

# Picking up the pieces

## The worst has happened. What now?

Accidents, errors, accusations. No matter how careful you are, bad things sometimes happen. So how can you minimize the impact?

### You got served

If legal action is taken against your business, don't panic.

But don't ignore it. If a case goes to court and you're not there to defend yourself, the judge may decide in the other party's favor.

Take time to assess the complaint and decide how best to tackle it.

This doesn't mean trying to cover your tracks by tampering with or destroying evidence. Or fabricating evidence to try and hide the truth.

### Hotheads can create a hot mess

A complaint doesn't need to end in a lawsuit to damage your business. You can do that all by yourself by reacting to a complaint in the wrong way.

If you receive negative feedback:

#### Don't:

- ✗ Take it as a personal attack
- ✗ Respond in the heat of the moment
- ✗ Reply in a rude or dismissive way

#### Do:

- ✓ See it as an opportunity to improve your business
- ✓ Write a timely, well-crafted response
- ✓ Say sorry like you mean it.

Remember, transparency and tone are key. People will see through a lukewarm apology.

### Bad-mouthing is a bad idea

Remember, your business can be sued for defamation, slander or libel. So tempting as it might be to vent about a customer who's criticized your business, don't bad-mouth them.

## Don't expect it to blow over

Sometimes, even big brands fail to recover completely from a major PR faux-pas.

But burying your head in the sand, hoping a PR disaster will blow over is just as bad as blowing up about it.

Keep tabs on what's being said about your brand online.

- ✓ Set up google alerts
- ✓ Monitor social media mentions
- ✓ Check review sites regularly

Then, if there is a crisis, you can respond quickly.

If the situation's really dire, get help from a PR agency. The cash you'll spend paying a firm to help will far outweigh the financial impact of doing nothing at all. (Or, digging a bigger hole by missing the mark with your apology.) Bad PR can destroy a small business overnight.

## On the road to recovery

When the situation is under control - no matter how major or minor it was - take time to review what went wrong.

Part of the recovery process involves learning from past mistakes and reassessing risk.

Preventing a similar situation from rearing its ugly head again - or knowing what to do if it does - saves time, money and resources that could be better spent on running your business.

Find out more by downloading  
InsuranceBee's free [SMB risk guide](#)

  
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