



Leading Through Change

A GC's Guide to
Strategic Advantage



Change is constant in business.

Change is a constant in business—but what sets effective leaders apart is how they respond. This Guide is designed to help GCs and their legal teams transform change into opportunity. By proactively navigating policy pivots, market shifts, and regulatory developments, legal leaders can shape business strategy, accelerate cross-functional alignment, and mitigate risk with confidence.

At OGC, we've led organizations through change from the inside. As former GCs, senior in-house counsel, and business executives, we've built legal teams that don't just withstand change—they use it to move the business forward. This guide captures that experience in a practical, repeatable framework to help legal teams monitor the landscape, assess impact, and take strategic action when it matters most.



01

Monitor Change

In today's environment, the speed and volume of change make passive monitoring a risk in itself. Without a proactive system for tracking developments, legal teams may react too late—missing key opportunities to influence internal strategy, shape external responses, or mitigate risk before it materializes.

The ability to pivot quickly enables:

- **Faster internal alignment:** Cross-functional teams need timely, tailored updates to plan effectively.
- **Smarter resource allocation:** Anticipating change allows teams to prioritize high-impact areas and avoid last-minute fire drills.
- **Stronger strategic positioning:** Policy shifts often signal broader market trends—early insight can provide a competitive advantage.
- **Reduced legal and operational exposure:** Spotting trends early enables updates to contracts, processes, and documentation before disruption occurs.

Monitoring isn't about tracking everything—it's about tracking the right things in a way that supports informed, strategic action. This step lays the groundwork for everything that follows. At this stage, readiness involves deciding:

- **What to track:** Focus on relevant jurisdictions, regulated activities, and areas of strategic importance.
- **Where to centralize information:** Use a shared dashboard, tracking tool, or reporting format to ensure visibility and access.
- **Who to involve:** Assign owners or subject matter leads for each topic or risk area.

In support of this work, consider setting alerts from relevant regulatory bodies (e.g., federal agencies, state regulators, international bodies) and leverage trusted external sources (e.g., law firms, trade associations, industry groups) for curated insights.

02

Assess Impact

Not every change warrants action, but lagging behind can create a number of challenges. An effective impact assessment process empowers legal teams triage developments quickly and respond with speed, clarity and alignment.

While the specifics will vary by organization, assessments should examine the most critical areas of impact, including:

- **Strategy:** Does this shift affect our business model, partnerships, or market positioning?
- **Operations:** Will it change how we deliver, manufacture or support our offerings?
- **Product/Service:** Does it influence what we can or should offer?
- **Human Capital:** Are there implications for hiring, employee management, or corporate culture?
- **Financial:** What are the cost, revenue, or insurance implications?
- **Information Technology:** Could this affect internal systems, data handling or cybersecurity?
- **Compliance:** Are there new obligations, liabilities, or disclosure requirements?
- **Reputational:** Is there a risk of negative stakeholder perception or scrutiny?

A strong assessment process also includes a method for scoring impact *severity* (high/ medium/ low) and *likelihood* (likely/ possible/ unlikely), along with recommended next steps. This helps teams quickly identify high-risk, high-probability issues that demand immediate attention. Depending upon your business, consider a formal Risk Rating System or Impact Assessment Worksheet to track findings and decisions. If resources are limited, regular meetings with your leadership team can serve this purpose effectively.



03

Take Action

Once action is indicated, speed and coordination are critical for capitalizing on strategic opportunities and minimizing risk exposure. A well-orchestrated, cross-functional response builds trust across the organization and with external stakeholders.

Set your team up for success by defining roles in advance:

- **Legal** – Interpret policy or regulation, advise on exposure, draft guidance, and update contract templates.
- **Compliance** – Embed changes into policies, controls, and training.
- **Operations / Product** – Adapt systems or offerings as needed.
- **Finance** – Forecast revenue impacts, adjust cost planning or insurance.
- **HR** – Implement employment-related changes (e.g., worker classification, DEI requirements, mobility rules).
- **IT** – Review systems for exposure or security concerns.
- **Communications** – Craft messages for internal, regulatory and public audiences.
- **Legal Ops** – Drive governance and accountability across functions.



04

Putting the Framework into Practice

Building a framework is only the beginning. To make it stick:

- **Communicate consistently** to build trust and limit the risk of communication breakdowns, while taking steps to protect confidential information (e.g., data, IP, trade secrets).
- **Support with workflows** to ensure follow-through and accountability.
- **Secure organizational buy-in** from key stakeholders to reinforce accountability and support.
- **Refine as you go** to keep the playbook current with changes inside and outside the business.

In today's environment, reacting isn't enough. Readiness is both a mindset and a muscle. This guide is your foundation. Use it not just to respond to change, but to lead through it.

Our team is here to help.

Book a 30-minute legal consult





Disclaimer:

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