



## CHEAT SHEET: CORONAVIRUS COMMUNICATION FOR LEADERS

Being a business leader in the midst of a world pandemic can be unsettling, but communicating well during this crisis doesn't have to be stressful. Even in the midst of uncertain times and hard news, we believe you can still communicate in a way that increases your internal team's trust and your customer's loyalty, all while providing comfort and even boosting your brand.

*Here's a quick resource to help you do that!*

### 1. Start by asking yourself a few questions.

To step out of your own perspective and communicate in a way that gives clarity and combats fear, we recommend asking yourself a few questions (and writing them down).

In light of what I need to address right now as a leader...

- What do the people I'm about to address ultimately want and need?  
*(This could be health, job security, a safe place to express concerns, etc.)*
- What are they feeling right now because of the uncertainty?
- What is my plan to help them through this? How can I say this briefly?
- What does success look like as we get through this together?

### 2. Craft your Message

Now use your above answers and begin outlining a plan for your communications, whether its an email, meeting, or memo.

Here's an outline we put together to help:

1. Lead with empathy - show that you understand what your customer or team member is feeling.
2. Acknowledge what they want during this time.
3. Briefly describe the problem (uncertainty, changes to work schedule, etc)
4. Give a quick plan - three or four points at the most. The last point should be a successful outcome they desire.

5. Invite people to the action you want them to take. Or, if there is no specific action, empower them to reach out with questions and concerns.
6. Cast a vision for what success looks like as you work through this together.

This is just a sample outline or help you organize your thoughts. You can also use it as a checklist to make sure you are saying everything that needs to be said.

*Email to Customers Example:*

*Our team at Main Street Coffee shop understands that the last few days have brought about uncertainty and concerns. In the midst of the coronavirus outbreak, we want to continue to be a place where you can connect with others, get work done, and enjoy a great cup of coffee - but we are also committed to your safety.*

*With the protection of our customers and staff in mind, and out of an abundance of caution, we are now only serving drinks in paper cups for the time being. We will also not pour drinks for our regulars into their cups or mugs they bring from home. Last, to ensure everyone's health, we are disinfecting surfaces every hour, have made an abundance of hand sanitizer available throughout our shop, and are washing our own hands every 30 minutes. If you are visibly sick or suspect you may be sick, please wait until you are well or cleared by a doctor to return to the shop. Anyone that appears ill will be asked to leave the premises.*

*We understand that this is a trying time, but we will get through it together as a community. Stay up-to-date with everything going on at Main Street Coffee shop on our Instagram page. Thank you for your understanding and ongoing support. Stay happy, healthy, and well.*

### 3. Send it out and crush it as a leader.

Here are a few closing encouragements and reminders:

- Be brief, especially in email. This gives clarity and comfort. If more information is needed or might be desired, provide an attachment or a link that gives more information.
- This is a great opportunity to get creative and show compassion while serving your customers and team.
- Lastly, you have what it takes. Your organization will get through this.