

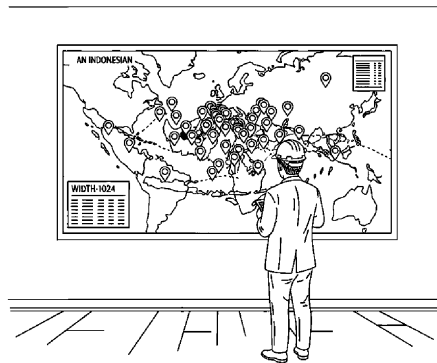
HIGH-VOLUME

WORKSHEET 3 OF 9

# Supplier Health Quick-Poll

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*A five-minute phone call or WhatsApp check with your top five vendors, once per week. Not a formal audit. A warm pulse.*



Complementary worksheet for  
*Supply Chain Risk Mitigation*  
by Ibrahim Anwar

## What This Is For

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Five of the most reliable early warning signals for supply chain disruption come not from invoices or delivery dates but from how a vendor communicates when something is changing. A vendor who used to respond to messages within 2 hours and now takes 2 days is showing you something. A vendor who suddenly asks for payment terms to be shortened is showing you something else. This worksheet exists to capture those signals while they are still signals, not after they have become facts.

The poll is not a formal audit and should not feel like one. The goal is a brief contact point, once per week, that keeps a warm communication line open with each critical vendor and gives you one data point per vendor per week to track over time. Vendors who know you check in regularly communicate problems earlier than vendors who hear from you only when a PO is placed.

## Benefits

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What you get when you actually run this worksheet on a real situation:

- Creates a weekly record of vendor communication quality, which is one of the four scorecard metrics from Chapter 9 and the hardest to reconstruct retroactively.
- Detects sudden payment term requests — a sign of vendor cash flow pressure — before those pressures translate into delivery failures.
- Keeps the relationship warm, which means vendors are more likely to give you early notice of problems rather than hoping the issue resolves before the next PO date.
- Surfaces tier-2 signals (upstream raw material availability, shipping route changes) that appear in informal conversation but not in formal communications.
- Takes five minutes per vendor. Ten minutes including note-taking. No formal meeting, no agenda, no prepared questions required.

## Framework To Use

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### — Three-Signal Vendor Health Classification

*Every vendor contact this week produces one of three classifications based on what is heard. The classification drives the action, not subjective impression.*

<b>NORMAL</b>	<b>WATCH</b>	<b>CONCERN</b>
<p>Business as usual. No new payment term requests. Lead times as expected.</p> <p>Communication responsive.</p> <p>No action required. Record the contact date.</p>	<p>One signal present: slightly longer response times, a passing mention of tight stock, a price query outside the usual schedule. Document the signal. Recheck next week.</p>	<p>Two or more signals, or one strong signal: upfront payment request, confirmed capacity constraint, delivery schedule uncertainty. Notify alternative vendor that volume may shift. Do not wait.</p>

## How To Use

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Follow these steps in order. Each one builds on the previous.

- 1 Choose the five vendors most critical to this week's production — typically those whose components have the highest Quadrant risk or the lowest buffer stock.
- 2 Call or message each vendor contact. Keep it brief: a check-in, not a review. 'Just touching base — how is stock looking on your end this week?' is sufficient to open the signal space.
- 3 Listen for the five early warning signals from Chapter 9: consecutive delays, declining quality mentions, payment term change requests, unsolicited pricing pressure, or reduced communication responsiveness.
- 4 After each contact, record immediately: did contact happen (Y/N), what signal was heard, any specific note, and what needs to happen before next week.
- 5 Any vendor marked Concern: before the end of the business day, send a brief message to the verified alternative vendor for the same component. Do not place an order. Just make contact: 'Checking capacity on [item] in case we need to adjust volumes over the coming weeks.'
- 6 Review the Notes column across all five vendors. If two or more vendors are showing Watch or Concern signals simultaneously, check whether they share a tier-2 source or shipping route. Simultaneous signals from multiple vendors can mean a single upstream event is affecting both.
- 7 Transfer the week's Signal column to the monthly vendor scorecard communication responsiveness entry.

## Example Use

*A food processing operator runs the weekly poll on Friday. One of five vendors — a packaging film supplier — has been on Watch for two consecutive weeks after mentioning that their production schedule was 'a little tight.' This week the operator calls to check in again.*

The call takes 4 minutes. The packaging film vendor's contact says stock is available this week but mentions, unprompted, that their main film manufacturer raised minimum order quantities last month and they have had to order less frequently as a result. Lead time for the next cycle might stretch from 7 to 10 days.

The operator marks this vendor Concern. The signal is concrete: a tier-2 change (manufacturer raising MOQs) is directly affecting the vendor's ability to maintain previous lead times.

The operator sends a brief WhatsApp to the verified secondary packaging film vendor that afternoon: "Hi Budi, just checking in. Are you stocked on the 20-micron film we ordered in March? We may need to adjust volumes in the coming weeks." The secondary vendor confirms availability and normal lead times.

