2017
Greater Omaha Organizational Ethics Survey
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The Greater Omaha Alliance for Business Ethics (Business Ethics Alliance) is an initiative of Omaha business leadership in partnership with Creighton University’s Heider College of Business, the Better Business Bureau, and the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce. The Business Ethics Alliance is a not-for-profit organization that builds leadership, strengthens organizations and elevates Greater Omaha through positive, practical business ethics.

The vision of the Business Ethics Alliance is to be the beacon of business ethics excellence for business communities around the world. We serve as a model for business communities seeking the self-awareness and means necessary for creating ethically prosperous places to live, work and play.

The core values of the Omaha business community are Accountability, Community Responsibility, Financial Vitality, Integrity, and Moral Courage.

The Business Ethics Alliance organizational core values are Big Impact, Ever Learning, Supportive, Tenacity, and Respect.

For more information about the Business Ethics Alliance, please visit our website at http://businessethicsalliance.org.
ABOUT THE 2017 ORGANIZATIONAL ETHICS SURVEY

The 2017 Greater Omaha Organizational Ethics Survey is the fourth survey about organizational ethics in the Greater Omaha business community. The purpose of the surveys is to understand the way that Omaha organizations manage ethics. It is not a measure of whether Omaha organizations are ethical.

The goal of the surveys is to serve as the benchmark on organizational ethics in Greater Omaha and as a template for other business communities to follow. The Business Ethics Alliance regularly conducts the survey to measure changes in organizations’ treatment of ethics.
CONTRIBUTIONS

The 2017 Greater Omaha Organizational Ethics Survey was conducted by the Business Ethics Alliance with support from Better Business Bureau Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce
The Business Ethics Alliance also thanks the following individuals for their contributions to the research effort.

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   Survey Implementation: Rebecca Shively, Ph.D.
The findings and conclusions of this report are those of the Business Ethics Alliance alone and do not represent the views of the contributors of this research project.
METHODOLOGY

Survey questions and methodology were established by the Business Ethics Alliance. Electronic invitations to participate in the survey were sent through the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce online newsletter and evite systems, the Better Business Bureau newsletter, as well as from the Business Ethics Alliance database.

The online survey, posted at Surveymonkey.com was open from November 7 through December 6, 2016. Participants were told that their individual responses to the survey would be confidential and all reporting would be in aggregate. The participant base was an unscientific sample of self-selected respondents. A total of 106 business people participated in the survey. The titles of participants included presidents, CEOs, chairs, executives, directors, owners, compliance officers, and human resource officers.

The response rate increased from the 2014 survey, but was lower compared to the 2008 and 2010 surveys, despite using similar strategies to promote the survey to Greater Omaha businesses. Therefore, this report focuses on the cross-sectional results of the 2017 survey and examines broad themes longitudinally from 2008 to present. However, a direct comparison across the three surveys is not advised due to varying error bands. Convention suggests an acceptable margin of error ranging between 4%-8% at the 95% confidence interval. The margin of error for the 2014 Omaha Organizational Ethics Survey is 10%. Thus, results are reliable to within +/- 10% at the 95% confidence level.
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</tbody>
</table>
Introductory Remarks

In our Elevate Ethics Academy we teach the 3 Minute Rule. This is the practice of slowing down and taking the time to think about what to do. Even three short minutes can be sufficient for a person to identify their most important values and act in ways that capture their noble intentions.

In this same light, I recommend that you make yourself a cup of coffee and take some time to read our 2017 Greater Omaha Organizational Ethics Survey. It will provide you with a view of our local organizations and how they manage their ethics. In a short amount of time, you will find yourself reflecting on your organization. You will strengthen your resolve to continue to focus on your values and spread them through your policies, practices, relationships, and activities.

Though there are several interesting nuggets to share from the survey, I will only emphasize two. First, the number of organizations reporting that they have formal ethics and/or compliance programs is at an all-time high. Though we don’t have direct evidence, I believe that the Business Ethics Alliance has played a role in this. Throughout our ten years, we have educated our business community that formal ethics programs have a high return on investment. When ethics are kept front of mind, businesses flourish and prosper.

