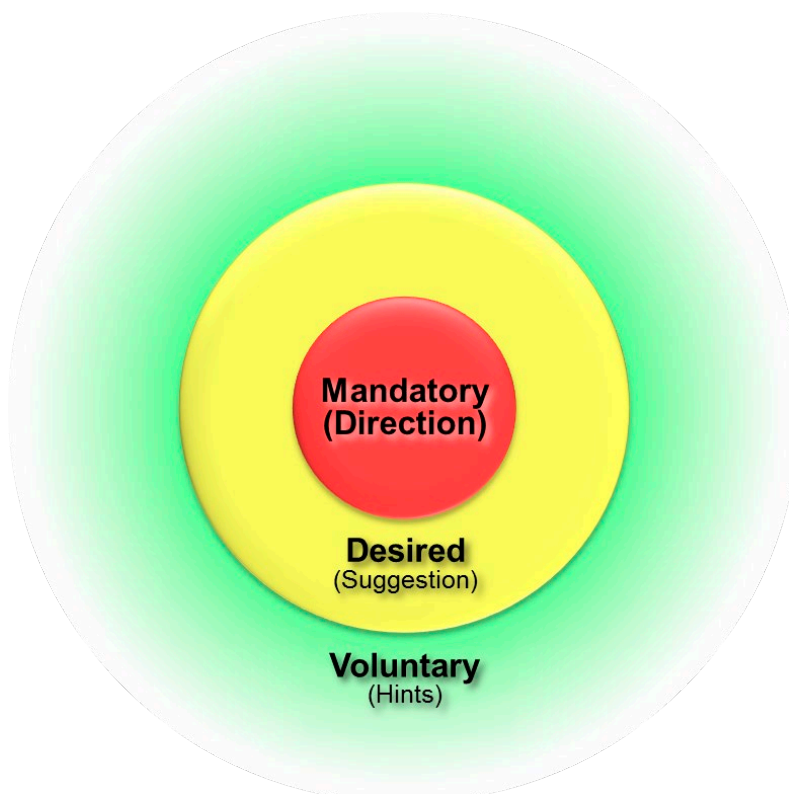


Commitment level

Commitment level determines the binding effect of publications. The large variety of guidelines that are used within an organization, require clarity for the target groups, how to deal with the respective publication. The implementation of commitment level should be done the same way as for confidentiality notices, i.e. in form of stamps, a reference in the imprint or at the beginning the document. All documents that will be provided with such bindingness should be accessible for the intended target group.

Levels of reliability consist of three levels: Mandatory, desired and voluntary.



- **Mandatory**
Documents that have to be obeyed, so-called directions, are binding for the target group. Violations are punished with defined sanctions, e.g. punishments of all kind. This includes especially laws, work instructions, rules and the like. These documents become mandatory by the adoption in an appropriate committee, e.g. legislator, standardization organization and certification company.
- **Desired**
Desired documents describe suggested behavior, so-called recommendations. Due to less bindingness, these are not furnished with a set of punishments. Nevertheless, the lack of attention can lead to a negative, uncooperative impression that results in unofficial consequences. Desired documents are mainly best practices as well as methods and procedures that are not mandatory. Appropriate optimization committees publish desired documents. After successful usage, desired approaches can be made mandatory.
- **Voluntary**
Voluntary documents are hints that provide information worth knowing. These documents are not binding at all and facilitate exchange of information, e.g. articles, brochures. Depending upon leadership style, this information can be published by individuals or through an appropriate publication procedure. If these publications become over time a recommendable procedure, they get the status of a higher commitment level.