

Dealing with a Complaint



This week...

A client calls from the United States to complain about a problem with a product he has just received from Japan. Emiko is handling his call.

Lesson Objectives...

- Dealing with a complaint
- Problem solving

Business English Conversation

Super Class



Have you ever dealt with a complaint from a customer before?

Picture Description

Why does she look so frustrated?



B



A

Who is he calling?

| | |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Client | This is Peter Davies with USA Imports. May I speak to Emiko, please? |
| Emiko | Hello, Peter. This is Emiko speaking. How can I help you today? |
| Client | I am extremely dissatisfied with the custom made tables I have just received from your company. |
| Emiko | Could you please tell me what the actual problem is? |
| Client | Three out of the ten tables I ordered have deep scratches on the legs and are unacceptable. |
| Emiko | I'm terribly sorry to hear that. I will get replacements made asap. |
| Client | It took three months for this order to arrive. I can't wait that long for the replacements to get here. |
| Emiko | We just have to make the detachable legs. You will have them within two weeks. |
| Client | As long as it doesn't take any longer than that, then it should be OK. |
| Emiko | Once again, I apologize for the trouble this has caused you. |



Student A is calling Student B to complain about a product he/she has just received from Student B's company. Student A is extremely dissatisfied and is negotiating with Student B to rectify the problem.

Key Phrases

- I am extremely dissatisfied with ...
- I can't wait that long for ...
- I need it/them quicker than that.
- As long as it doesn't take any longer than that, then it should be OK.
- I'm terribly sorry to hear that.
- You'll have it/them within ... days/weeks/months.
- Once again, I apologize for the trouble this has caused you.

Products

Problems

- | | | |
|------------------|---|---------------------|
| • laptops | → | webcams not working |
| • exercise bikes | → | no seats |
| • printer | → | no ink as promised |
| • glass tables | → | broken tabletops |
| • PC monitor | → | cracked screens |
| • <i>Other</i> | | |



Talk about one of the following topics for one minute:

1. “The customer is always right.”
2. Showing emotions as a customer when something goes wrong.
3. Complaining about really minor problems.

*Other students in the class, ask one question each to the presenter after the speech

- Have you ever complained about a product or service that you received?
- Do you ever get angry when you are complaining about something?
- In your opinion, what is the best way to deal with a complaining customer?
- Would you complain if the product you received had only a very minor defect?

We need to find some **common ground** if the negotiations are to go ahead.



common ground – shared beliefs, interests or mutual understanding

- After the negotiations both parties finally found **common ground**.

reach a stalemate – to reach a position where no progress is made

- The negotiations for the price increase have **reached a stalemate** and it will be difficult to start them again.

stand one's ground – to maintain and defend one's position

- It was important for us to **stand our ground** to get the best deal possible.