

GENERAL ENGLISH

Lesson 7 – COMPLAINTS



Lesson 7 - Complaints

Introduction



Complaints are never a happy occasion, particularly if you are trying to keep a client or customer happy AND you are struggling with the language.

Lesson 7 - Complaints

Parts of handling a complaint

It is important to remember that responding to a complaint always has **FOUR** parts:

1. **Apologize for the problem** – no matter if you created it or not – no matter whether the issue is true or not. What you are apologizing for is the fact that a customer is unhappy. That's not good for business.

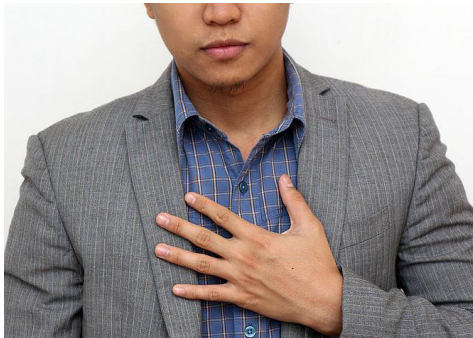


Lesson 7 - Complaints

Parts of handling a complaint



2. Ask for the specifics of the problem – what happened or what went wrong.



3. Say that you will take action [and take it!]

Lesson 7 - Complaints

Parts of handling a complaint



4. **Check back** with the customer later to make sure the problem was resolved to their satisfaction.

Lesson 7 - Complaints

Expressions

Apologizing

- I'm sorry ...
- I'm sorry to hear that ...
- I apologize ...
- I apologize for the problem ...
- I apologize for the inconvenience ...
- My apologies ...



Lesson 7 - Complaints

Expressions

Ask for Specifics

- Please tell me exactly what the problem is
- Please tell me exactly what happened

Take Action

- I will send someone to take care of it
- We will send the correct order tomorrow
- Let me check with the shippers and see what happened
- I don't know what happened, but I will get back with you later today
- Let me straighten this out and I will get back to you today with the solution.



Lesson 7 - Complaints

Expressions

Check back – after the situation has been corrected

- Ms. Chen, did everything work out to your satisfaction?
- Mr. Wozniak, I wanted to see if the problem has been resolved to your satisfaction.
- Did everything work out okay?
- Did you get what you needed/wanted?



Lesson 7 - Complaints

Expressions

Activity 1. Practice the dialog below with a partner. Be sure to exchange roles so that are both the person with a complaint and the person responding to the complaint.

The missing parts . . .

A: Hello Mr. Chen, may I help you?

B: Yes, I ordered spare parts for my generator, but you sent the wrong parts.

A; Oh no! Can you tell me exactly what parts you ordered and what you got?

B:Yes, I ordered two of part number B235C, but I got two B235Ds instead! They won't fit my generator.

A: I'm very sorry, let me check and see if we have the correct parts here right now and if we do, I can have someone deliver them this afternoon. Would that be okay?

B:Yes, please – the sooner I have the parts the better. LaterA: Hello Mr. Chen, did you get the correct parts I sent over ? Are they exactly what you needed?

B:Yes, they just arrived. Thank you.

A: My pleasure Mr. Chen, again, sorry for the inconvenience.

Lesson 3 - Telephoning

Exercise

Activity II. Practice the dialogue. Change the underline words with your own company details.

A: Hello, this is Chris Hust. May I help you?

B: Hi Chris, this is Suda from Thailand Travel. There was a problem with our display advertisement last week. The telephone number was missing!

A: Oh no! Let me check on an that. Can I give you a call back this afternoon?

B: Yes, please do – we'd like a credit or for the ad to run again, please.

A: I am sure we can arrange something, Suda.

B: Thank you, Chris. I'll talk to you later.

A: Thank you for letting me know about the problem, Suda. Bye, bye

B: Bye, Chris.

Lesson 7 - Complaints

Expressions

Activity II. Practice the dialog below with a partner. Be sure to exchange roles so that are both the person with a complaint and the person responding to the complaint.

Shoddy service ...

A: Hello, Anderson Pool Service, may I help you?

B: Yes this Dolly McBride, someone was supposed to clean my swimming pool today. No one came.

A: I'm sorry Ms. McBride, let me check the schedule and see what went wrong. Can I send someone over first thing tomorrow morning?

B: Yes, that would be okay. Tomorrow ...

A: Hello Ms. McBride?

B: Yes?

A: Did the pool cleaner get over there okay this morning?

B: Yes, everything is fine now. Thank you.





A: Thank you, Ms. McBride – and again – my apologies for the

mix-up yesterday. * mix-up means confusion or problem*

Lesson 7 - Complaints

Expressions

Activity III. Work with a partner making and responding to the complaints in the table below. Use the dialogs from slides 11 and 12.

			
<p>Name of Caller with Problem: Sumida Jobes</p> <p>Calling to: Panasonic</p> <p>Problem: Ordered 20 DVD Recorders, got only 10.</p>	<p>Name of Caller with Problem: Richard Canalez</p> <p>Calling to: Fire Stoppers, Inc.</p> <p>Problem: Bought a fire extinguisher, but it doesn't work.</p>	<p>Name of Caller with Problem: Wendy Morales</p> <p>Calling to: Windy City Toyota</p> <p>Problem: Had her car painted last week at Toyota, but the paint is already starting to come off .</p>	<p>Name of Caller with Problem: Bob White</p> <p>Calling to: Dog Sitters 4U</p> <p>Problem: Scheduled dog sitter for 2 p.m. today – no one came. Need a dog sitter right now!</p>

Lesson 7 - Complaints

Steps to handle complaints

1. Listen with an open mind.

Before you say anything, you should fully understand what has happened and precisely why the person is upset.

2. Repeat the problem back.

Once you see where the complaint is coming from, repeat it back in your own words so the person knows you've grasped her position.

3. Empathize and assure that something will be done.

Showing your sincere empathy will help neutralize any anger the person feels.

4. Follow up promptly.

As soon as possible, follow up with a report on what went wrong and the steps you plan to take to rectify the situation and prevent it from happening again.



Next Lesson:

MAKING REQUESTS AND OFFERS

The End