

Small Public Company CEOs & Finance Leaders: What to Ask Your Controller 30 Days Before a Filing

How to catch reporting risks early without waiting for the deadline to do it for you.

How to Use This Guide

This takes 5–10 minutes. Use this as a conversation framework with your controller or finance lead. Don't overanalyze the answers. Pay attention to:

1. hesitation
2. lack of clarity
3. "we should be fine" responses

If you hear those, that's where the risk is.

The 30-Day Pre-Filing Leadership Questions

1. "Are we fully on track to file on time — right now?"

If the answer isn't immediate and confident, dig deeper.

2. "Where are we most likely to fall behind?"

Every process has a weak point. You want to know it early.

3. "What still depends on one person?"

Single points of failure are where delays start.

4. "What issues are we still working through?"

If there are open items, understand their impact and timeline.

5. "Are there any areas you're not fully confident in yet?"

Confidence gaps turn into deadline pressure.

6. "What typically slows us down at this stage?"

Patterns repeat. If it's happened before, it will happen again.

7. "Are auditors waiting on anything from us?"

Delays don't always come from your team.

8. "Is anything being pushed to later in the process?"

Work pushed forward usually becomes a last-minute problem.

9. "Do we have everything we need to finalize disclosures?"

MD&A and disclosures are often where time disappears.

10. "If something breaks, what's the backup plan?"

If there's no answer, there's risk.

What You're Listening For

You're not just listening for answers. You're listening for:

- Uncertainty
- Overconfidence without detail
- Dependence on one person
- Unresolved issues being minimized

That's where delays come from.

Why This Matters

Most filing issues don't start at the deadline. They start 2–4 weeks earlier — when leadership assumes everything is on track. By the time problems are visible, your options are limited. At your level, this isn't just about getting the filing done.

It's about:

- Maintaining credibility with your board
- Avoiding unnecessary pressure on your team
- Keeping control of the process instead of reacting to it

The earlier you see the risk, the easier it is to fix.

What To Do If You Hear Red Flags

If multiple answers feel unclear or uncertain:

- You don't necessarily have a personnel problem.
- You have a visibility and structure problem.

What typically needs to change:

- Clear ownership across reporting
- Better sequencing of work
- Earlier identification of bottlenecks
- Stronger communication between leadership and finance

Brimmer Company works with small public companies to create that structure — so leadership has clarity before pressure builds.

Schedule a Confidential Strategy Call

We'll walk through your current reporting process and identify where risk is building — before the deadline forces it out.

[URL HERE](#)