

The Plain-English Policy Checkup

For small professional services firms: consultants, accountants, architects, engineers, agencies and anyone else who sells what they know.

How to Use It

Grab your insurance policies and give yourself about 15 minutes. The first few pages of each policy (called the declarations page) will answer most of these questions.

Check off every question you can confidently answer "yes" to. Anything you leave unchecked, including "I'm not sure," is worth a closer look.

Professional Liability: The Big One

This is the coverage that protects you if a client says your advice or your work cost them money. It's sometimes called errors and omissions, or E&O. For a firm that sells expertise, it's usually the most important policy you have.

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| ☐ | Do you have professional liability insurance at all? Your general liability policy won't cover this. General liability is for injuries and property damage, like someone tripping in your office. It doesn't cover a client who says your advice was wrong. |
| ☐ | Does your policy describe what you actually do today? If you've added new services since you bought the policy, a claim about that new work might not be covered. |
| ☐ | Have you read the exclusions? These are the things your policy won't pay for. Look closely for anything tied to your core work. One client of ours found her policy excluded intellectual property claims. For a consulting firm, that's the whole product. |
| ☐ | Is your coverage limit at least as high as your client contracts require? Many larger clients require a minimum amount of coverage. Check your contracts against your policy. |
| ☐ | If you've switched insurance companies, did you keep your "retroactive date"? Most professional liability policies only cover past work done after a certain date. If that date resets when you switch, older projects may not be covered anymore. |
| ☐ | Do you know whether legal costs come out of your coverage limit? On many policies, every dollar spent on lawyers reduces what's left to pay a settlement. |

Cyber: Your Email Is a Target

Small firms are hit by scammers all the time, often because they have less protection than big companies. Cyber insurance helps pay for the cleanup when something goes wrong.

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| ☐ | Do you have cyber insurance? Most business owner's policies don't cover a hack or a data breach, or only cover a small amount. |
| ☐ | If a scammer got into your email and tricked a client into wiring money to the wrong account, would you be covered? This is one of the most common scams out there, and it's often left out of cyber policies unless it's added on purpose. |
| ☐ | If client information leaked, would your policy help pay to notify clients and fix the problem? If you keep financial records, tax returns, Social Security numbers or health information, this one matters a lot. |

Your People

You don't need a big staff to face an employee claim. Even a team of three or four can.

- ☐
- If a current or former employee said they were treated unfairly (let go for the wrong reasons, harassed or passed over), would you be covered? That's called employment practices liability. Your general liability policy won't cover it.
- ☐
- Do you have workers' compensation for every employee, including anyone working from home in another state? Workers' comp covers employees hurt on the job. The rules are different in every state, and remote employees can add a wrinkle.

Your Office and Equipment

Most small firms have a business owner's policy that covers the office and what's in it. It's worth making sure it still fits how you work now.

- ☐
- If you couldn't use your office for a month (after a fire or a burst pipe, say), would your policy help cover lost income and the cost of working somewhere else? This is called business income coverage.
- ☐
- Are your laptops and equipment covered when they leave the office? If your team works from home, a coffee shop or a client's site, check if all laptops, equipment, and personal property is properly covered.
- ☐
- Does your policy meet the requirements in your office lease? Many leases require specific coverage amounts, and landlords do check.

The Basics

- ☐
- Do you know when your policies renew? Write it down: _____. Renewal is the easiest time to make changes, and the time to start looking is 60 to 90 days before.
- ☐
- Is the information on your policy still accurate? Your price and coverage are based on things like your revenue, number of employees and the services you offer. If those have changed, your policy may not match your business anymore.
- ☐
- Has someone walked you through your policies, in plain English, in the last year? If you can't remember, the answer is probably no.

How Did You Do?

Count the boxes you left unchecked.

Unchecked	What it means
None	Nice work. Run through this again before your next renewal.
1 to 3	You're in decent shape, but those gaps are worth a quick conversation.
4 or more	You're not alone. It's more common than you'd think. Let's take a look together.

Want a Second Set of Eyes?

Book a free 15-minute policy checkup with Camargo. Send over your declarations pages (or just bring them to the call), and we'll walk through what you have in plain English. We'll tell you what looks good, what's missing and what we'd keep an eye on. There's no pressure to switch.

Visit the Camargo Insurance website or contact our team to schedule.

Camargo has been explaining insurance in everyday English since 1956.

This checklist is general information to help you ask good questions. It isn't advice about your specific policy. Every policy is different, and what's covered depends on the policy's actual wording.