

Communicate effectively in a crisis

How should CFOs communicate during this incredibly difficult and uncertain time? Below are four critical steps for communicating in a crisis.



1. Start with “what”

If you have news to give, don't bury the lead. Don't do corporate-speak. This is a critical time to be frank and honest with your employees. Speak directly to what is happening – if there's bad news, or a difficult situation, you need to start with it.



2. Explain why

It's tempting to start here, and warm yourself up to giving the bad news, but no one will hear the “why” if they don't already know the “what.” Only after the “what” is delivered should you explain the reasoning behind it. Tell your employees the specifics of why you're currently in this situation, or why a particular decision was made. Be completely transparent.



3. Explain how

This is the most important step. How will this happen? How will it work? Explain tactically. Your employees will want to know the details.



4. Next steps

Although it's an uncertain time, it's important to provide as much clarity as you can about what the next steps are to mitigate any fear or confusion.

3 key steps for delivery

1**Tone**

Be straightforward. This isn't the time for corporate-speak.

2**Empathy**

Be incredibly empathetic in how you treat your employees.

3**Leadership**

In uncertain times, there's no such thing as too much leadership.