Lesson Plan © Easy Access English

Dealing with Angry customers

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Practice using polite expressions to deal with angry customers.
Reading comprehension and role plays



Activity One – Questions and answers

1. Have you ever had an angry customer on the phone, on the chat or send you an e-mail?
2. How could you tell he/she was angry?
3. What was the problem?
4. How did you handle the situation?
5. Did you succeed in calming them down?

Activity Two – Being polite

There are key words to use when being polite. Does it matter HOW you say them and polite expressions? Let's practice reading them in different ways





'Sorry'
'Could...' (question)
'Please'
'Thank you'
'I apologise'

Can you think of any others in English you would add to this list?

Activity three – Reading comprehension

https://www.forbes.com/consent/?toURL=https://www.forbes.com/sites/thesba/2013/08/02/7-steps-for-dealing-with-angry-customers/

Seven steps for dealing with angry customers

Customers get rude or angry for a variety of reasons—some justified, some not. But since you're in business to serve your customers, you'll likely encounter rude or angry individuals at one time or another. How you respond can make the difference between a customer who feels satisfied with the resolution and one who vows never to patronize your business again.

Here are tips for coping with a tense situation and hopefully resolving it to everyone's satisfaction:

1. Remain calm. When a customer starts yelling or being otherwise rude, there is nothing to be gained by responding in a similar manner. In fact, that will probably escalate hostilities. Maintain control of yourself, even if the customer's tirade makes you feeling like yelling yourself.

2. Don't take it personally. Remember, the customer is not angry with you, they are displeased with the performance of your product or the quality of the service you provide. Your personal feelings are not part of the problem.

3. Use your best listening skills. The first thing an angry customer wants is to vent. To do so, they need someone to listen—and, for better or worse, you are that person. Listening patiently can defuse a situation, as long as the customer feels acknowledged in his or her complaint. Hear them out. When they are done talking, summarize what you've heard and ask any questions to further clarify their complaint..

4. Actively sympathize. After the customer vents, he wants to know you understand where he's coming from and how he or she feels. Express sympathy for their unpleasant customer experience. Respect and understanding go a long way toward smoothing things over.

5. Apologize gracefully. Whether the customer's complaint is legitimate or not is really irrelevant. If you want her to stay a customer, you need to express an apology for the problem they are having (or perceive to be having). A simple, straightforward statement is often all that's needed: "I'm sorry you're not happy with our product. Let's see what we can do to make things right."
6. Find a solution. Once you understand why the customer is unhappy, it is time to offer a solution. Ask him what he feels should be done or put forward your own fair and realistic answer to the problem. In most cases, that's all the customer is looking for—and may result in providing some degree of satisfaction.

7. Take a few minutes on your own. After the situation has been resolved and the customer is on her way, it's helpful for you to take your own "time-out." Even if you've handled the situation in the most professional way possible, it's still a stressful experience. Rather than let that stress linger inside you, take a short walk, treat yourself to a snack or find someone to talk to who makes you laugh. Then you'll be ready to once again engage with your customers.

Comprehension questions



1. What are the seven steps for dealing with angry customer?
2. What is there to gain from behaving in the same manner as an angry customer?
3. Who is the customer angry with?
4. What is the first thing an angry customer wants to do?
5. What do you have to do once you understand why they are angry?

Activity four - Polite expressions



Apologise
I am sorry for the trouble
I am so sorry you feel that way
I am very sorry that the service/product has been disappointing

Empathise
Here is what I am going to do for you....
I understand why you are upset – some people think this is not a good thing to say, why do you think so?
We really do appreciate this feebdack Mr/Mrs....
I understand how upsetting this must be for you

Make him part of the solution
I am glad you brought it to our attention so that we can resolve it for you right away

Throw the ball in the customer's court
What can we do to resolve this problem?

Activity five – Listening Comprehension (listen to the first 2:30 minutes)
Listen to the video and answer the comprehension questions

'handling irate customer calls' (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyJbvEpsfSM)

1. What is it a mistake to do?
2. For what reasons may they be upset?
3. What are the signs that the call might result in conflict?
4. What should you do when you sense they are becoming upset?
5. What is the worst thing you can do?
6. What does the expression 'put yourself in their shoes' mean?
7. What do customers love?

Activity six – How would you deal with this situation?
Read the scenarios and discuss the best and worst way to deal with these situations

A. A customer gets angry because you don't know the answer to their query

B. When the item is not available

C. They get angry because you say 'please hold while I transfer you'

D. Their product isn't working as it should

E. They are angry because you won't offer their whole order free due to a small fault in one of the products

F. The product is defective/damaged

G. They have not received the service they were expecting

Have you ever been in these situations?



Activity seven – Dialogues
Read the dialogue with your teacher and continue it

Ikea CSC: Hello, Ikea customer service center, _____ speaking, how can I help?

Customer: Hello, I have a problem with my order, the kitchen arrived, but the style is red, and I ordered white. I am really not happy at all! I am moving into my house tomorrow and now I have no kitchen!

Ikea CSC: I am very sorry about this confusion and I will do my best to rectify this situation for you. Please can I take your order number?

Customer: It is ABC5654

Ikea CSC: I can see you order and there was a confusion with the delivery, I will get it changed for you and the correct kitchen doors sent right out to you. They can be with you in three days, and there will be no additional charge.

Customer: That is not good enough, I need it before tomorrow

Ikea CSC: ...

Customer: ...

Activity eight – Role Plays
Using the example above and the expressions in the previous activities, with your teacher act out the following role plays :

A. A customer calls you because his kitchen was delivered with pieces missing, he gets very agressive and angry towards you.

B. A customer calls to complain that the service she received in the store was not what she had expected and demands to speak to your manager.

C. Someone calls you, the conversations starts calm with his complaint about the quality of the sofa when it arrive. He is not happy that you are not going to give him any money off and starts to get angry.



