

FTU – ESP DEPARTMENT

COMMERCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

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Adjustment

- Dealing with a complaint (Adjustment) provides an opportunity to investigate, to explain, and to put things right.
=> Goodwill may be preserved.

Rules to observe when dealing with a complaint

- Assume that **“the customer is always right”**.
- Acknowledge the complaint promptly:
 - **If you are unable to reply fully, explain that it is being investigated and a full reply will be sent latter.**
 - **If the complaint is unreasonable, point this out politely and in a way that will not offend.**
 - **If you are to blame, admit it readily, express regret and promise to put matters right.**
- * Thank the customer for inform you about the matter.

How to deal with a complaint?

Opening:

* Acknowledge (and Thank) the customer for informing the problems.

e.g. – *We thank you for your letter ofin which you inform us that*

- *We are replying to your letter ofin which you told us that*
- *We thank you for your letter of ... regarding / concerning / in connection with ...*
- *I refer to your letter of ... about / relating to ...*

Apology for the error or fault

- We must apologise for ...
- We sincerely apologise for ...
- Please accept our apologies for ...
- I would like to apologise for the error made by our company in (verb+ing)

Message

- Accepting the Complaint
 - *We agree that the usual high standards of our products / services were not met in this instance.*
- Explain the mistake (How and why it occurred)
 - e.g. – *The mistake was due to a fault in one of our machines, which has now been corrected.*

A short explanation of the fault

» Introductory phrase

- *As a result of our investigation, we found that... (Not: After our investigation...)*

» Causes

- *The error was caused by ... / was due to ...*
- *Apparently, the problem was the result of ... / resulted from ...*
- *The cause of / reason for the mistake was ...*

» Effects

- *As a result ...*
- *This led to ...*
- *Consequently ...*

- State the intended solutions

e.g.

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- *Would you please return samples of the items you are dissatisfied with and we will send them to our factory for tests.*
 - *We have modified / changed our ...*
 - *We have implemented a system to...*
 - *To prevent re-occurrences we have set up a verification procedure.*

Other solutions

- Proposal to settle the difficulty
 - » *As a gesture of our regret, we are prepared to .../ we are willing to .../ we would like to ...*
 - » *To show goodwill, we will ...*
- An offer to take goods back, make a replacement, give a discount etc.
 - » *We have dispatched the new items by express courier. They should arrive by Monday, 10 January 2011.*
 - » *To show our goodwill, we would like to offer you a 5% discount on your next order with us.*

- Reject the complaint if it is unjustified:
Explain why you deny responsibility.
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e.g. – *We have compared the articles you returned with our samples and can see no difference between them. Therefore, in this case we are not willing to substitute the articles.*

Useful expressions

- Rejecting responsibility for the problem leading to the complaint
 - » *I regret to inform you that ...*
 - » *I am afraid that ...*
 - » *Unfortunately, I must point out that ...*
- Reasons for the rejection
 - » *This is because the guarantee period has expired.*
 - » *This is due to the fact that the guarantee period has expired.*

Closing

- Apologize for the mistake.

e.g. – *We/I would like to apologize for the mistake/ inconvenience and we are sure that this type of fault will not occur again.*

- *We sincerely apologize for the trouble caused to you and will take all possible steps to ensure that such mistake will not be made again.*

- A concluding paragraph aiming at retaining the goodwill of the customer

» *We look forward to receiving your further orders, and assure you that they will be filled correctly / promptly.*

- Everlong Batteries
171 Choi Hung Road
Hung Hon, Hong Kong
Tel/Fax 2235 2449
6 Jan 2011

Mr J Wong
Purchasing Officer
Fortune Goods
317 Orchard Road
Singapore

Dear Mr Wong

- **Order No. 2639/L**
- Please accept our apologies for the error made by our company in filling your order no. 2639/L dated Monday, 3 January 2011.
- You ordered 12,000 size Ultra super-long-life premium batteries, but our dispatch office sent 1,200. This was due to a typing error.
- The balance of 10,800 batteries was dispatched by express courier to your store this morning and will arrive by Friday, 14 January 2011.
- Since we value your business, we would like to offer you a 10% discount off your next order with us.
- We look forward to receiving your further orders and assure you that they will be filled correctly.
- Yours sincerely
David Choi
David Choi
Distributions Manager

Exercise

- **Reply a complaint:**
- **Situation**

You are an administrator for Exhibitions International, a company which organises business exhibitions and trade fairs around the world. You have received the following letter of complaint about your company's most recent exhibition.

- Flat 303 Lucky Mansions
856 Cheung Sha Wan Road
Cheung Sha Wan
Kowloon
- 3 January 2011
- The Administrative Officer
Exhibition Services
Exhibitions International
33 Kadoorie Avenue
Kowloon
- Dear Sir/Madam
- I attended your exhibition Sound Systems 2010 at the Fortune Hotel from 24 - 27 December and found it informative and interesting. Unfortunately, my enjoyment of the event was spoiled by a number of organisational problems. I explain each of the problems below.

- Firstly, I had difficulty in registering to attend the event. You set up an on-line registration facility, but I found the facility totally unworkable. Even after spending several wasted hours trying to register in this way, the computer would not accept my application. I eventually succeeded in registering by faxing you.
- Secondly, the exhibition was held at one of Hong Kong's most prestigious hotels, but frankly the venue was better suited to a medium-sized business conference than to a large exhibition open by registration to the public. The lack of space led to serious overcrowding in the venue, particularly at peak visiting times (i.e. lunch times and early evening). On one or two occasions I was also seriously concerned about the physical safety of attendees.

- The final point I want to make concerns product information. It is very enjoyable to see and test a range of excellent sound systems, but it is also important to be able to take away leaflets on interesting products, so that more research can be done before deciding which system to buy. However, by the time I attended the exhibition all the leaflets had been taken.
- Could I please ask you to look into these matters - not only on my behalf but also on behalf of other attendees, and in fact on behalf of your company, too.
- I look forward to hearing from you.
- Yours faithfully
- Michael Leung
- Michael Leung

Questions and Answers



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

