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Day in the Life: Fermeen Fazal

Interviews and Profiles



Fermeen Fazal

Vice President, Chief Counsel, and Director of Compliance

Houston, Texas

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5:45 am

Wake up to my iPhone alarm playing American Authors' "Best Day of My Life." Brush teeth, put in my contacts, and then snuggle for a moment with my third grade daughter as she wakes up.

6:15 am

Pack lunches while reviewing my daughter's spelling words. I sign my sixth grade son's math test and then give him a pep talk for an upcoming debate tournament. **Remind my husband about the afternoon pickup schedule**, and then conduct a routine Outlook calendar check.

6:45 am

Leave for work. I alternate between listening to the "90s on 9" and NPR XM radio channels. **Pull into garage, grateful for my short commute** in an otherwise sprawling Houston.

7:00 am

Login to my work computer. I **immediately read the daily Skimm and Lexology emails** waiting for me. Saudi Arabia is cracking down on corruption and the Aramco public offering is on track. Make a note to include the story in my next quarterly Compliance Council meeting.

7:30 am

Because of the time difference, the first thing I do is reply to emails from the UK office. They are considering responding to a bid tender, so I **ask my paralegal to run a denied party screening and due diligence search** on the proposed client. I redline the terms and conditions in the proposed contract.

8:30 am

Attend a business development and operations joint meeting to understand opportunities being chased. We are seeking new survey work from a client with whom we have an existing engineering services agreement. **Make a note to check the warranty, indemnity, and limitation of liability provisions** in the contract, and, if acceptable for this scope, suggest using the contract already in place.

9:15 am

Leave the meeting early to give code of ethics and business conduct training at our new hire orientation. **Stress the importance of confidentiality and the availability of the OpenLine, our whistleblower system.** I explain that acting with integrity is part of our corporate culture.

10:00 am

Attend a senior management team meeting, which means engaging in a **roundtable discussion with heads of IT, HR, business development, operations, and finance**. I provide training on insider trading to the group.

11:00 am

Proofread company newsletter articles on cybersecurity and retaliation. Then I check language in two new work orders and a confidentiality agreement. **Approve work orders for signature**, send back redlines on the confidentiality agreement.

11:30 am

Lunch with engineering colleagues at the Project Management Forum. I give a **15-minute talk on the difference between direct damages and consequential damages**.

1:00 pm

Schedule a call with the supply chain contact for an important client to discuss renewal of engineering services agreement scheduled to expire. I **summarize key revisions in new agreement for the president**.

1:30 pm

Call with compliance director at our parent company to discuss approval of new third-party representative. **Discuss how audit rights and the compensation scheme mitigate the risk of working in a red flag country**.

2:15 pm

Draft an update for a weekly report. While prepping for call with HR to advise on course of action related to background check waiver, an engineer stops by and I answer his question about the effect of a change order.

3:30 pm

Review applications for three suppliers seeking to be added to Procurement's approved vendor list and confirm they will follow our supplier code of conduct. Follow up with a **call with IT to ensure compliance** with export control rules when we ship a computer to the Trinidad office.

4:00 pm

Blocked time to quietly work on tasks. **Draft contract amendment, review certificate of insurance** from subcontractor. Redline a right of way access agreement. Approve outside counsel invoice, make notes for tomorrow's contract negotiation.

5:30 pm

Head home; call my husband to make dinner plans. Easy! He's picking up pizza tonight.

6:30 pm

Family time. We each take turns sharing the best, worst, and funniest parts of our day. Negotiations for a post-dinner piece of candy begin in earnest, and tickles and teasing ensue.

8:30 pm

Bedtime for the kids, then I check work emails and talk to my husband as he loads dishes. I straighten up clutter.

9:30 pm

Review an agreement to determine when title transfer takes place for procured goods with the TV on in the background. Tonight it's a rerun of *The Big Bang Theory*.

10:30 pm

Shower and bedtime!

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