

# 4 Ways to Survive a Tornado

Why your business is like the Queens twister

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A few weeks ago, I drove through the aftermath of the “[Borough Tornado](#).” The highway was littered with trees and debris. A trip to Long Island that normally takes two hours took four.

The next morning, our largest client called to tell me that, due to cash flow issues, he needs to cut our fee by two thirds.

I realized at that moment that weathering the storms of small business in a recession is not unlike tornado survival. And sometimes, like Dorothy in Kansas, we get shut out of the root cellar, just as the winds are picking up.

So, how do you survive the “business tornados?” It’s not unlike dealing with the kind found in nature. Here are some tips I uncovered and how they apply to business:

1. **Know when and where tornados can develop. Be aware of the warning signs.** In business, we should always listen to clients, customers and competition. Pay close attention to late payments and unreturned phone calls. Read the news, talk to colleagues, and study trends.
2. **Pack a “survival kit.”** Business owners should build up cash reserves and lead pipelines. Do a worst case forecast each month, so you’re prepared for downturns.
3. **Get into the basement or a ditch or depression- covering your head with your hands.** This is a seriously bad move in business. Crisis moments require reaching out to others for help. Those who crawl into holes are doomed.
4. **Do not attempt to outrun the storm in business- you can try to race away from issues- and sometimes you might even win.** But be sure you have a rational route in mind. Don’t just speed aimlessly. And remember, twisters (in nature and in business) are just unavoidable phenomena. You can’t stop them, but you can often survive them. And, when the winds die down, be quick to cleanup your debris and help your neighbors, repack your survival kit, and enjoy the sunshine!

(Want to know how to REALLY survive a tornado? Watch [this cool video!](#))

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