Second, organizations find ethics communication challenging. They recognize the need for it, and know that better informal messaging and formal training will maintain and improve their organizational cultures. But the “how” remains an issue. In this world of smart phones and emails, face-to-face conversations are less frequent, and online training has become the norm. Let’s use our 2017 Organizational Ethics Survey as a call to action. Together, let’s create strategies and tools that communicate our values and thereby build the kinds of organizational cultures that can withstand extreme pressures from without and within.

Bemul Krach
Executive Director/CEO
Executive Summary

2017 Greater Omaha Strengths

- **Strength One**
  Respondents reported strong alignment between their organization’s formal and informal ethical cultures.

- **Strength Two**
  The number of organizations reporting the existence of a formal ethics and/or compliance program is at an all-time high since the first Omaha Organizational Ethics Survey in 2008.

- **Strength Three**
  Consistent with previous survey findings, the majority of respondents believe their organizations have strong ethical climates, as well as the city of Omaha as a whole.

2017 Greater Omaha Opportunities

- **Issue One**
  Communication about results from ethics program results tends to be on an “as needed” basis. This was true for both top management and board of directors. Leaders should develop proactive systems for communicating the results of ethics programs throughout all levels of the organization.

  Further, Chapter Eight of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines states: “The organization shall take reasonable steps to communicate periodically and in a practical manner its standards and procedures, and other aspects of the compliance and ethics program, to the individuals referred to in subparagraph (B) by conducting effective training programs and otherwise disseminating information appropriate to such individuals' respective roles and responsibilities.”
Issue Two
Better informed communication, more individual responsibility, and better formal training were all cited as needs for maintaining or improving ethical culture in organizations. Organizations should seek opportunities to infuse ethics into their day to day operations to keep ethics front of mind and an integral part of the organizational culture.

Issue Three
Most organizations surveyed reported mature and well-funded ethics programs. These findings may not generalize to midsize or smaller organizations within Greater Omaha. Small and midsize organizations can seek innovative low-cost ways to bring intentionality around ethics in their organizations. Our survey sample is limited in the comparisons we can make by company size.
2017 Greater Omaha Organizational Ethics Survey

Findings

More than half of the organizations surveyed reported having a mission statement, vision statement, written code of conduct, and values statement. Fewer companies reported having topical policies about ethics or departmental specific policies.

Which of the following does your company have?

- Mission Statement: 91%
- Vision Statement: 76%
- Written Code of Conduct: 71%
- Values Statement: 63%
- Topical Policies About Ethics: 50%
- Departmental Specific Ethics Policies: 22%

Small and medium organizations were less likely to have written codes of conduct, departmental specific policies, and topical policies, compared to large organizations.*

*Note to reader. Where possible, we distinguish between small (1-50), medium (51-1000), and large (1001+) organizations. However, comparisons are not possible for every question due to varying sample sizes.
Just over half (58%) of the organizations reported having employees sign a code of conduct at their organization.

**Do employees have to sign a code of conduct at your organization?**

- Yes: 58%
- No: 36%
- Unsure: 6%

*This number varied by organization size, with 90% of large organizations having this requirement, but only 36% of medium organizations and 33% of small organizations.*

Nearly all respondents (97%) reported that they feel that having some form of formal ethics policy is important to the company.

*This finding was consistent across company size.*

**Do you feel that having some form of formal ethics policy is important to the company?**

- Yes: 97%
- No: 1%
- Unsure: 2%
Several respondents commented on the importance of formal policies:

“More than ever, we must promote ethics as the only way to conduct our business.”

“Not as important as the reality of the organizational culture.”

“Our corporate culture makes our position on ethics pretty clear.”

“I do feel a policy is important, yet if it is not regularly discussed and reviewed, it is not influential.”

