

The Three Archetypes of Corporate E-Discovery Survey Report

Zapproved LLC, a developer of cloud-based e-discovery software for corporate legal departments, has released the results of a groundbreaking survey revealing the common attitudes held by e-discovery executives – and how those beliefs are influencing behaviors, processes and priorities.

The Three Archetypes of Corporate E-Discovery report identifies three leadership types – proactive Achievers, reactive Strugglers and disinterested Idlers – and breaks down how each archetype's attitude impacts success, from confidence in the defensibility of their preservation process to their standing within the organization. As legal professionals face increasing risk management, regulatory and process visibility demands, the ability of in-house leaders to self-identify their tendencies provides an important starting point for organizational evaluation.

“The survey data demonstrates compelling connections between leadership attitude and satisfaction in the business results. Forty-three percent of Achievers conduct regular legal hold compliance audits as opposed to only 5 percent by Strugglers,” said Brad Harris, Vice President of Corporate Strategy for Zapproved. “Achievers are significantly more likely to have implemented e-discovery best practices across their organization to improve compliance and reduce risk.”

While Achievers invest effectively in the legal hold and preservation process, Strugglers are defined by their failure to implement effective solutions. This group understands the benefits of automating these functions in-house, but they grapple with establishing a successful process, typically

being reactive in their response. Idlers, on the other hand, tend to be ambivalent to e-discovery needs rather than strategically implementing systems to solve them. While Idlers display confidence in their approach, they face a knowledge gap about the benefits of in-house e-discovery processes and risk losing control of data that is outsourced.

“This survey is the first of its kind for corporate e-discovery professionals. It offers a unique vantage point on how to evaluate existing in-house processes and strategies,” said Harris. “As people identify their own archetype, Strugglers and Idlers may end up using these findings as a means of moving into the Achiever category.”

The report finds that 50 percent of Strugglers identify as using a manual legal hold process, but only 29 percent express confidence in the defensibility of their process. As the volume of data grows exponentially, implementing e-discovery best practices requires a vigilant evaluation of the tools and trends that affect a company’s bottom line.

The survey was conducted by an independent research organization, Audience Audit, in May of 2017. The approach focused on two areas: legal hold and data preservation processes and the attitudes of the surveyed e-discovery professionals. Participants were chosen based on their involvement in the legal hold process with 75 percent working within the legal department at their organizations.

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