



CASE STUDY

The HOW Group

PARTNERSHIP IN SAFETY



COMPLIANCE CONSULTANTS, INC.
HEALTH | SAFETY | ENVIRONMENTAL



The HOW Group

PROFILE OF A PARTNERSHIP

The HOW Group, a multi-faceted real estate company, headquartered in Conshohocken, PA, serves Philadelphia and the surrounding regions. The HOW Group was founded in 1998 by Gary Jonas, Bill McLaughlin, Andy Blum, and Gary Risler.

Now, with more than 154 employees across eight divisions, The HOW Group is a full-service real estate company with construction, property management, acquisitions, lending, real estate and even a nonprofit all under one roof. With fifteen to twenty active jobsites, \$161 million in real estate holdings and 745 units, The HOW Group likes to say that “We’re the city’s only one-stop-shop for everything real estate.”

At its core, The HOW Group has always stressed safety excellence and was founded on several key guiding principles:

Do Whatever it Takes, Do the Right Thing, Have a Positive Attitude, Be Decisive

As one of the region’s “Best Employers” selected by the Philadelphia Inquirer for 6 years in a row, The HOW Group has also won the “ABC STEP Award,” a safety benchmarking and improvement tool which has evolved into a world-class safety management system that dramatically improves safety performance.

SAFETY AS A CULTURE - EVERYONE HAS TO OWN IT

Central to its mission, The HOW Group has always been focused on providing a safe environment on all jobsites. When Tom McHale, Director of Operations, started working at the organization, he knew that there would be safety plans and protocols in place.

However, Tom wanted to get an objective, third-party review of existing plans, and to formalize safety procedures. According to Tom, “I always felt the company was safe but really wanted to be sure.” Through his professional network, Tom knew about the



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- Tom McHale, Director of Operations,
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Compliance Consultants, Inc. provides, and reached out to discuss safety consulting options they offer.

Tom was looking for a collaborative business partnership, not just a safety vendor. After an initial consultation, Tom provided Compliance Consultants, Inc. with the existing plans and other safety-related materials, and asked CCI for a complete review and implementation ideas, not just replacement plans. Tom's view was that there was no such thing as being too safe, and he wanted to dig deeper into what The HOW Group needed going forward. As he puts it, he wanted to answer the question "are we a safe company . . . or are we a lucky company?"

He enlisted CCI to find the answers and provide innovative ideas. The HOW Group wanted to incorporate the ideas proposed by CCI to further their core mission of deepening the culture of safety and promote the notion that ALL employees (and subcontractors) across ALL jobsites are responsible for modeling and communicating safety protocols.

BUILDING A SAFETY CULTURE

Compliance Consultants, Inc. had a number of recommendations. The first step was updating the company's Health & Safety Program. The HOW Group management then introduced CCI to all Superintendents and Project Managers and committed to the new safety partnership. At the nearly 20 currently active sites, CCI provides regularly scheduled, in-person site inspections where they work directly with site superintendents and foremen to address and plan for hazardous situations. CCI also provides targeted training programs (in-person and virtually) and required OSHA reporting. CCI is an integral part of The HOW Group's team and stays in regular contact with management.

According to Chris Smith, Senior Project Manager, "CCI provides us with the peace of mind to know that all the safety reviews and worker trainings are being managed, so I can focus on coordinating the many other moving parts of an active site." Chris's colleague, Alexandra McDonald, Assistant Project Manager, agrees, "With CCI regularly on site I am much more aware of preventing safety violations and having our subcontractors informed as well."



In fact, The HOW Group is so committed to promoting a culture of safety, that subcontractors are included in CCI training programs, even if they move to another competing company.

"With CCI's engagement, we have really seen improved awareness of safety rules being followed by both our workers, as well as our subcontractors," noted Lynn Przywara, Construction Supervisor, adding, "We have even developed a safety messaging campaign 'HOW To Be Safe' that we have incorporated into our culture."

"The HOW Group is an ideal client for us. They truly value the safety of their employees, subcontractors, and the public. When management is committed to a culture of safety, our relationship with the client is productive and successful; we're able to make a real difference in the lives of the workers."

- Terri Collins, CEO, CCI

IMPLEMENTATION IS VITAL


As CCI's safety recommendations and trainings have been implemented, The HOW Group has doubled the number of third-party inspections across its active construction sites. Further, there has been a noticeable improvement in employees and subcontractors taking proactive measures to prevent accidents. Through ongoing training programs such as in-person "Toolbox Talks" and virtual online training programs, The HOW Group has also been able to keep its front-line workers and management up to date on OSHA and other required regulations, furthering The HOW Group's adherence to compliance.

As part of the collaborative partner model, Compliance Consultants, Inc. now sits on the Safety Committee for The HOW Group, so communication regarding maintaining a high-level of safety measures can be addressed in a timely manner.

"We are very proud to have won the prestigious ABC STEP Award," adds Tom McHale, "This award put us among the safest companies in the industry." According to ABC STEP reporting, companies that win this award by using enhanced safety measures are reducing recordable incidents by up to 84 percent, making the best-performing companies 645 percent safer than the industry average.*

The partnership between The HOW Group and Compliance Consultants, Inc. has provided tangible and positive safety results. Worksites have seen increased safety awareness and communication and the organization as a whole is part of an elite group who have garnered an industry leading award.

* <http://www.abcstep.org/#about> | [Download the ABC Step Report](#)



"Our goal has always been to ensure every worker gets home safely. We value working cooperatively with The HOW Group jobsite management to identify and correct safety issues in a proactive manner."

- Scott Boroi, VP/COO, CCI.

In an ever-changing industry, the common goal is for everyone to

GET HOME SAFELY at the end of the day.



ABOUT COMPLIANCE CONSULTANTS, INC.

Compliance Consultants Inc. is a woman-owned and family-operated business located in Delaware County, PA and serving all of PA, NJ, DE, and further. CCI was founded by Michael J. Cunningham, Sr. in 1986 with the belief that every working man and woman has the right to come home safely at the end of the day.

Today, Terri Collins and Scott Boroi run the company as President and Vice President respectively. CCI maintains its national certification as a Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) and Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) by the Women's Business Enterprise Council East, a regional certifying partner of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC).

CCI PRIDES ITSELF ON SEVERAL CORE PRINCIPLES, SUCH AS:

- » Support
- » Trust
- » Knowledge

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