# Taking Advantage of the Awareness Vault in the New Year

*In 2013, we saw many of our MOAT/TIPS clients utilize the Awareness Vault across multiple departments to meet legal requirements, compliance obligations, training certifications and more. With the Vault, it is easy to upload role-based training, assign to only those groups of people that are required to see it and track and document all acknowledgements/ certifications. What do you plan to share in your Vault this year? Below are just a few ideas you may want to consider:*

**Professional Development/Training**

1) Classroom Training/Event and Ongoing Awareness – did you recently have an organization-wide training or assembly? There were probably a few employees who were out of the office that day or had a prior engagement and/or new employees that started after the event. These and others are good reasons to share the details of the event in the Vault so all employees can get caught up or look back and review.

**Compliance/Legal Due Diligence**

2) New Legal Obligations and Regulations - Are there new regulations affecting your industry? Make sure all appropriate employees have access to new policies and track individual acknowledgements ensuring they have read and understand the updates.

3) Contractor/Vendor Agreements – place agreements with contractors signed and documented prior to starting a project, without the wasted time of manually shuffling paper and connecting the dots. All documents are legal/audit ready upon request.

**Human Resources**

4) New Hire Information & Onboarding – you know that handbook you pass out to your new hires when they show up for their first day of work…do you think they actually read it? Do they understand what roles apply to them in their new job? It is much easier and more cost-effective to place new hire policies and procedures in the Vault – assign all onboarding documents to the "New Hire" Department/Group and ensure each of your new employees login, review their responsibilities and acknowledge all requirements. Once the new employee has become initially certified, you can move them to their respective Department/Group and ensure they have access to all job and role-based training.

5) Health Insurance/Benefits – everyone seems a bit confused with new Affordable Care Act changes. Make sure employees understand the benefits they are provided by clearly outlining available options in the Vault and make sure they review and agree to these guidelines annually or as updates occur.

6) Teleworking/Remote Office Policies – As more and more organizations allow employees to work from home, it is critical all employees understand the requirements, what devices they can use, how to securely and remotely access systems, who to report to, etc. Use the Vault to easily share information with your teleworking staff as they can securely access the Vault from anywhere with Internet access!

7) Virtual Staff Meetings & Notes – Update employees daily or as needed without leaving your office and easily track every employee's acknowledgement and compliance from your computer.

8) Lose the Excuses – tired of hearing "I lost my handbook, "I never received that email/memo," or "I was out of the office that day."? Employees can access the Vault anytime and anywhere with Internet access and you can track individual compliance at the click of a mouse. Reminders can be automatically sent to supervisors when employees have yet to become compliant.

9) Organization's Ethics Guidelines - what behavior is allowed and what behaviors should be reported? Place ethics related documents in the Vault to ensure your employees understand what is expected.

10) Employee Notifications – Are we due for a window cleaning or is that a spy? How do we operate this new software upgrade? Notify employees of scheduled upcoming facility work and updated operations, so they know when someone is lurking that shouldn't be or they know the new software is legitimate.

11) Procedural Updates – Are all your employees referring to the most up-to-date procedures? Update policies as new versions become available and ensure all employees are notified of the update. Track acknowledgements and compliance in real time without the paper mess.

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**Information Security/Privacy**

12) Updated Security Settings – Are there new procedures for physical security or upgraded protocols for information security?

13) FERPA Training – Can I share student/education information? What information can I share? Who can I share it with? Compliance and legal obligations require all personnel with access to student/education records must go through awareness training for FERPA. The Vault allows managers to assign role-based training, ask customized and organization specific questions and ensure all appropriate staff participates.

14) HIPAA Training – When can protected health information (PHI) be shared? Who is required to protect PHI? Can I share this information with our contracted staff? Can I e-mail PHI and results to the patient? The Vault allows administrators to easily assign awareness training to personnel who has access to protected health information and ensure they understand their responsibilities ongoing. Updates with the new HIPAA Omnibus rule should be communicated to all and documented too!

15) PCI-DSS Card Handling Procedures – have all staff who handle credit card information completed their required PCI training? It is easy to share end-user and role-based training and ensure all users understand how to protect personally identifiable information.

**Acceptable Usage**

16) Mobile Device Acceptable Usage – outline what types of mobile devices employees can bring to work and connect to the organization's internal networks. If mobile devices must be first approved or have specific software installed, define these requirements and ensure all employees understand and have signed off on mobile device related policies.

17) Social Media Acceptable Usage – make sure employees understand the difference between personal and business related social media accounts and what information is acceptable and unacceptable to post or share on social media.

**Emergency Response/ Public Safety/Facilities Management**

18) Crisis/Emergency Plans - Do all employees as well as suppliers, vendors and contractors know what they are personally required to do in an event of an emergency?
19) Evacuation Maps – do your employees know where to go in the event of a fire? A tornado? A hurricane? A flood? Make sure your evacuation routes are clearly defined and securely shared with all staff prior to an event. Add updated rosters of students/employees and checklists so teachers know who is to be accounted for and how to address different situations if disaster strikes.

**Workplace Safety**

20) Concerning Behaviors - Do staff know what is considered a concerning behavior? Workplace Violence, Harassment, Sex Abuse, Drug Abuse, Bullying, Suicidal Ideation, etc. Do employees know what to do if they witness concerning behaviors? Do you have documentation to explain any liability issues on your end if future facts or legal questions arise? Do you have documentation (and can you easily locate) to show auditors your employees have been informed of mandatory procedures?

21) OSHA – Could an incident like this happen at your organization? (http://www.safetynewsalert.com/top-10-osha-stories-of-2013/?pulb=1) Share lessons learned and OSHA policies to enforce why it is important proper procedures are always followed.

**Risk Management/Threat Assessment/Behavioral Assessment**

22) Incident Management Updates – securely and confidentially share updates on open/active incidents and threat assessments with appropriate contacts like Human Resources, Risk Management, Communications and/or Media/Public Relations, who may not be privy to full details of incident reports, but need to know information as it pertains to their organizational role. Assign document and incident updates to individual groups as needed. Your TAT/BIT will then be able to document what information was shared and when.

23) Threat Assessment & Investigation Forms – Forms that Threat Assessment and Behavioral Assessment staff need to use or fill out as they investigate an incident (whether it be phishing, fraud, bullying, harassment, suicide, sexual abuse, etc.), can be securely stored and accessed when needed in the Vault to ensure all appropriate staff has access to the most recent forms. They can easily access the form, download and begin their investigation. Once forms are completed, the forms can be uploaded into the appropriate incident report within TIPS platform for easy and secure access by all members of your TAT/BIT/SRO or others.

**Student Conduct**

24) Student Agreements and Forms – share consent forms (field trip permission slips, annual physical exam forms, transportation agreements, athletic agreements, etc.) with students and parents so they can be reviewed and acknowledged electronically. Easier and less expensive than sending home paper agreements and keeping track of who brought it back on spreadsheets and filing signed paper documents for future access for compliance or legal due diligence.

25) Student Handbooks – improve student accountability and reduce printing, distribution and documentation/filing costs dramatically by sharing handbooks in the Vault. The Vault also makes it easier and more cost efficient to update code of conduct or other Student policies throughout the year and use real-time reporting to see who has or has not reviewed/acknowledged their policies. Can be a great way to help parents become more aware of your school's procedures and code of conduct!

Please contact us at info@awareity.com if you have any questions about the Awareness Vault or would like to discuss potential applications within your organization.