone in his home (Video 2).

We have explored creating "hybrid" videos...filming some parts in person, recording other parts using Teams, and even incorporating animation! In this vignette focused on timesheet falsifications, we blend all three together (Video 3).

In our latest vignette, we invited a group of employee-owners to headquarters to film a parody of The Office discussing conflicts of interest and outside employment. This was an especially fun vignette to produce because each actor was excited and committed to their characters (Video 4).

c. Explain why the achievements you have highlighted are unique or significant. If possible compare the achievements to the performance of other players in your industry and/or to the team's or organization's past performance (up to 250 words). Required

When we initially transitioned from the training purchased from an outside organization, the percentage of employees who completed the required training within the first week of release (due within 12 weeks) increased from 15% to 56%. This 56% completion within the first week of release has become our target. In reference to the videos discussed in our nomination, our completion rate within the first week ranged between 56-66% (attachment A, figures 1 & 2). We believe there is a strong correlation in the involvement of more employees from a variety of office locations to the engagement rates we see.

In 2022 and 2023, AMERICAN SYSTEMS has been focused on reinforcing the ethics of time reporting when working with the government. By focusing our ethics training on time reporting compliance, combined with regular communications about expectations, we have improved our compliance with our Time Reporting policy. One expectation is that employee-owners will enter their time at the end of the workday, and no later than 12pm the following business day, or the timesheet is considered late—too many late entries is considered a policy violation. Between 2022 and YTD 2023 zero late timesheet entries are up 8% and the number of policy violations due to late entries is down 2% (attachment A, figure 3).

We look forward to continuing to keep our employee-owners entertained, educated, ethical, and engaged while working remotely, and exploring new ways to leverage technology available to us to accomplish this task.

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