

“Small Businessing” Ain’t Easy



There was a time when the biggest concern a business had was bringing in customers. These days, we know you’re worrying about a lot more.

- You’re wondering where you will find qualified employees. When you do find them on paper or through an application, you keep your fingers crossed that they will show up for their first day of work, or better yet, the interview. Once you hire them, you hope they’ll come back the next day and the next.
- You worry about how you will sell items if you can’t get anything on the shelf. And you’re so very tired of hearing your suppliers talk about the supply chain. Two years ago, you didn’t even think about a supply chain in reference to anything more than toilet paper.
- You worry about baby formula or people getting sick, your loved ones, your friends, your employees. You wonder if you should ask the person who’s been coughing the entire time they’ve been in your business to leave. Will they be offended or angry?
- You worry that if you raise prices to try to make the smallest of profits to help pay for your gas to get to work or the groceries that keep getting more expensive while the quantities shrink that people will stop buying from you. Lag times and scheduling keep you up at night.
- Or you’re challenged with too much need of your product or service and an inability to deliver. You hope that when you tell people it will be two to three weeks before you can meet their needs that your competitors are in the same boat.
- You want to learn more, do more, and help more but your profits are dwindling almost as quickly as your “rainy day” money and investments are. Rents are going up and you worry your business’ lease will increase above what you can afford or you worry your landlord will sell your building. Home prices are going up but if you sell now, you won’t be able to find an affordable place to live.
- It’s summer and you want to take vacation but there’s no one to run your business and even if there was, plane tickets and gas prices look more like car payments these days.
- And you worry about safety.

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No, this is not an easy time.

But we see you small business owner. We are working to connect need with solutions. We’re talking to municipal, county, state, and federal leaders and voicing what you need most. We are brainstorming solutions for these unprecedented times.

We know you’re stressed and anxious, but we are here for you. Small businesses like yours are the backbone of our community and our country. You are not in this alone even though it can feel that way as a business owner.

While it’s important to have a support system, many small business owners struggle when they turn to friends and family for advice. Unless your family and friends are/were business owners themselves, they likely do not fully understand what you are facing.

At OBP, we do.

While these are unprecedented times, we are working with all our resources to find solutions. We have experience in business and are bringing business owners together.

We can’t make your anxiety go away, or fix the supply chain over night, but we’re working on viable solutions and growth for all.

And because we understand what you’re going through, we’re sharing the following. Please feel free to use it (or edit it) however you see fit:

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<<feel free to share this with your customers>>

We’re Business Owners, Not Miracle Workers

Behind this business is a person and a family.

The employee you’re fed up with or questioning because prices are “too high” or service is slow, is someone’s mother, father, child, friend, or loved one.

We’re not a faceless conglomerate.

We are your neighbors and we’re doing the best we can working in times no one prepared us for.

And while we seem to have everything together, we’re working round the clock just to help keep appearing like they used to be. In reality, we’re getting by and doing what we can to keep our doors open. A lot of people depend on us--our employees, our landlord, our vendors, our suppliers, our own family.

We are providing you service with a smile today even if you’re not showing us your best self.

And we’ll do it again tomorrow and as often as you want to patronize us. We will be here as long as we can keep our business open.

We thank you for sticking with us while we navigate unprecedented times. And yes, some days we’re going to run out of things or we’ll be short-staffed. That may inconvenience you for an hour or two, but please don’t take it out on the person who’s working a double shift because a co-worker called out.

We love being part of this community, but we’re worried, too, just like you. We drive to work, we buy groceries, we must take off when people who depend on us are ill.

No small business owner or employee signed up for the challenges we’re facing now. But we’re making the best of it—like you are—and we sure could use your continued help and understanding.

Thank you for your support. We want to continue to serve you long into the future—or at least as long as it takes for the supply chain to get untangled.

[Christina Metcalf](#) is a writer/ghostwriter who believes in the power of story. She works with small businesses, chambers of commerce, and business professionals who want to make an impression and grow a loyal customer/member base. She loves road trips, hates exclamation points, and believes the world would be a better place if we all had our own theme song that played when we entered the room. What would yours be?