

FINDING RELIEF FROM FEAR OF REVIEWS

Make your own versions of these valid fearful statements, acknowledge what you feel, and then seek relief via reframing.



Fears

People behave anti-socially online

I have no control over review platforms hurting my business

My livelihood is at stake; the last thing I need is to read a bunch of complaints

Thoughts that provide relief

Hostile strangers are not my ideal customer. I am working hard to build good relationships with the neighbors I want to serve.

I'm in the same boat with all local businesses on this, but I'm open to learning more about online reviews. I bet the more I learn, the more control I'll enjoy.

I resolve in-person complaints daily. If I listen when a customer speaks up online, I can probably fix their problem so that future customers don't experience it. This protects my reputation.

How to run a complaint-friendly local business

The more you invite and catch complaints offline, the safer and stronger your online reputation will be. When complaints end up online, don't worry - you can plan for that, too



OFFLINE PLAN:



Train all staff in complaint resolution and escalation



Hang in-store signage urging patrons to speak up if anything isn't right



Identify perks you can offer to restore patrons' good feelings



Publicize after-hours support options



If multiple patrons have the same complaint, implement structural fixes to resolve

ONLINE PLAN:

1

Form a good habit

Don't let reviews pile up. Respond within 2 days to all new reviews

2

Make things right

When patrons leave negative reviews, apologize + offer to make things right

3

Encourage reviews

The more positive reviews you earn, the less impact a few complaints have on your overall star rating

PERSPECTIVES

Complaints or Money-making tips?



The coffee is too weak. Wish they'd switch brands.



No dark roast available. Tastes like instant coffee instead of real.



None of the coffee options are strong enough.



The cup sizes seem small for the prices.



Service is good but the coffee is lackluster. Won't give you a boost.



Dishwater coffee and their large is like a medium.



Fear it

No surprise that after a long day running your business, you don't really look forward to reading a bunch of low-star reviews! Customers can start to sound like a chorus of complainers no one could possibly satisfy.

Fear of feeling bad can make you put off reading reviews, letting them pile up without responses, dragging down your overall rating. But what if you started seeing complaints as free money-making tips?



Flip it

Look again at the reviews. Are these really crabby complaints or are they amazing business intelligence you didn't have to pay a dime for? When take altogether, aren't these customers tipping you off that if you offered a **larger, stronger, richer** coffee option, they'd be happy to buy it?

Seize the opportunity to provide exactly what these customers want and respond to their reviews with an apology + invitation to come try your new coffee, on the house!



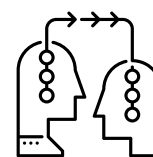
YOUR REVIEW DELEGATION PLAN



DON'T ACCEPT STRESS

If, despite all your efforts to reframe your fear of reviews, your stress level about them remains at a level that's unhealthy for your body, don't accept that you have to live with the stress.

Look for an exit door via **delegation** of the majority of this reputation management task.



TRAIN SOMEONE

Train one or more employees to be first responders to all your reviews, adhering to brand guidelines you create for how to reply to each type of scenario. Use tools to analyze sentiment trends and tell staff only to bring you in if a serious negative trend occurs. Create a reporting schedule that maximizes information while minimizing time spent stressing.



HIRE SOMEONE

Delegate the bulk of online reputation management to a trustworthy local SEO agency or consultant. Communicate your brand standards and reporting expectations, including how quickly you want to be alerted to any serious negative trend. Be open about your stress level and clear about what you need from them to make a valuable difference.



“In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.” – Albert Einstein