Category

Data & AI

Responsible Data & Ethics Playbook (Privacy, Protection, Responsible Use)

A practical program for teaching employees the daily judgment calls of responsible data use, beyond what privacy law technically requires.

- Practitioner
- Intermediate
- Template Included

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- 21 August 2023

- 7 minute(s)

Overview

Move beyond a once-a-year compliance quiz to daily judgment: the Purpose Test, a real escalation path, and the line between what is legal and what is appropriate.

What's the actual difference between privacy and data ethics?

Privacy is about complying with law and consent terms for handling personal data — retention limits, access controls, breach notification. Ethics covers the broader question of whether a use is fair and appropriate even when it's fully legal, such as a biased model or a use the data subject wouldn't expect. You need both, and ethics is the harder, less codified half.

Where does legal or privacy counsel fit into this program?

Counsel owns the legal-compliance quadrant of the Compass and should sit on the Data Ethics Council, but they shouldn't own the whole program — fairness and transparency judgments need business and data practitioners in the room too, since counsel alone can't assess a model's real-world bias.

Does this cover AI and machine learning specifically, or just reporting?

The core framework applies to both, but model-building teams need the additional half-day bias and fairness deep-dive, because a biased model can cause harm at a scale a single bad report never could. Treat AI/ML use cases as automatically high-risk on the inventory.

Does this replace our GDPR, CCPA, or other regulatory compliance training?

No — this playbook assumes that regulatory training already exists and is current. It fills the much larger gray zone above the legal floor: uses that are technically permitted but ethically questionable, which formal compliance training rarely addresses.

How often should the Responsible Data Use policy and training be refreshed?

Refresh the policy document annually at minimum, and immediately whenever a new data source, vendor, or AI use case is introduced. The Purpose Test itself is durable and rarely needs to change; what changes is the list of real examples used to teach it.

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Talk to our data ethics team

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