



INSTRUCTOR:  
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# COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT



CUSTOMER CARE EXCELLENCE

# COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

— LISTEN • RESOLVE • IMPROVE • GROW —

Effective complaints management turns problems into opportunities and customers into loyal advocates.



## 1. LISTEN

Hear the customer with empathy.



## 2. ANALYZE

Understand the root cause.



## 3. RESPOND

Communicate clearly and professionally.



## 4. RESOLVE

Provide the right solution, promptly.



## 5. IMPROVE

Learn and enhance our processes.



Every complaint is a chance to make things **better**.

Watch  
**THIS VIDEO**



- ✓ Practical tips
- ✓ Real-life examples
- ✓ Easy strategies
- ✓ Better customer relationships



Teacher *Marlon*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

**Complaints Management: Stand up and discuss the following questions with your classmates.**

**WARM UP**



## Useful Expressions

- ✚ *In my experience,...*
- ✚ *One reason is that...*
- ✚ *For example,...*
- ✚ *I believe that...*
- ✚ *In my opinion,...*
- ✚ *If I were in that situation,...*
- ✚ *The company should...*
- ✚ *A good solution would be...*

What kind of service is this?

**1. Have you ever made a complaint about a product or service?**

- ✚ What happened?
- ✚ How did the company respond?
- ✚ Were you satisfied with the solution?

**2. Why do customers complain about products or services?**

- ✚ What are the most common reasons?
- ✚ Can complaints help businesses improve?

**3. How should employees deal with an angry customer?**

- ✚ What should they say or do?
- ✚ What should they avoid doing?

**4. Do you think it is always important to complain when something goes wrong? Why or why not?**

- ✚ Give an example from your experience.
- ✚ What might happen if people never complain?

**5. Describe a time when you received excellent customer service.**

- ✚ What was the situation?
- ✚ Why was the service so good?
- ✚ How did it make you feel?

**6. What qualities should a customer service representative have?**

- ✚ Explain why these qualities are important.
- ✚ Which quality is the most important in your opinion?

**7. Imagine you bought a new phone, but it stopped working after two days.**

- ✚ What would you do?
- ✚ What solution would you expect from the company?
- ✚ How would you react if the company refused to help?



Customer Complaints

I think I will complain!



## CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

Many businesspeople regard a customer complaint as a negative experience. However, if your business handles complaints properly, previously unhappy customers may start singing your praises. Consider a complaint as one of the best opportunities you must show your commitment to creating another satisfied customer.

### WHY SHOULD ANY BUSINESS WELCOME COMPLAINTS?

- ✓ a typical business hears from only 4% of its dissatisfied customers; the other 96% just go quietly away and 91% of them will never come back.
- ✓ a typical dissatisfied customer tells more than 8 people about his or her problem.
- ✓ 7 out of 10 complaining customers will do business with you again if you resolve the complaint properly.



# COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

## VOCABULARY LIST



### COMPLAINT

An expression of dissatisfaction about a product, service, or experience.



### CLAIM

A formal request for compensation, repair, replacement, or another solution.



### CUSTOMER

The person or organization that receives our products or services.



### LISTEN

To pay attention and understand the customer's issue without interrupting.



### INVESTIGATE

To look into the details and find the cause of the problem.



### RESOLUTION

The action taken to solve the problem and satisfy the customer.



### FOLLOW-UP

The step of checking back with the customer to ensure the issue is fully resolved.



### EMPATHY

Understanding and sharing the feelings of the customer.



### TIMELINE

The expected time for providing a solution or update.



### IMPROVEMENT

Making changes to prevent the same problem from happening again.

Watch  
**THIS  
VIDEO**



Better communication



Stronger relationships



Solves problems effectively



Improves customer satisfaction



Builds trust and loyalty



# Six Steps to Dealing with Customer Complaints

**1. Listen carefully** to what the customer has to say and let them finish. Don't get defensive. The customer is not attacking you personally; he or she has a problem and is upset.

**2. Ask questions in a caring and concerned manner.**

The more information you can get from the customer, the better you will understand his or her perspective. I've learned it's easier to ask questions than to jump to conclusions.

**3. Put yourself in their shoes.**

As a business owner, your goal is to solve the problem, not argue. The customer needs to feel like you're on his or her side and that you empathize with the situation.

**Here are some phrases that express empathy:**



Customer Complaints

"It must have been very frustrating for you have waited five days for your order and for that I am sorry."

"If I were you, I'm sure I'd feel just as you do."

"I realize the wait you encountered was an inconvenience."

"That must have been very frustrating for you."

**4. Apologize without blaming.**

When a customer senses that you are sincerely sorry, it usually diffuses the situation. Don't blame another person or department. Just say, "I'm sorry about that."

- ✓ *"I'm sorry for any frustration you may have experienced."*
- ✓ *"I'm sorry for any inconvenience this misunderstanding may have caused you."*
- ✓ *"I'm sorry this happened to you."*



**LIVEWORKSHEETS**

5. **Ask the customer, "What would be an acceptable solution to you?"**

Whether or not the customer knows what a good solution would be, it is recommended proposing one or more solutions to alleviate his or her pain.

6. **Solve the problem** or find someone who can solve it— quickly! Research indicates that customers prefer the person they are speaking with to instantly solve their problem. When complaints are moved up the chain of command, they become more expensive to handle and only add to the customer's frustration.

- "As a solution,
- "May I suggest that...?"
- "What I'll do right now is..."
- "I will action this for you right away..."
- "Let me see how I can fix this, Mrs Brown..."



Instructions: This video provides useful strategies to deal with angry customers. Pay attention to it, take notes and share them with your classmates.





# COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT

Turn complaints into *opportunities to improve!*



## ADDITIONAL PHRASES AND EXPRESSIONS USED TO RESPOND TO COMPLAINTS

- 1 "Thank you so much for letting us know about this, Sir/Madam..."
- 2 "I'm so sorry to hear about this, Mrs. Brown..."
- 3 "I completely understand how you feel, Sir/Madam..."
- 4 "Thank you so much for your patience/understanding, Mrs. Brown..."
- 5 "Wow, I'm really sorry"
- 6 "I'm so sorry that you feel this way, Mrs. Brown..."
- 7 "We really do appreciate this feedback, Mrs. Brown..."
- 8 "I do understand the inconvenience you've faced, Sir/Madam..."
- 9 "I recommend that you (insert action here), Sir/Madam, so that I can take further action without delay."
- 10 "I am more than happy to help you, Mrs. Brown..."
- 11 "I truly understand your concern, Sir/Madam, but unfortunately we cannot tolerate the kind of language you are using right now..."
- 12 "I'm going to do my very best to help you, Mrs. Brown..."
- 13 "You seem very upset, Mrs. Brown. Would you prefer to continue this conversation through email or post?"
- 14 "I'm sorry you're so upset, Sir/Madam. Would you like for us to call you back when you feel a little calmer?"
- 15 "I apologize, Mrs. Brown, but if you continue to use this language, I will be forced to end this call."

## GOOD COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT =



### SATISFIED CUSTOMERS

Happy customers are loyal customers.



### BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT

Feedback helps us identify problems and make things better.



### STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS

Listening and responding with care builds trust.



### POSITIVE REPUTATION

How you handle a complaint is often more important than the problem itself.



Every complaint is a chance to show you care.



TEACHER

Marlon



LISTEN



RESPOND



IMPROVE

## Situation– COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT SCENARIO



You are a customer who has bought a very expensive machine ... but after three days you notice that the machine is making a terrible noise, and you are worried that something bad is going to happen to either the machine or to those working on it. On top of this you have been trying to get hold of the Sales person who sold you the product but constantly get his answer machine.

You are angry as this machine was only installed two days ago and you have had to cancel various areas of production because of this. Your company is now losing money due to the fault.

You ring the customer services and having been put through to the wrong department three times you are now seriously angry. This machine was expensive and was described by the salesman as an investment. You finally get to speak to the manager of the company. You want action!!!

### Note:

- **The manager will try to solve this problem by offering some possible solutions. In this case, make sure you refuse most of them and accept only one at the end of the conversation. Please, be a picky customer**

## USEFUL PHRASES / CLIENT

Practical phrases for client interactions



### CLIENT EXPRESSIONS

- I am very dissatisfied with the service.
- I expected more from your company....
- I am unhappy with....
- This is not good enough...
- I want action now or compensation...



### DEMANDS & ESCALATION

- I am not taking no for an answer....
- What are you going to do about it....
- I want to speak to the director....
- Who is in charge. I want to speak to them...



You are the Manager of an important manufacturing company and you have had a very busy day. You are just about to take a well-earned lunch break when the telephone rings. It is the receptionist who tells you that this is a call you must take as the client is very unhappy and is threatening to sue.

You listen to the customers' complaints and realize that this is another of one of the many problems one of your sales team has created. If your boss finds out it will be more trouble for you and any chance that you have of a promotion that year will disappear. You need to try and resolve this problem.

**Note:** You will deal with a picky customer. Therefore, offer different solutions to your customer and make sure one of them is accepted. Finally, think how you can compensate him or her because of the inconvenience.

## USEFUL PHRASES FOR MANAGERS

Practical phrases to communicate with empathy, tact and support



### PROFESSIONAL APOLOGIES

- I am so sorry...
- I must apologize for this...
- I can only apologize sir/madam...
- Please accept my apologies...



### HANDLING LIMITATIONS WITH TACT

- I'm afraid I am not authorized to do that....
- I am not in a position to....
- I am not authorized to make that decision....



### REQUESTING PATIENCE & ASSURING SUPPORT

- If you could just bear with me a moment....
- I will endeavor to do my best to assist you....
- I assure you that we will do our best to....



# COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT – CONVERSATION QUESTIONS



B1 LEVEL

- 1 Have you ever complained about a product or service? What happened?
- 2 What is the best way to make a complaint: in person, by phone, or by email? Why?
- 3 How do you feel when a company ignores your complaint?
- 4 What should a customer service representative do when a customer is angry?
- 5 Have you ever received poor service at a restaurant or store? Describe the situation.
- 6 What are some common reasons why customers make complaints?
- 7 Do you think customers should always receive compensation when they complain? Why or why not?
- 8 How can employees remain polite when dealing with difficult customers?
- 9 What would you do if you bought a product that stopped working after one day?
- 10 Why is it important for companies to handle complaints effectively?
- 11 Have you ever seen someone make a complaint in public? What happened?
- 12 What qualities make a good customer service representative?
- 13 If you received the wrong order at a restaurant, how would you complain politely?
- 14 Do you think social media is a good place to make complaints about companies? Why or why not?
- 15 What should a company do to prevent the same complaint from happening again?



## USEFUL FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

- ✓ Can you give an example?
- ✓ Why do you think that?
- ✓ How would you react in that situation?
- ✓ What happened next?
- ✓ Have you ever experienced something similar?
- ✓ What advice would you give to the company?



### SPEAK • SHARE • DISCUSS

Practice your English and learn from different perspectives.



### BE PREPARED

Think before you answer and support your ideas.



### RESPECT EVERY OPINION

Listen carefully and keep the conversation positive.