



## 5 Key Points to Remember for Your First Earnings Call

Your company's first earnings call is a major milestone. With thorough preparation, you can use it to make a strong impression and instill confidence within the investment community. **Keep these five key points in mind as you get ready for your debut earnings season.**

### 1. Shape Expectations

To avoid shaking investor confidence, it's vital to manage the Street's expectations ahead of time. About three weeks before your earnings release, touch base with analysts to discuss their models. Identify any outliers relative to your own projections and address miscalculations that analysts may have made. Cite these outliers in your conference call script if you need to explain why earnings appeared to miss the consensus estimate or justify an unexpectedly weak forecast.

### 2. Prepare for Q&A

You can pre-record a portion of the earnings conference call, but the live question-and-answer session is another matter. Be prepared to respond in detail to questions about your performance and outlook and to elaborate on your prepared remarks. Also be ready to address any negatives that may capture analysts' attention.

### 3. Choose Your Timeslot Wisely

Make sure your chosen date doesn't conflict with existing events that might distract you or those who follow the company. Identify when your peers report after the quarter closes and strategically position yourself such that you are able to learn from what they disclose and how analysts and investors respond. Avoid Monday mornings and Friday afternoons, and never report earnings while the market is open.

### 4. Design Your Call

Investor audiences appreciate calls with clear, succinct remarks focused on new developments and a few key messages. First, the CEO should provide an overview that summarizes achievements from the quarter and touches upon company strategy and goals. Your CFO should briefly elaborate on financial results and provide color around your guidance. Finally, make sure to address any disappointments or difficulties directly in your prepared remarks; don't wait for analysts to raise them in the Q&A session.

### 5. Follow Up

Follow-up conversations with sell-side analysts who cover your company can reinforce your messages and answer any remaining questions. Schedule follow-up calls weeks in advance to avoid missing connections on a busy earnings day. Develop a strategy for how you'll handle questions, concentrating on the big picture and avoiding a focus on ratings and price targets.

Do you have questions about handling your first earnings report? ICR brings years of Wall Street experience to help you navigate the investor community. Please [get in touch](#).