

White Paper

4 Essential Tips for Ensuring Policy and Procedure Compliance



COMPROSE
everyone knows what to do.®





Taming the compliance monster

There is a better way

For over 30 years COMPROSE has worked with organizations across all industries -- commercial banks, credit unions, hospitals, labs, government agencies, non-profits – just to name a few.

Although their specific regulatory and certification requirements may differ, all industries share the pain of creating and managing policies and procedures required for regulatory compliance.

If you are outside the compliance world, you may be shocked to learn that many organizations have entire departments dedicated just to compliance. In these organizations a large chunk of budget and staff time is spent just on getting documents reviewed and approved.

No one we know has ever said “Hooray, it’s time to review this year’s compliance policies and procedures!”

It may not be possible to transform policy and procedure compliance into something that’s on everyone’s “favorite to do list,” but there are steps you can take that will make the job easier and less painful.

Below are 4 proven tips that can help you tame the compliance monster and keep the regulators happy.



Focus on quality content

If you've ever read any of our articles or blog posts, you already know that we truly believe that content quality trumps everything else. Unfortunately, content usability is something that's difficult for many organizations to get right.

But the effort and focus on it is well worth it.

Employees who have access to clear policies and procedures perform better than those who don't.

But here's something most people don't think about ... Better content makes your Reviewers' and Approvers' lives easier too!

Why do most managers require constant nagging and put off reviews until the last minute? Why do employees invent ways to "check the box" on content they've never really read or understand?

If you've ever had to dive into a 100-page document that's incomprehensible and unreadable, you know what we're talking about. Are you clear on what you're signing off on?

Better content makes auditors happy and bolsters their confidence in you. Audits are easier, less costly.

Even in a world with hundreds of document management products, slick looking websites and search engines, all this technology doesn't do any good if people don't understand the content itself or it takes forever to get through it.

Content drives performance

Employees who have access to clear policies and procedures perform better than those who don't.



Make content accessible online but don't forget paper

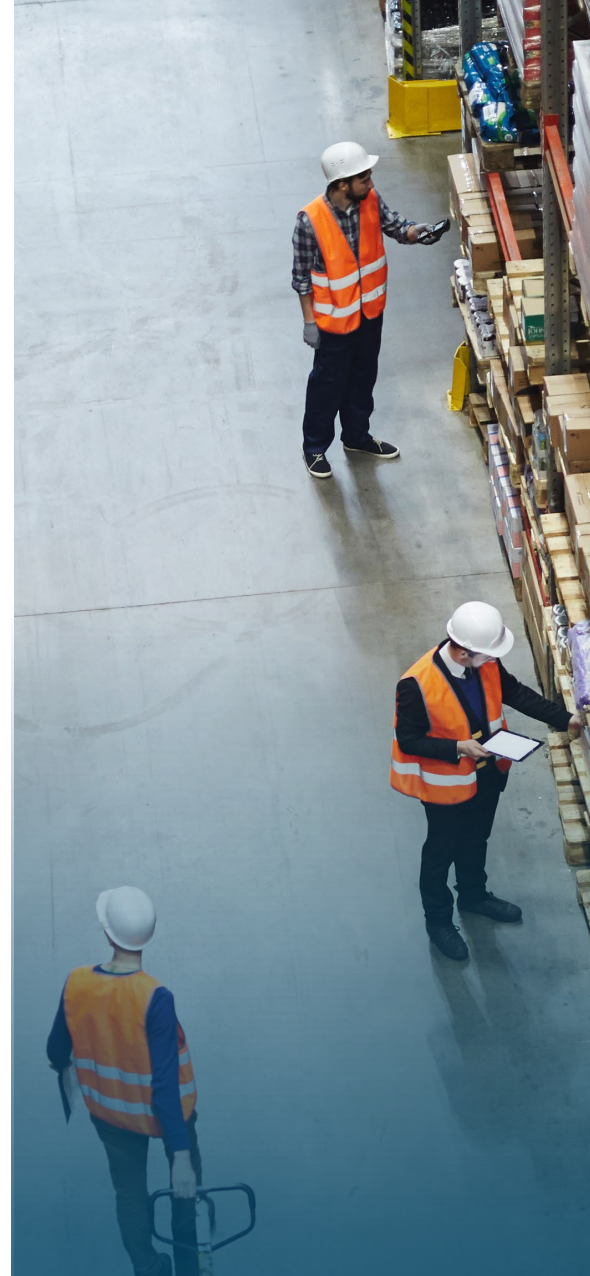
The modern way to deliver policy and procedure content is through an engaging online experience, but don't forget that some people may need or even prefer paper.



