Giving Advice and Making Suggestions

Introduction

When replying to an email asking for advice, we often discuss what we think might be the cause of the problem which the person enquiring is experiencing. When we do this, we usually use modal verbs such as can, could, might or would, for example:

Excessive overuse can seriously affect the operation of our equipment.

The cause of your problem could be excessive overuse.

It might be that excessive overuse is behind your problems.

Excessive overuse would create the effects that you described.

It is then logical to follow this explanation with advice or suggestions about what can be done to avoid the problem. When you do this, it is common to use a statement using the modal verbs should or ought to, such as in the following example:

In order to avoid this problem, you should/ought to ensure that the equipment is installed in a dry place.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

To: Catherine Jenkins

From: Peter Toshack

Subject: CTX7000 Laptop Computers

Dear Ms Kwan

I refer to your fax of 3 March 20xx, regarding the problems you were having with the laptop computers we supplied you.

Since the machines are now out of guarantee, I can only offer the following advice which may help correct the problems:

1. Sticky keys may be the result of storing the laptops in a humid room. If this is the case, I would advise you to use a dehumidifier in the room. This would also give greater protection to your other equipment.

2. If you are running a number of laptops or other computer equipment from the same electrical socket, this might cause the overheating you described in your letter. For safety's sake, no more than two appliances should be run off a single electrical socket.

3. As far as the loud fan noise is concerned, this could be because the ventilation panels on the laptop are being blocked. In this case, you ought to ensure that there is plenty of space around the laptop when it is in use.

I hope that these measures will help correct the problems you have been experiencing. If not, please bring the laptops to our repair depot in the Lippo Centre.

Best regards

Peter Toshack

Technical Support

The PC Shack Ltd

LIVEWORKSHEETS

To: Kenneth Wong

From: Bill Havers

Subject: Sound System Installation at JHT Ltd

Dear Mr Wong

I refer to your email of 27 March 20xx describing the problems you have been having with the sound and public address system we installed in you factory last month.

From your letter it seems that there are two basic problems. First, the sound is not very clear.

Second, you state the public address feature has not functioned since it was installed.

1. The cause of the first of these problems could be obstructions to the speakers which might create the effect you describe. In order to avoid this problem, you should ensure that all speakers are clear of obstructions. Note that obstructions can lead to overheating as well, and this is not good for your equipment.

2. As far as the public address system is concerned, there might be something heavy standing on the wiring, cutting the signal. When we installed the system, we recommended that the wiring should be hidden in order to avoid this problem.

3. Checking the wiring for this might cause the public address feature to start to work.

I hope that the enclosed advice will help you to solve the problems you have been having with the equipment. If this advice does not fix the problems, please feel free to contact me again, and I shall arrange for one of our engineers to visit you in the near future.

Yours sincerely

LIVEWORKSHEETS

From: Colleague to Colleague

Subject: Follow up to Monday's Demonstration at JVT PowerTools

Can we get together sometime later this week to discuss what we saw at JVT Powertools on

Monday? We really ought to think about buying a batch of their K5 drills. What about Wednesday at 10?

Also, as JVT were so hospitable to us when we visited them, perhaps it would be a good idea if we sent them a quick thank you letter, expressing our appreciation.

Could you give me a call me if you can't make the Wednesday meeting?

LIVEWORKSHEETS