

# Top 10 Tips – Managing Customer Complaints

*Supplied by: The Development Company Limited*



## 1. Encourage customers to complain

This may sound odd, however only 1 in 10 dissatisfied customers take the time to complain. To be a world class business we need to listen to our customers, seek out stories, encourage staff to feed back even minor customer grumbles and ask customers what their experience has been.

(Ask for 'How are we doing?' feedback on receipts, packing lists, invoices, email footers, in conversations etc.).

## 2. Listen to what the customer has to say.

## 3. Keep an open mind

## 4. Establish the facts.

We do this with effective questions: "May I ask what happened?" by actively listening and summarising our understanding "So what you are saying is...?"

## 5. Empathise with the customer "I can hear how frustrated you are..."

Empathy is walking in the customer's shoes, so you will be feeling what they are feeling and reflecting back what they are saying. Just using the words is not enough.

## 6. Say "I'm sorry"

Some people are reluctant to apologise yet if we are empathic, surely we are sorry someone feels this way about our product or service not meeting their needs?

Saying "I'm sorry" does not mean you are admitting to making an error.

You can say "I am so sorry to hear we did not meet your expectations."

## 7. Agree what you will do.

## 8. You need to agree what the first step is. This may be a long way from resolution, however by stating "I will discuss this with the Warehouse Manager and get back to you by 5pm today."

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**You have to keep to your promises.**

### **9. Thank them for taking time to tell you their experience.**

**Think of the 9 dissatisfied customers who didn't take the time to do this and instead just voted with their feet.**

### **10. Give the customer your name and contact details.**

**World class organisations make it easy to be contacted. Give them your name, department, phone number and email.**

**See it through**

**You answered the phone, so it is your responsibility to see it through to completion.**

**This may involve calling the customer to keep them informed, arranging meetings, escalating internal system errors to ensure this doesn't happen again, etc.**

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