

# Dealing with complaints



advice  
 should  
 let's  
 must be  
 would have  
 done  
 adverbs  
 conditionals –  
 type 3

## 1 Ten ways of dealing with complaints

Read the advice.

# Dealing with COMPLAINTS



**1** You should be calm and relaxed when dealing with a complaint.

**2** Let the person explain their problem. If they're angry, let them talk until they've released their anger. Don't interrupt them until they have finished.

**3** Never lose your temper. Speak in a friendly, helpful way.

**4** Be sympathetic. Use attentive listening techniques. (*I understand, I see.*) Take notes. Use reflective listening techniques. (*You must be very annoyed about this.*)

**5** Offer to investigate the problem.

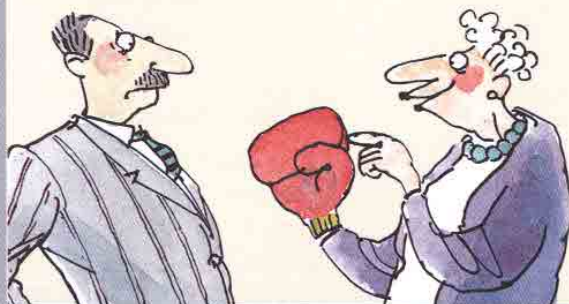
**6** If your company is wrong, admit it and apologize.

**7** Don't waste time defending your company, or blaming someone else. Never make excuses. (*It isn't my fault. We're having problems with the computer system. Someone else was responsible for this.*)


**8** Stick to the point. Don't make personal comments. Don't start an argument.

**9** Ask the person what they think the answer is.

**10** Explain what you're going to do about the problem. Make sure that you do it.



**2 Listening**

 Listen to the telephone conversations, and assess the people who were answering the calls and dealing with the complaints. You can tick more than one box.

	Dialogues			
	one	two	three	four
polite	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
rude	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
sympathetic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
efficient	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
aggressive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
assertive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
submissive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**3 Discussion**

Listen again. How did the person who was answering deal with the call? Efficiently, sympathetically or politely?


**4 What would you have done?**

If you had answered the call, would you have ...


- lost your temper?
- listened more sympathetically?
- sounded more helpful?
- transferred the call?
- tried to solve the problem?
- apologized?
- put the phone down?

**5 Role-play**

Look at the Listening appendix. Choose one of the conversations. Role-play this call with your partner. The situation is the same, but you are answering the call. Deal with the call differently.

 See Active Grammar conditionals – type 3; *would have done*; adverbs of manner

**6 Interaction**

 You are going to do a role-play. Turn to the Interaction appendix.

Student A: look at section 38.

Student B: look at section 19.

Demonstrate your role-play to the class.