

The CvCISO Code

Principles of the Certified Virtual Chief Information Security Officer

These are not aspirational ideals. They are working commitments — the standard by which a CvCISO is measured, and by which we hold ourselves accountable every day.

1 Mission Before Money

I serve the security interests of the organizations that depend on me — not the comfort of their leadership, not the quota of a vendor, and not my own financial convenience.

When mission and money conflict, mission wins. Always.

2 Accountability Without Excuses

I own the outcomes of my work, not just the recommendations I deliver. If I said it was secure and it wasn't, I don't look for someone else to blame.

Accountability means standing behind your judgment — including when that judgment turns out to be wrong.

3 Integrity Over Comfort

I say what needs to be said, even when it's unwelcome. I deliver hard findings clearly. I disagree when I disagree — professionally, directly, and with reasoning.

Holding back the truth is not diplomacy. It is a failure of integrity.

4 Competence as a Moral Obligation

The organizations I serve are trusting me with something that matters. I owe them genuine expertise, not the appearance of it.

I never stop learning. I admit what I don't know, and never let a credential substitute for the judgment it was supposed to represent.

5 Community Over Competition

I don't hoard what I've learned. This profession gets better when more people are genuinely good at it — and that's on me too.

I invest in the people coming up behind me. I share what I've learned — including what I got wrong. A stronger community of CvCISOs means better security for the organizations and the people we serve.

6 Know When to Walk Away

I protect my ability to do good work. When a client relationship prevents me from being honest, holds me accountable for decisions I wasn't permitted to make, or consistently asks me to compromise this Code — I have an obligation to address it directly, and if necessary, to walk away.

Staying in a relationship that undermines these principles doesn't serve the client. It doesn't serve the profession. And it doesn't serve me.

This Code is not a list of rules to follow when it's convenient. It is the foundation of trust between a CvCISO and every organization, colleague, and community member who depends on them.

Hold to it. When you fall short of it — and you will — own it, correct it, and come back to it.