“We have a written code through our profession.”
In addition to the importance of formal policies, over half of respondents (59%) reported close alignment between the formal and informal ethical culture of their organization. Only 2% reported no alignment between the two, and 3% reported slight alignment. *This finding was consistent across company size.*

**How closely does your organization's formal and informal ethical culture align?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alignment Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not aligned at all</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly aligned</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat aligned</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately aligned</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closely aligned</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, most respondents reported that employees are informed of ethics policies primarily when hired (68%), at annual meetings (40%), or on an as-needed basis (35%). *This finding was consistent across company size.*

**If you have some form of organizational ethics policy are employees informed of it? If so, how often?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When hired</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual meetings</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As needed</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly meetings</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly meetings</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several participants elaborated on the question:

“Employees are introduced to the code of ethics when they begin employment. Employees sign an acknowledgement form at the time of hire as well as annually that they have read the code of ethics. BOD and Supervisory committee members are required to review the code of ethics annually and sign an acknowledgement form of their review.”

“It is randomly brought up in weekly memos, and reiterated during monthly manager meetings.”

“Specific training sessions”

“Weekly, sections are covered in the weekly company memo.”

“We remind employees in communications related to ethics.”

“Policy/procedure changes; new regulations.”

“We meet monthly for “Best Practices” where ethical questions are frequently addressed.”

“Electronic training one time per year.”

“It is constant!”

“We use multiple channels to communicate information about our ethics policy… monthly articles on Intranet, quarterly ethics refreshers, annual training, and new hire training.”
Ethical Culture

When asked what would help maintain or improve the ethical culture of their company, over half of the respondents suggested that better-informed communication would help, as well as more individual responsibility, and better formal training.

The 2008, 2010, and 2014 Omaha Organizational Ethics Survey all reported communication as the most frequently cited solution for maintaining or improving ethical culture. Consistent with findings from the previous surveys, communication was again the top answer for maintaining or improving an ethical culture in 2017. *This finding was consistent across company size.*

**What would help maintain or improve your company’s ethical culture?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better informed communication</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More individual responsibility</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better formal training</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better role modeling</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearer policies</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better supervisors</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More web-based training</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A universal code of conduct</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower cost formal programs</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Next, we asked participants about their perception of the balance between ethics and compliance when it comes to their company’s culture. Over half of respondents (58%) reported a balance between ethics and compliance in their company culture.

**Which of the following is the primary focus of your company's culture?**

- Equally balanced: 58%
- Ethics: 20%
- Compliance: 16%
- Neither: 5%

*Large and medium organizations tended to report a balance between ethics and compliance (70% and 63%, respectively), while small organizations tended to focus on ethics (48%).*
Reporting Ethical Issues

The next section of the survey included questions regarding reporting ethical issues. The most common method for reporting violations was one-on-one discussions (71%), followed by a third-party reporting line (34%), comment or suggestion box (26%), and in-house reporting line (26%). The use of a third-party reporting line has been rising since the first Omaha Organizational Ethic Survey in 2008. The option of “Mobile App” is a new addition as a reporting method for the 2017 survey.

Which of the following does your company use for anonymous reporting of perceived ethics violations?

- One-on-one discussions: 71%
- Third party report line: 34%
- Comments/suggestion box: 26%
- In-house report line: 26%
- Web-based reporting: 17%
- None: 13%
- Post office box: 9%
- Voice mail: 8%
- Mobile App: 1%

One-on-one discussions were the most common method of small (64%) and medium organizations (75%), while large organizations were most likely to use a third-party reporting line (80%).

According to survey respondents, most ethics reports appear to go to Human Resources, the President, CEO, Chairperson, or Board of Directors. Other avenues of reporting that were not listed included a compliance officer, internal audit department, or ethics officer.
Smaller organizations were more likely to report to the Owner or President, CEO, Chairperson, while medium and large organizations reported Human Resources as the most common recipient of reports.
Formal Ethics/Compliance Programs

The next survey topic included questions over formal ethics and/or compliance programs. Over half of the survey respondents reported having a formal ethics and/or compliance program or initiative. This number has increased from the 2014 survey (51%), 2010 survey (45%), and 2008 survey (38%).

Does your company have a formal ethics and/or compliance program or initiative?

- Yes
- No

Large (90%) and medium (70%) were more likely to have a formal program, while only 7% of small organizations reported having a formal program.
When asked about the reasons that may have influenced their organization’s decision to not have a formal ethics and/or compliance program, most respondents believed their organization is too small for formal programs.