Policies and procedures help people make decisions and perform their jobs effectively.

It's important to keep your audience in mind.

The system you use should enable you to easily deliver content in the way your audience wants it -- without all the pesky reformatting.



Keep your audience in mind

How are they going to use the content?

How do they need it delivered?

Use a system purposely built for policies and procedures

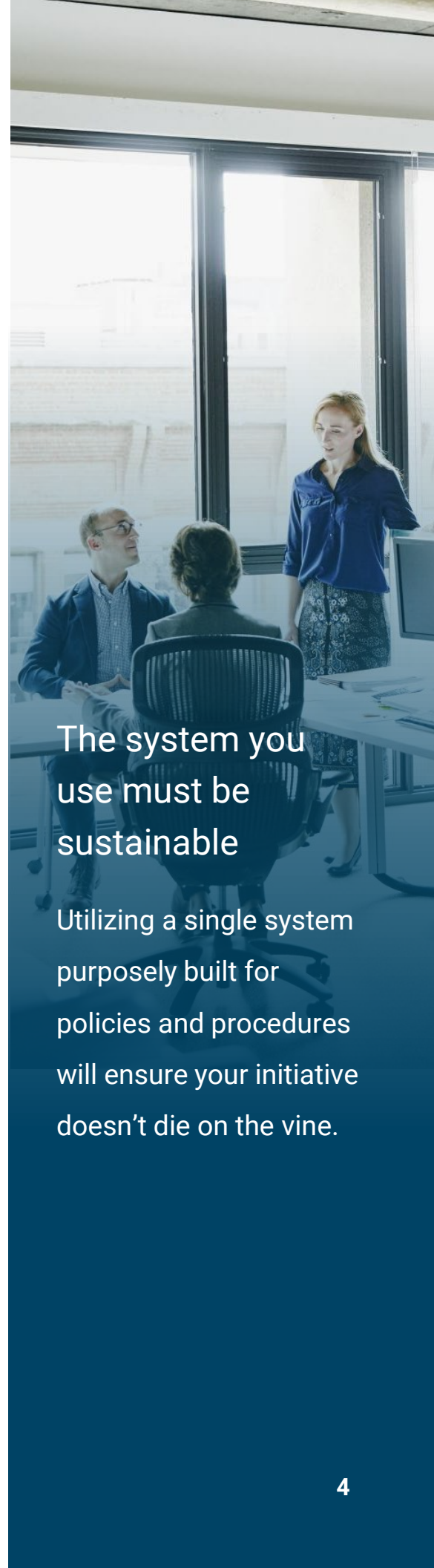
The inherent nature of policy and procedure content is unique: high volume, constant change; it must meet the demands of a diverse audience. Standardization is a must.

Unlike other kinds of content – reports or marketing collateral for example – people use this content to take action; perform their jobs, and in some cases, even prevent fatal accidents.

Utilizing a single application that handles all phases of the policy and procedure life cycle is far superior to performing these tasks manually or cobbling together multiple systems.

Important considerations:

- Automation features such as review/approval workflows can significantly save everyone time and frustration
- Ability to separate but link policies to the procedures needed to carry them out (regulators don't like to see them mixed)
- Guided authoring to help authors be productive and prevent them from leaving out important details
- Read verify and testing to ensure employees have read and understand policies and procedures
- Maintenance utilities to make mass changes quickly
- The ability to codify policies and procedures to regulations and accreditation standards



The system you
use must be
sustainable

Utilizing a single system
purposely built for
policies and procedures
will ensure your initiative
doesn't die on the vine.



Avoid reinventing the wheel for every new law or regulation that comes along

We see this all the time. Over time, policy and procedure content has been cobbled together and evolves in a haphazard manner.

