



**Trust is the alpha and
omega of whistleblower
schemes**



**WHISTLEBLOWER
PARTNERS**

Trust doesn't come naturally. It takes hard work to build it, and once things go the other way, it can be broken down incredibly fast.

A whistle-blower scheme cannot, and should not, replace direct day-to-day communication between management and employees. That said, it is important for employees, management and stakeholders to feel confident that things that are not as they should be in a company or organisation are being reported.

The company's management must stand firm on trust, security and fairness. And if things do go wrong, cases must be brought to light quickly, and illegalities cracked down on.

The purpose of a whistle-blower scheme is to provide a formalised means of bringing serious matters within the organisation to the attention of an organisation's management and board, outside the normal channels of communication, e.g. the employee's immediate superior or the customer's direct contact.

A whistle-blower scheme will, in some cases, be the only real opportunity to detect significant irregularities. It is therefore important that the scheme is generally trusted. A lack of confidence in the difference reporting makes is one of the main reasons why individuals refrain from making a report.

Trust is ensured first and foremost by the establishment of an independent and autonomous channel for reporting.

Trust also requires a clear commitment by the organisation to follow up on reports received, conduct a thorough investigation of the issue, and close the case within a reasonable timeframe, which includes following up by providing feedback to the reporting persons on intended or taken actions unless such information would prejudice the investigation or other persons involved. In order to ensure effective follow-up, detection and prevention of violations, appropriate internal procedures must be implemented for the receipt of - and follow-up on - reports.

Using an external party – e.g. WhistleReact – to receive whistle-blower reports can ensure a greater degree of transparency, integrity and trust. An external party is independent of internal politics and can more easily escalate matters to the board of directors if senior managers are implicated, if other relevant information that requires the board's attention emerges or if special expertise is required.

By their very nature, whistle-blower reports will be very diverse. They may, for example, relate to environmental issues, personal data, sexual harassment, employee relations or financial crime. Therefore, using external suppliers to secure the range of expertise that may be required would be an obvious benefit. In addition, external experts are specially trained to handle whistle-blower

reports correctly and in accordance with relevant laws. They are thus able to support the management team in discussions, investigations and other follow-up procedures, if necessary.

In small and medium-sized enterprises, the independence of a third party from the company's employees and managers is a decisive advantage. For employees, this creates credibility and confidence that whistle-blower reports are handled anonymously and in the best possible way.

As an independent third party with optimal competencies, WhistleReact can receive whistle-blower reports so that the company does not have to worry about complicated rules, training of employees, the establishment of a particular administrative set-up or unnecessary use of internal resources.