**What reasons influenced your organization’s decision not to have a formal ethics/compliance program?**

- **Our organization is too small** - 74%
- **We don’t have the budget** - 18%
- **We don’t need a program** - 18%

60% of small organizations said their organization was too small for a program and 44% said they were considering a program.

*Due to the small number of small organizations with formal programs, size comparisons are not available for questions pertaining to formal programs.*
Of the organizations without a formal program, over half (55%) reported that they were considering a program. Just under a third (32%) believe they do not need a program.

![Bar chart showing the need for ethics and compliance programs]

Of the organizations with formal programs, just over half reported that the program has existed for more than 10 years (53%). All respondents reported having a formal program in place for at least 2-3 years.

![Bar chart showing the duration of ethics and compliance programs]
Over three quarters (78%) of respondents believed that starting their program was the right thing to do. Over half (52%) reported legal or regulatory requirements as a motivator for starting a program.

What reasons influenced the starting of your company’s ethics and/or compliance program?

- It was the right thing to do: 78%
- Other legal or regulatory requirements: 52%
- Business Ethics Alliance: 20%
- Sarbanes Oxley Law: 20%
- Federal sentencing guidelines: 20%
- Lawsuit or serious business conduct incident: 13%
- Others are doing it too: 9%

In companies with formal programs, most of the responsibility falls to someone in Human Resources, the President, CEO or Chair, or a Department Head.

Which areas of your organization are primarily responsible for your ethics and/or compliance program?

- Human Resources: 68%
- President, CEO or Chair: 61%
- Department Heads: 43%
- Legal: 41%
- Risk Management: 40%
- Finance: 30%
- Audit: 30%
The majority of respondents reported that management is advised of program results on an as needed basis.

**How often is management advised of ethics program results?**

- As needed: 60%
- Quarterly: 17%
- Monthly: 15%
- Annually: 4%
- Never: 2%

Similarly, organizations with a board appear to have similar patterns of being advised of ethics program results.

**How often is your board advised of ethics program results?**

- As needed: 53%
- Quarterly: 23%
- Monthly: 4%
- Annually: 11%
- Never: 0%
- Not applicable: 9%
Just under half (42%) of respondents reported that one to two full-time employees manage their ethics and/or compliance program. Just over a quarter (27%) of respondents reported a team of three to five people to manage their program. Only large organizations reported as many as six or more people assigned to manage ethics and compliance.

### How many full-time equivalent people are assigned to manage your ethics and/or compliance program?

- **6 or more**: 15%
- **3 to 5**: 27%
- **1 to 2**: 42%
- **Part-time, fewer than 1**: 4%
- **None**: 11%

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**How Does Omaha Compare?**

According to a 2017 survey from NAVEX Global, the majority of companies surveyed reported 1-3 FTEs dedicated to supporting Ethics & Compliance programs.
The cost of ethics and/or compliance programs varies widely, particularly by organization size. About 28% of respondents reporting spending more than $250,000 per year on their program, but all were from large organizations (over 1000 employees).

**How much per year do you estimate is spent on your company’s ethics and/or compliance programs?**

- More than $250,000: 28%
- $100,000 to $249,999: 10%
- $25,000 to $99,999: 8%
- $10,000 to $24,999: 13%
- $2,500 to $9,999: 18%
- Less than $2,500: 23%
When asked to consider their ethics and/or compliance budget for next year, the majority of respondents (75%) reported that they expect the budget to remain unchanged while 20% anticipated an increase and 5% a decrease.

**For the next year, do you expect the ethics and/compliance budget to:**

- **Increase**: 20%
- **Remain unchanged**: 75%
- **Decrease**: 5%

**How Does Omaha Compare?**

According to a 2017 survey from NAVEX Global, 65% of companies surveyed reported they expected their Ethics & Compliance budget to stay the same, 29% expected an increase, and 6% expected a decrease.
Evaluating Formal Programs

In evaluating an ethics and/or compliance program, most respondents reported using internal self-assessment (50%), an internal audit review (48%), tracking the number of incidents (36%) or using an external assessment (36%) in order to evaluate the success of their program.

