FREE GUIDE

The First 30 Days

What to Tell Employees, Customers & Vendors When a Business Is Restructuring

Why the first 30 days decide the outcome

When a business files, restructures or quietly works out a deal with creditors, people fill silence with the worst story. Employees update their resumes. Customers hedge their orders. Vendors tighten terms or stop shipping.

The legal plan protects the business in court. A communication plan protects it everywhere else: the payroll, the order book and the supply line it needs to come out the other side.

This guide gives owners a simple, attorney-friendly playbook for the first 30 days.

Five rules before anyone says a word

1. **Clear every message with your attorney first.** What you say publicly can affect the case, creditor negotiations and employee obligations.
2. **Pick one spokesperson.** Usually the owner or CEO. Everyone else points questions to that person.
3. **Tell people in the right order.** Leadership, then employees, then key customers and vendors, then everyone else. No one important should learn the news from the internet.
4. **Be honest about what you know and don't know.** "We don't have that answer yet; we'll update you by Friday" builds more trust than a guess.
5. **Say what is NOT changing.** Paychecks, delivery dates, the people customers work with. Stability is the message.

Employees: tell them first, in person

Employees are the first audience because they are the ones customers will ask. Hold a short all-hands (in person or video) the same day as any filing or announcement, then follow up in writing.

Cover these points:

- What is happening, in one plain sentence
- Why: the goal is to strengthen the business, not close it (only if true)
- What does not change: pay schedule, benefits, their manager, day-to-day work
- What they should say if a customer or vendor asks (give them a one-line script)
- Who to go to with questions, and when the next update is

SAMPLE OPENING

"Today we took a step to put the company on stronger financial footing. Your paychecks and benefits continue as normal. Customers will keep getting what they ordered. I'll share another update next week, and my door is open."

Avoid: guessing about layoffs, criticizing lenders or past leaders, and letting managers improvise their own version.

Customers: call your top accounts before they hear it elsewhere

List your top 20 customers by revenue. The owner or account lead calls each one personally within 48 hours, then sends a short written note. Everyone else gets an email.

Watch for: customers who slow orders or ask for new terms. Flag them to leadership the same day.

SAMPLE CUSTOMER NOTE

"We want you to hear this from us. [Company] has begun a process to restructure its finances so we can keep serving you for years to come. Your orders, pricing and contacts stay the same, and we are operating as normal. If you have any questions, call me directly at [phone]."

Vendors and suppliers: protect the supply line

Critical vendors decide whether you can keep operating. Work with your attorney on what you can promise about past-due balances, then focus the conversation on future business.

SAMPLE VENDOR NOTE

"[Company] is restructuring its finances and continuing normal operations. We value our partnership and want to keep buying from you. [Name] is your contact for orders and payment terms going forward."

Tips:

- Name one person who handles all vendor calls
- Keep promises small and keep every one of them
- Thank the vendors who stick with you; they remember who communicated

Online reputation, media and the community

Court filings are public, and local business press and online reviews can pick them up. Get ahead of what shows up when someone searches the company name.

- **Prepare a short holding statement** approved by counsel, ready to send if a reporter calls
- **Update the website and Google Business Profile** so hours, contacts and services are current
- **Monitor reviews and social posts daily** for 30 days; reply calmly and take details offline
- **Don't go silent on social media**, but don't post anything about the case; share normal business news
- **Bilingual audiences:** make sure Spanish-speaking employees and customers get the same message at the same time

30-day checklist

Days 1–3

- [ ] Attorney approves the core message and holding statement
- [ ] All-hands meeting with employees; written follow-up the same day
- [ ] Personal calls to the top 20 customers and critical vendors
- [ ] Website, Google Business Profile and voicemail updated

Week 1

- [ ] Email to all remaining customers and vendors
- [ ] Daily check of reviews, social posts and news mentions
- [ ] Log every customer or vendor concern and how it was handled

Weeks 2–3

- [ ] Second employee update, even if nothing has changed
- [ ] Follow-up calls to any customer or vendor who hesitated
- [ ] Share one piece of normal, positive business news

Week 4

- [ ] Review what worked with leadership and counsel
- [ ] Set the communication rhythm for the next 60 days

About Oracle Method Group

Oracle Method Group (OMG) is a PMP-certified PR and marketing firm in Corona, serving Inland Empire and Southern California businesses. Lourdes del Rio-Valdes leads crisis communications for owners in transition, in English and Spanish, and works alongside the client's attorney so every message supports the legal strategy.

Attorneys and advisors: if a client is heading into a restructuring, book a 15-minute call and we'll build their first-30-days message plan.

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This guide is general communications guidance, not legal advice. Review all messages with your attorney.