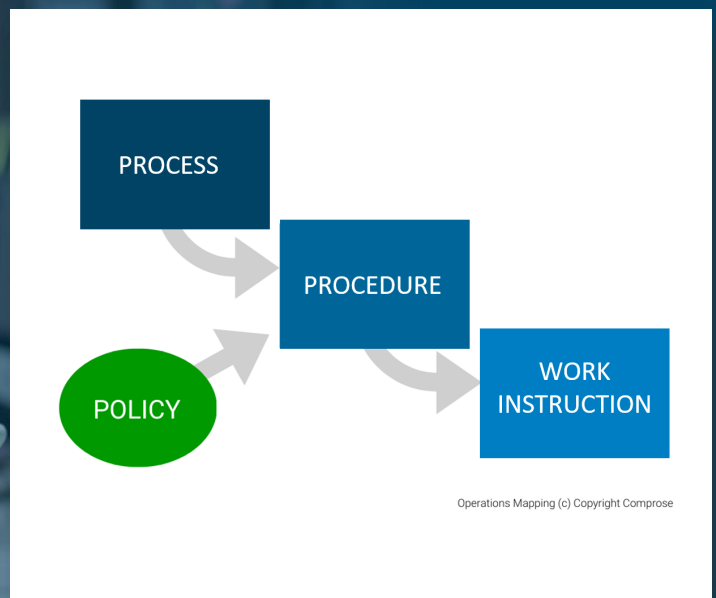
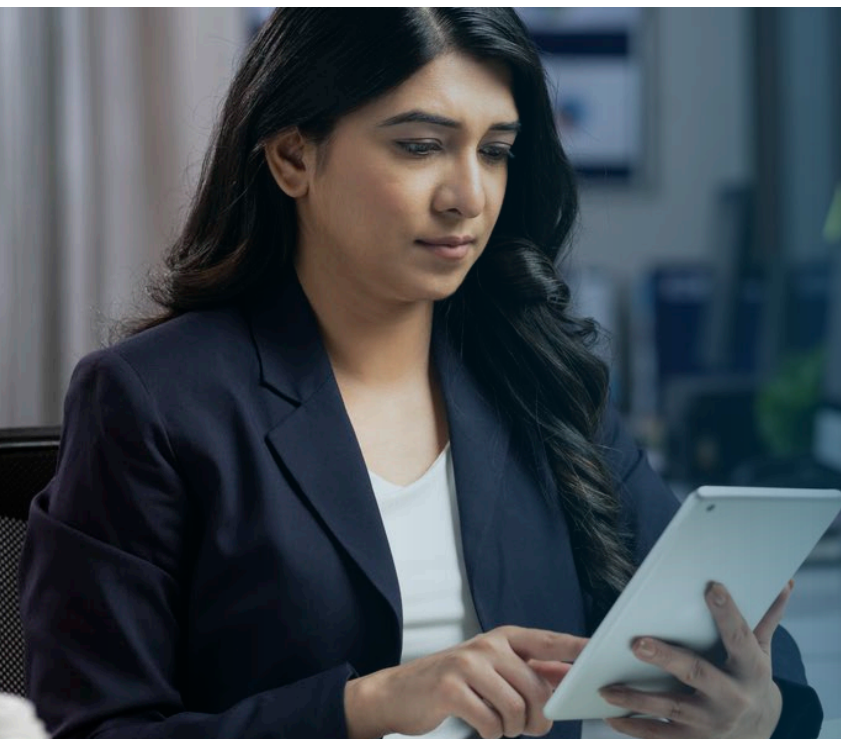
So, when a new law or regulation comes along, the company reinvents the wheel, starts over.

Or, one area of the company has developed content that could be repurposed, but no one in the other departments knows about it.

You get the picture. Everyone does their own thing. Operating this way is wasteful, error-prone, and a sure-fire way to fail an audit.

Best practice is to utilize a single system and create an information architecture that is modular, easy to change. This is best done early, at the beginning. Think of your policies and procedures as a living, breathing “system”, not the old-style static documents or a one-off project.

If you practice this approach, your policy and procedure content can simply be tweaked and changed as the regulatory environment changes.



How does Zavanta software streamline policy and procedure compliance?

Zavanta is specifically designed to address the challenges discussed above by seamlessly integrating a structured content approach with guided authoring and content management automation.

Results Zavanta users are achieving:

One manufacturer was able to avoid (2) multi-million dollar lawsuits by proving they had necessary safety policies and procedures in place.

A community bank was able to overcome numerous citations and create a policy and procedure system that their auditors praised.

Another client was able to become ISO registered in half the time it normally takes.

An e-commerce services provider said their auditors commented that their P&P “were the best implementation of Policy and Procedure documentation they had seen anywhere.”





About Comprose

We are dedicated to helping people thrive by gaining access to accurate, updated “how to” knowledge anytime, anyplace, in any language.

Everything we do – our method, our software, our advice – is focused on one thing: helping our clients achieve their strategic goals by getting procedural knowledge out of peoples’ heads and shareable.

We’re passionate about the power of good systems and clear standard operating procedures because of the tangible results we’ve seen our customers achieve: agility, reduced operating costs, faster training, predictability, greater transparency.