How do you evaluate your ethics and/or compliance program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal self-assessment</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal audit review</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of incidents</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External assessment</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics and compliance survey</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not evaluated</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How Does Omaha Compare?

According to a 2017 survey from NAVEX Global, 85% of companies surveyed reported that they have efforts in place to measure the effectiveness of their Ethics & Compliance training program.
Organizations reported that compliance with rules and regulations, and employee engagement were two primary indicators of return on investment for money spent on ethics programs. Retention of top performers was the third most important indicator.

**How does your organization demonstrate a return on investment for the monies spent on an ethics program, which is above and beyond your compliance program?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with rules and regulations</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee engagements survey</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention of top performers</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased levels of reporting</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer/vendor reputation survey</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in termination due to ethical lapses</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money saved through reports of misconduct</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How Does Omaha Compare?**

According to a study by the Ethisphere Institute, ethical companies achieved a 27% return to shareholders in four years, compared to a -8.5% return for other S&P 500 companies.
When asked to consider the effectiveness of their program, over two-thirds (68%) perceived their organization’s program as very effective or extremely effective. No respondents selected “Not at all effective” as a response to the question.

**How do you perceive the effectiveness of your program?**

- Not at all effective: 5%
- Slightly effective: 27%
- Moderately effective: 52%
- Very effective: 16%
- Extremely effective: 0%

No respondents selected “Not at all effective” as a response to the question.
Some survey respondents elaborated on what they believe a successful program looks like:

“Employees demonstrating a culture of ethical behavior and being equipped with the knowledge and tools to perform their work in compliance with all regulatory requirements.”

“No ethical violations, open, honest, transparent communication.”

“Employees know what is expected of them. Issues are resolved before becoming a problem and compliance audits are easily accommodated and quickly resolved.”

“Continual improvement, reflected in a cohesive growth in business reputation industry wide.”

“Employees and stakeholders act with integrity; compliance with laws and regulations.”

“To have a report-free environment of illegal/unethical activity. However, reports are also good because that means people are speaking up.”

“Minimal misconduct; no lawsuits; engaged workforce; strong integrity index rating (from engagement survey score).”
Communicating About Ethics

Although many respondents reported the existence of formal programs and initiatives surrounding ethics and compliance, the majority reported using informal methods of communicating ethics and compliance expectations to both employees and vendors.

How are ethics and compliance expectations communicated to employees? (check all that apply)

- Informally, through verbal communications in meetings, etc. (83%)
- Informally, through role modeling (63%)
- Through a formal ethics and/or compliance program (51%)

How are ethics and compliance expectations communicated to vendors? (check all that apply)

- Informally, through verbal communications in meetings, etc. (70%)
- Informally, through role modeling (43%)
- Through a formal ethics and/or compliance program (25%)
Formal Ethics Training

About 46% of survey respondents reported the presence of formal ethics training in their company. This number has grown since the first Omaha Organizational Ethics Survey conducted in 2008.

**Does your company provide formal ethics training?**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of companies providing formal ethics training from 2008 to 2016.](chart.png)

Large organizations were more likely to provide formal ethics training (85%), than medium (50%), or small organizations (11%).

How Does Omaha Compare?

According to the 2013 National Business Ethics Survey, 81% of companies reported providing formal ethics training. This was an increase from 74% reported in their 2011 survey.
Companies with formal ethics training reported using a variety of methods to deliver their training. The top two most common methods were instructor lead classroom training and online training. Large organizations reported online training as the most commonly used method, while instructor lead classroom training was more common from small and medium organizations.

**How is formal ethics training delivered in your company? (check all that apply)**

- Classroom (e.g. instructor led) 73%
- Online (e.g. web-based) 68%
- Supervisor/manager meetings 49%
- E-mail or written policy reminders 46%
- Facilitated group discussions 41%
- Department head meetings 27%
- Board meetings 22%
- Social Media 8%

Most respondents (89%) reported that an internal member of their company delivers formal ethics training to employees.

**Who delivers your company’s formal ethics training? (check all that apply)**

- Someone in-house 89%
- Contracted training 35%
Of the companies with formal ethics training initiatives, about 92% reported that the training is comprehensive throughout the organization and received by all employees.

