

Resolving Customer Complaints

 | 30 min

Category: ✓ Business English

Topic: ✓ Work, Problems

Media: ✓ Video

Level: ✓ B2-C1 Upper-Intermediate / Advanced

Grammar: ✓ Mixed Grammar

Learning Focus: ✓ Listening, Speaking, Vocabulary


Activity 1

Learning New Vocabulary and Discussion

VOCABULARY, SPEAKING


5 min

Ask the student(s) to complete task 1. Discuss the answers. You can ask these additional questions.

- What are the most common problems that dissatisfied customers call in about?
- Do you agree that the customer is always right? Why (not)? Does your company share this view?
- Should there be an obligatory course for employees on how to deal with difficult customers?
- Is it possible to avoid occasional run-ins with dissatisfied customers?
- How can a company suffer from not handling such situations in a proper way?



Task 1

Read the comments below. Write C (customer) or S (staff).

The most common complaints

1. I keep getting shuffled from one person to the next. **C**
2. We're doing our best to make sure we get this issue resolved quickly, but sometimes it takes time. **S**
3. They just don't seem to care at all. **C**

4. We handle many issues at a time, but they want to be kept up to date on their issue. **S**
5. They blame us for the product's faults. **S**
6. They don't seem to know the product well enough to provide necessary information. **C**



Activity 2

Watching the Video
and Comprehension

LISTENING, VOCABULARY



10 min

Play the **video** about dealing with difficult customers to the student(s). Ask them to complete task 2. Check and discuss the answers. Ask these additional questions.

- What do you think of the advice given in the video?
- Is there any procedure for dealing with difficult customers in your organization?



Task 2

Watch the **video**. Answer the questions.



1. What shouldn't you do while a customer is making a complaint? *interrupt*
2. How should you react once they finish? *repeat back to them, summarize what they said*
3. What's the most important thing you should offer a customer? *a plan*
4. What's the thing to understand about a customer? *what they want to accomplish*
5. What was the outcome of the presented case? *they managed to offer the customer what he wanted within the scope of their service*



Activity 3

Learning New Vocabulary
and Discussion

VOCABULARY, SPEAKING



10 min

Ask the student(s) to complete task 3. Explain the vocabulary, if necessary. Next, check and discuss the answers.



Task 3

Fill in the blanks with the correct words from the video.
Answer the questions.

sample answers

1. Sometimes you have to properly _____ *reset* _____ expectations. What is meant by that?
some customers may not understand what the service entails
2. You're totally _____ *valid* _____ in how you feel. Why is it important to say that?
customers feel someone cares about their problems

3. Show a customer that you _____ *mutually* _____ benefit from what you're about to offer.
What's the benefit for the company?

the customer is satisfied, their reputation is not harmed

4. First, I had to _____ *acknowledge* _____ the fact that I understood where he's coming from.
What does it refer to?

understanding the customer's needs

5. Why is it vital to understand what a customer wants to _____ *accomplish* _____?

we can find a way to fix the problem



Activity 4

Reviewing Vocabulary and Discussion

SPEAKING



5 min

Ask the student(s) to complete task 4. Discuss the answers.



Task 4

Put a check mark (✓) next to the items that you agree with.
Next, answer the questions.

Strategies for dealing with a difficult customer

student's idea(s)

- be dismissive of their behavior
- never apologize for the issue
- try to diffuse negative or highly charged emotions
- show empathy
- offer a full refund
- follow up with the customer to get their feedback on the solution you offered
- set aside your personal opinions and feelings
- adjust to the customer's communication style
- consult the company's policies and regulations
- be transparent about the issue

Why did you choose those strategies? *student's idea(s)*

Describe a time you, or someone you know, had to deal with a difficult customer/client at work. What happened? How was the problem solved? *student's idea(s)*