The operator increases the order from the primary vendor this week by 20% to rebuild buffer before the 10-day lead time kicks in, and notes in the BCP contact list that the secondary vendor has been pre-warned. The primary vendor is moved from Watch to Concern on the scorecard for this week.

The 10-day lead time materializes in the following cycle. Because buffer was rebuilt and the alternative vendor was pre-warned, no production adjustment is needed.

# The Worksheet

*Tear this out, copy it onto a fresh sheet, or fill it in directly.*

## Supplier Health Quick-Poll

*A five-minute phone call or WhatsApp check with your top five vendors, once per week. Not a formal audit. A warm pulse.*

<b>VENDOR</b>	<b>CONTACT MADE? (Y/N)</b>	<b>SIGNAL HEARD (NORMAL / WATCH / CONCERN)</b>	<b>NOTES</b>	<b>ACTION BEFORE NEXT WEEK</b>

## Reflection Prompts

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*After filling in the worksheet on the previous page, work through these.*

1. Any vendor marked Concern: notify your verified alternative vendor for the same component that their volume may increase in the coming weeks. This costs nothing. If the primary vendor recovers, you cancel the alert. If they do not, you have already prepared the switch.
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2. Review the Notes column. Are any explanations for Watch or Concern signals consistent with the tier-2 risk categories from Chapter 2 — a shared upstream source disruption, geopolitical shipping route problem, or currency pressure raising import costs? If yes, the signal may affect more than one vendor simultaneously.
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# Tips and Traps

## TIPS

- Make the contact feel like a relationship check-in, not a vendor audit. Vendors who feel surveilled give less information, not more. 'How are things on your end?' opens more signal space than a formal questionnaire.
- Contact the person who actually handles your account at the vendor — not the sales manager who only appears for contract renewals. The account handler knows the operational details.
- If a vendor is consistently hard to reach on Fridays, try Thursday. If WhatsApp works better than phone, use WhatsApp. The medium is not the point. Contact is.
- Track the Watch count across weeks. A vendor that stays on Watch for three consecutive weeks without a clear explanation is drifting toward Concern without triggering any single threshold.

## TRAPS

- Treating 'no news' from a vendor as 'Normal.' A vendor who does not respond to a check-in call by the next business day is showing you a responsiveness signal. Mark it as Watch, not Normal.
- Skipping the poll in a week where 'everything seems fine from last week's orders.' Early warning signals appear before delivery problems, not after them.
- Recording the signal classification without the specific note. 'Concern' without a note explaining what was said is not actionable next week. The note is the signal. The classification is just a label for sorting.
- Pre-warning the alternative vendor and then forgetting to cancel the pre-warning if the primary vendor recovers. The alternative vendor will start preparing capacity for you. If the switch never happens, communicate that clearly so they can reallocate.

# Appendixes

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## **Appendix A – The Five Early Warning Signals (Chapter 9 Reference)**

Signal 1 – Consecutive delivery delays that keep getting longer

One delay: note it. Two consecutive: flag it. Three with increasing duration: act.

Signal 2 – Gradually declining quality

A defect rate rising from 0.5% to 2% to 5% over three months is a trend, not noise.

Signal 3 – Sudden price increase request

A price increase outside the agreed schedule usually means the vendor is facing cost pressure from their own tier-2 suppliers.

Signal 4 – Unsolicited changes in payment terms

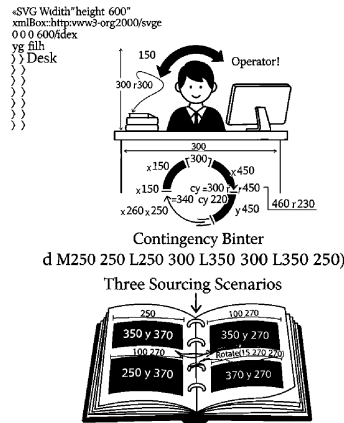
A request for larger upfront payment or shortened terms often signals vendor cash flow problems. A vendor with cash difficulties will prioritize customers who pay faster when capacity is constrained.

Signal 5 – Minimal proactive communication

A vendor who used to confirm orders within hours and now takes days – or who gives increasingly vague answers – is often avoiding a conversation about a problem they are not ready to acknowledge.

One signal in isolation may have a simple explanation.

Two or more signals in the same week: escalate to Concern immediately.



WHERE THIS WORKSHEET COMES FROM

# Supply Chain Risk Mitigation

*Disruptions Cannot Always Be Prevented, But Their Impact Can Be Limited*

by Ibrahim Anwar

This worksheet is one of nine in the *Supply Chain Risk Mitigation* companion worksheet pack. The full pack is grouped into three categories: high-volume worksheets you can run weekly, niche-search worksheets for rare but high-value situations, and specific-case worksheets that walk you through a single concrete scenario.

Every framework, decision filter, and figure used in these worksheets is drawn from the chapters of the source book. The book sets the diagnosis, the worksheets give you the form to act on it.

Available on Google Play Books

[play.google.com/store/books](https://play.google.com/store/books)

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