Who receives formal ethics training? (check all that apply)

- All employees: 92%
- Supervisor/Managers: 32%
- Executives: 30%
- Department heads: 27%
- Board: 22%
- New employees only: 8%
Organizations train employees on a variety of ethics-related topics. The top three responses were Code of Conduct, Sexual Harassment, and Conflict of Interest. These top three topics are the same as those found in the 2014 Omaha Organizational Ethics Survey.

Which of the following business ethics topics do employees get trained on in your company? (check all that apply)

- Code of Conduct: 97%
- Sexual harassment: 89%
- Conflict of interest: 84%
- Making ethical decisions at work: 73%
- Privacy, confidentiality, HIPAA: 70%
- Drug and alcohol policy: 68%
- Federal, state, and local laws: 65%
- Showing respect: 49%
- Industry specific reporting: 49%
- Financial reporting: 49%
- Bullying: 38%
- Environmental: 32%
- Insider trading: 32%

How Does Omaha Compare?

According to a 2017 survey from NAVEX Global, the top three topics that companies train on are Code of Conduct, Sexual harassment, and Conflict of interest.
Organizations with ethics and/or compliance training reported that their employees spend anywhere from under an hour up to a whole day doing ethics and/or compliance training. About 40% reported spending 1-2 hours per year in training.

**How much time does each employee spend in ethics and/or compliance training each year?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Duration</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 1 day</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-8 hours</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 hours</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 hours</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than an hour</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ethical Climate of Companies and Omaha

Participants were asked, “In relation to what you believe to be an ideal ethical business culture, how would you rate the ethical climate of your company?” The chart below shows that respondents were generally positive about the ethical climate of their company with 60% rating their company climate as strong and 27% as extremely strong. Only 3% suggested their climate was weak or extremely weak.

In relation to what you believe to be an ideal ethical culture, how would you rate the ethical climate of your organization?

How Does Omaha Compare?

According to the 2013 National Business Ethics Survey, 66% of respondents rated their company as having “Strong” or “Strong-Leaning” ethical cultures.
Participants then answered the same question, but regarding the ethical climate of Omaha. The responses were again positive with 60% believing Omaha’s ethical climate to be strong and 10% extremely strong. Only 5% believed Omaha to have a weak ethical climate, and no one selected extremely weak as a response.

**In relation to what you believe to be an ideal ethical business community, how would you rate the ethical climate of Omaha?**
Concluding Remarks

The 2017 Greater Omaha Organizational Ethics Survey is the fourth measure of how organizations manage business ethics. Data from 2008, 2010, 2014, and 2017 show that Greater Omaha business leaders value ethical business environments and strive to elevate their organizations’ ethical cultures.

According to the Federal Sentencing Guidelines for Organizations (1991 and revised in 2004), there are seven minimum requirements for a comprehensive formal ethics and compliance program:
1. Written ethics standards
2. High level person is in charge of the program, resources to implement it, responsibility for ethics throughout the organization
3. Due diligence in hiring and promoting personnel to positions with authority
4. Ethics training programs
5. Mechanisms for monitoring, auditing, and reporting misconduct, including periodic measurement of program effectiveness
6. Consistent enforcement of ethics standards, including appropriate discipline
7. Reasonable steps to avoid further misconduct upon recognition of ethics violations

The Federal Sentencing Guidelines represent the minimum requirements when it comes to creating an ethical organizational culture. But Omaha has never been satisfied with the minimum. As organizations strive to excel in ethics the way they excel in everything else, the Business Ethics Alliance will serve as a resource and a partner. We don’t coast—on ethics or anything else.
Additional Resources

Business Ethics Alliance
www.businessethicsalliance.org

Ethics & Compliance Initiative
National Business Ethics Survey
www.ethics.org

Ethical Systems
www.ethicalsystems.org

Ethisphere
https://ethisphere.com

Federal Sentencing Guidelines
https://www.ussc.gov/guidelines

NAVEX Global
2017 Ethics & Compliance Training Benchmark Report
www.navexglobal.com