

Data protection being ignored by UK workers as more worry about office chores

A quarter of UK employees have been told off about not emptying the dishwasher, compared to just 14% on poor handling of confidential data

Nearly 90% (87%) of UK office workers claim they are more likely to be told off for forgetting to do menial tasks, like emptying or loading the dishwasher and keeping their workplace tidy, than complying with GDPR, according to a new report issued today.

The poll, conducted by office equipment specialist Fellowes, assessed whether GDPR is being taken seriously by UK office workers since its introduction in April of this year.

The study from Fellowes found that only 14% of workers have been given a ticking off about careless handling of confidential data, while 25% claim office chores, like emptying or filling the dishwasher, has landed them in the most hot water.

The data, collected from over 1,000 UK office workers in July 2018, also reveals that many are more likely to be challenged about missing deadlines and being late (17%) than ensuring they are compliant with GDPR.

Further data from the Fellowes survey reveals workers are yet to get to grips with how confidential data should be handle according to the GDPR guidelines:

- 54% have seen personal or confidential data they shouldn't have
- 33% of workers admit they have left confidential or personal data unattended
- 45% have sent a confidential email to the wrong person
- 61% have received an incorrect email from the wrong person
- 19% have left a USB pen lying around somewhere
- 14% have left confidential documents in public places

Darryl Brunt, Country Head UK & Ireland at Fellowes, said:

"It's a worrying sign that companies in the UK are more concerned about office chores than GDPR, which could cost businesses millions of pounds. One in ten workers don't know who is responsible for GDPR within their business, and the truth is, protecting confidential data is everyone's responsibility. It's also troubling to see that almost one in five workers haven't been given a concrete policy for handling GDPR. This has to change, or businesses will pay the price."

Fellowes, which is celebrating 100 years in the office product industry, helps to protect companies with innovative office solutions including paper shredders, the first line of defence for data protection and PrivaScreen™ blackout privacy filters which prevent prying eyes from reading your screen. Bankers Boxes from Fellowes also ensure any documents that must be stored can be easily located if required.

Key tips to ensuring data is secure in an organisation include:

1. Conduct a data flow exercise to understand what data you currently hold, where has it come from, where is it stored, why you've got it, who has access to it and is it shared to any other party.
2. If you don't need personal data, or are holding more information than you need to about individuals, securely destroy any printed documents by shredding.
3. Ensure your business has a robust policy to deal with unneeded records, such as a compulsory requirement to delete expired digital documents.
4. GDPR gives individuals more rights than the current Data Protection Act (DPA) to access their personal data from a company. Companies must respond within one month to requests.
5. Inaccuracy in personal information is one of the subjects covered by the GDPR, so if you know a record is inaccurate, either delete it or securely shred it to minimise the risk of further inaccuracies, mistakes or negative consequences for the person it relates to.

Find out more at www.fellowes.com

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Notes to editors:

Survey conducted during June-July 2018 by Markteffect B.V. on behalf of Fellowes Brands with 1000 UK participants.

About Fellowes Brands:

Fellowes is a global manufacturer and market leader of products for improving life at work, at home and on the go, including business machines, Bankers Box records storage solutions, workplace management products, home and commercial air purification and mobile technology accessories. For more information, visit:

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