

Empower Your Organization With Mature Incident Management

Did you know organizations that track whistleblowing reports across all sources – open-door conversations, email, mobile and others – [receive 88 percent more reports on average than organizations tracking only web and hotline?](#)

This massive difference is one example of the power of a mature incident management program. Providing a secure mechanism for employees to anonymously report misconduct is critical for every organization. Research shows the organizations that provide a robust means to do so – while putting the resulting data to good use – reap the greatest rewards.

Furthermore, in an era when employees are growing more willing to speak up about workplace misconduct, a movement is occurring in which workers are expecting their employers to embrace a culture of ethical conduct. A multichannel incident management program lays the foundation for an ethical culture and sends a signal to the marketplace that an organization takes those values seriously.

Your incident management program serves as a “first responder” in the creation of a more ethical workplace culture, directly informing the actions taken based on that critical information. If you are not capturing this data, are you missing big-picture organizational risks?

The work of capturing whistleblower allegations across multiple channels doesn't stop at simply taking a report. On the other side of the equation, organizations with mature programs also have systems in place to centralize, analyze, and operationalize this invaluable risk signal data.

■ How to Assess Incident Management Maturity

A great incident management program does more than just check a box. It is a strategic organizational asset that supports growth, culture and reputation while providing meaningful data insights to inform decision-making beyond the scope of a single reported incident.

There are four attributes to assess when evaluating the maturity of an incident management program. Mature programs are comprehensive, scalable, informative and actionable. Let's look at each of these attributes and the scope within each to consider:

Comprehensive

At the “first responder” level, a mature incident management program provides a comprehensive array of channels for individuals to report misconduct.

For example, some employees may feel more comfortable reporting through a phone call instead of an internet-based intake method. Some may feel most comfortable in a closed-door conversation with their supervisor. Perhaps there are logistical challenges to making a private phone call at the workplace. Empowering your workforce to choose the reporting mechanism that fits their needs shows that your organization takes reports of misconduct seriously.

The other side of this multichannel intake mechanism for a mature program is that the corresponding data makes its way to a single repository. A centralized database should capture all manners of reports in a format that enables the review of allegations under a “single pane of glass.” This capability enables the organization to see the big picture – and to act more meaningfully.

Scalable

Organizations that have implemented effective incident management early on enjoy the payoff of having baked these practices and expectations into their DNA, which pays off at scale. Waiting to retroactively implement robust whistleblowing after scaling the organization is much more difficult, costly and disruptive – it’s never too early to lay the foundation for a strong program.

Effective programs can expand to meet the needs of a growing organization. Customizable workflows power repeatable, automatable investigations and case management processes. These efficiencies in case management translate to longer reach and broader data collection, allowing more agility and scaling as an organization grows and evolves.

Informative

The value of a comprehensive program that provides multiple intake channels and centralizes related data hinges on what mature incident management programs do with the data they’ve actually collected.

Informative, robust data and analytics capabilities illuminate larger trends impacting your governance, risk and compliance program. Compelling report dashboards illustrate the story of your company’s cultural health in a way that can mobilize necessary decision makers to act. Which brings us to our next point:

Actionable

The deep insights that a mature incident management program provides are only useful if they translate into meaningful action to redirect or preserve an organization’s cultural dynamics. Sophisticated reporting tools give leaders the confidence they need to take action, and reveal critical areas of opportunity to improve safety, efficiency, retention, brand reputation and more.

■ Value of a Mature Incident Management Program

The most valuable incident management programs excel in four key performance areas.

Improved report collection

When you can tailor your reporting channels and intake experience to serve your specific workforce, report quantity and quality will trend upward. Web, telephone, mobile and in-person reports combine to engender a healthy speak-up culture.

Better case management

As an organization grows and diversifies, case management becomes more complex. Enterprise programs stretch their resources by harnessing a centralized database comprising multiple intake channels, templated investigation workflows to ensure consistency across complex businesses, and automated administrative processes that keep investigations progressing and prevent cases from falling through the cracks.

Stronger analytics and insights

An efficient incident management platform enables administrators to turn on-the-ground data into deep insights into the health of an ethics and compliance program. From case-level details to cross-departmental or global trends, your analytics should create a holistic view for your stakeholders.

Empowered ability to act

Knowing is only half the battle – high-performing GRC programs serve as a vehicle for senior leadership to steer their organization in the right direction. Risk hotspots are identified, policies are updated and disseminated, and training programs are shaped using the invaluable insights generated by an incident management platform.

■ Incident Management Maturity Drives Organizational Value

NAVEX survey data shows organizations with more-mature incident management programs see much greater rates of whistleblowing. Consider the opposite scenario – an organization with a bare-bones program could be missing out on a swath of critical decision-making data.

A mature incident management program does more than simply record misconduct, however. Mature programs leverage that information into insight and action, addressing risk while also setting a foundation of ethical cultural values that help establish them as a leader in the marketplace.

When designed and implemented to maximize these key performance areas, your incident management solution will serve as a powerful tool for engaging your workforce, encouraging a more ethical workplace culture and cultivating trust within your organization.

For more information on how to assess and mature your incident management program, [visit NAVEX's free maturity assessment](#).

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