

# HANDLING CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

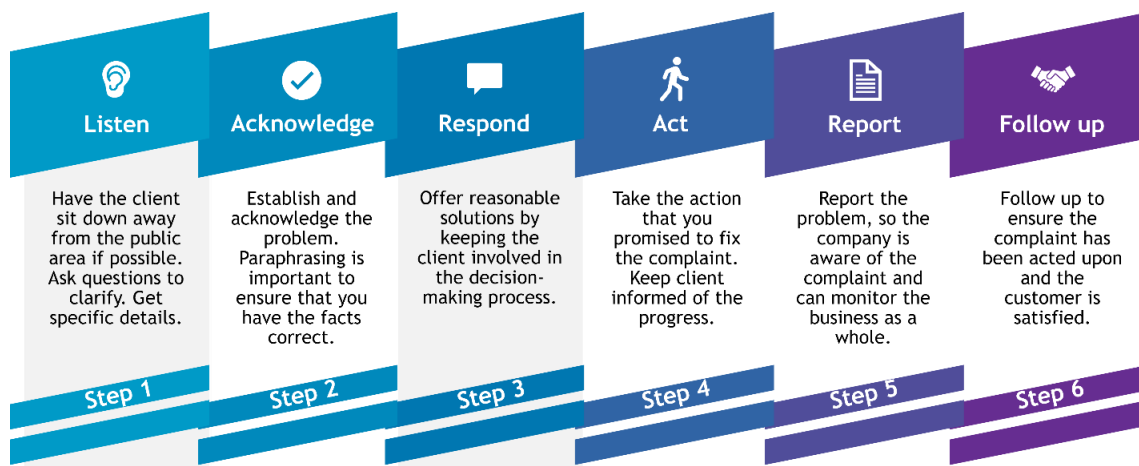
The 6-step formula for success

## *Quick Guide*





## steps to successfully handling customer complaints



### LISTEN - The Power of attentive listening

The first and most crucial step in resolving complaints is to listen. Participants may feel frustrated or unheard, and if they don't feel listened to, no solution will satisfy them.

#### What helps:

- Stay fully present and give them your attention.
- Ask clarifying questions to understand their concerns accurately.
- Take notes (if appropriate) and summarise their issue to confirm accuracy.

#### What to avoid:

- Jumping to solutions too quickly.
- Minimising their concerns or being defensive.
- Interrupting or multi-tasking while they talk.

When people feel heard, their frustration reduces, and they become more open to solutions.



### ACKNOWLEDGE - Show empathy and take ownership

Once you fully understand the concern, the next step is to acknowledge it. People want to know that their feelings and frustrations are valid, even if the issue wasn't your fault.

#### What helps:

- Ensuring both parties understand the issue.
- Express empathy: "I understand why this would be frustrating."
- Acknowledge the inconvenience and thank them for bringing the issue to your attention.

#### What to avoid:

- Making excuses or shifting blame
- Making the issue seem unimportant.
- Over-explaining why something went wrong instead of focusing on a solution.

Acknowledging the issue de-escalates tension and builds trust, making it easier to move towards resolution.



## RESPOND - Offer a fair and practical solution

Once the issue is clear and acknowledged, provide a fair and actionable solution. A well-handled response can turn an unhappy participant into a loyal client.

### What helps:

- Offer a realistic solution that aligns with expectations.
- Involving the customer in the solution. “What would a good resolution look like for you?”
- Resolving the issue immediately if possible.

### What to avoid:

- Overpromising and underdelivering.
- Dismissing their suggestion without offering alternatives.
- Leaving them uncertain about what happens next.

When clients see you are focused on making things right, they are more likely to be satisfied with the outcome.



## ACT - Follow through on your promises

Words mean little without action. Once a resolution is agreed upon, act quickly and efficiently to address the issue

### What helps:

- Fixing the problem as promised to build credibility and trust.
- Implement the agreed solution immediately where possible.
- Communicate delays promptly and transparently.

### What to avoid:

- Saying “I’ll look into it” without clear next steps.
- Forgetting to follow up after promising a resolution.
- Leaving them in uncertainty about what’s being done.

Timely action reassures participants that their concerns are genuinely valued.



## REPORT - Document the complaint for future improvements

Handling complaints isn't just about fixing the immediate issue—it's about learning from the experience to prevent similar problems. Proper documentation helps you improve processes and enhance service quality.

### What helps:

- Keep a record of complaints, including details of the issue and resolution.
- Look for recurring issues and root causes to address underlying problems.
- Use the feedback as an opportunity to improve service quality.

### What to avoid:

- Treating complaints as isolated incidents instead of recognising trends.
- Ignoring feedback that could improve future workshops.
- Failing to act on insights from past complaints.

Tracking complaints allows facilitators to refine their approach, improve future sessions, and enhance participant satisfaction.



## FOLLOW UP - Ensure the client is satisfied

Resolving a complaint doesn't end with fixing the issue. The final and often most overlooked step is following up. A follow-up shows that you care about their experience beyond resolving the immediate issue. This is where real trust and loyalty are built.

### What helps:

- Check in after a reasonable timeframe: "Is everything resolved to your satisfaction?"
- Express gratitude for their patience and feedback.
- If possible, offer a small gesture of goodwill to reinforce the relationship and let them know their valued.

### What to avoid:

- Avoiding follow-up out of fear of reopening the issue.
- Sending impersonal or generic responses.
- Assuming that once the issue is fixed, they are automatically satisfied.

A thoughtful, well-executed follow-up turns a complaint into a long-term positive experience

*I hope you find this quick guide helpful.*

Dare to make a *difference!* Any questions? Contact us today.

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