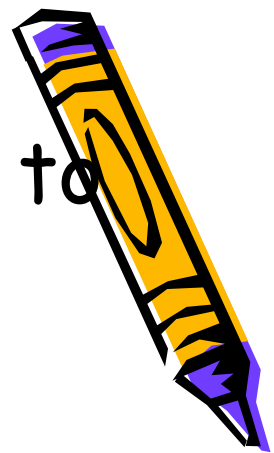


# Complaint Letters

Problem questions:

1. Reasons for writing a Complaint Letter
2. What is Complaint Letter?
3. The language of a Complaint Letter
4. Content of a Complaint Letter:
  - ▶ Opening
  - ▶ Explaining the problems
  - ▶ Suggesting the solutions





- Ideally, it should not be necessary to complain....
- Errors occur when goods are mishandled, accidents happen, usually because of haste or lack of supervisions.
- There's often a shortage of staff owing to illness or holidays, and there's sometimes a shortage of sufficiently trained staff, so mistakes are inevitable and customers complaint.



## Reasons for writing a Complaint Letter

- Complaints may be of several kinds, and may arise from the delivery of wrong goods, damaged goods, or too many or too few goods. Even if the articles are delivered in the right quantities, they may arrive later than expected, thus causing severe difficulty to the buyer and possibly, to his customers.
- Then the quality of the goods may be unsatisfactory: perhaps they are not according to the sample or description on the basis of which they were ordered or they may simply be second-rate products (второсортные).

- If a customer is dissatisfied with the execution of his order, he will complain.
- In doing so he should refer clearly to the articles in question, by referring to his own order number or to that of his supplier's invoice, or both. He should then specify the nature of his complaint, and finally state what action he wants his supplier to take.



- Dear Sig. Causio
- I am writing to you to complain about the shipment of sweater we received yesterday against the above order.
- The boxes in which the sweaters were packed were damaged and looked as if they had been broken open in transit. From your invoice No.1887 we estimate that thirty garments have been stolen, to the value of £550.00. because of the rummaging in the boxes, quite a few other garments were crushed or stained and cannot be sold as new articles in our shops.
- As the sale was on CIF basis and the forwarding company were your agents, we suggest you contact them with regard to compensation.
- You will find a list of the damaged and missing articles enclosed, and the consignment will be put to one side until we receive your instructions.

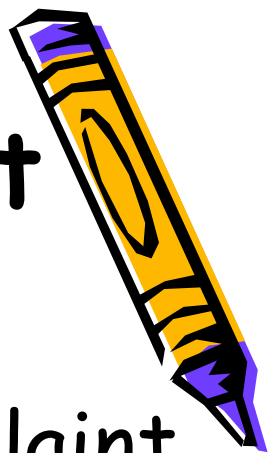
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## What is a Complaint Letter?

- A complaint letter requests some sort of compensation for defective or damaged merchandise (товары) or for inadequate and delayed services.
- While many complaints can be made in person, some circumstances require formal business letters.
- The complaint may be so complex that a phone call may not effectively resolve the problem; or the writer may prefer the permanence, formality, and seriousness of a business letter.

# The language of a Complaint Letter

- The essential rule in writing a complaint letter is to maintain your poise (сдержанность, уравновешенность) and diplomacy, no matter how justified your gripe (огорчение) is. You have to avoid making the recipient an adversary (врагом, неприятелем, оппонентом).



- Emotional terms like «**disgusted, infuriated or amazed**» have no place in business.
- You can express dissatisfaction by saying:
  - - *This is the third time this mistake has occurred and we are far from satisfied with the service you offer.*
  - - *Unless you can fulfill our orders efficiently in the future we will have to consider changing to another supplier.*
  - - *Please ensure that this sort of problems does not arise again.*
- Do not be rude or personal.
- In most correspondence between companies takes place between employees in various departments.



Use the passive voice and impersonal structures mentioned:

- - *The mistake must be corrected as soon as possible.*
- - *There appears to be an error on the statement.*
- - *There seems to be some misunderstanding regarding terms of discount. Discount is deducted from net prices, not CIF price.*

- Do not use words like fault (your fault, our fault) or blame (you are to blame) - these expressions are rude and childish. Do not write:

- - *It is not our fault. It is probably the fault of your despatch department.*

**Instead write:**

- - *The mistake could not have originated here, and must be connected with the despatch of the goods.*



## Content of a Complaint Letter: Opening

- Do not delay with writing your complaint. Complain as soon as mistake has been made, delay weakens your case and can complicate the matter as details may be forgotten. There is no need to open by apologizing for the need to complain. Simply begin:

- - *We would like to inform you...*
- - *I am writing to complain about...*
- - *I am writing with reference to Order No.P32, which we received*



## Content of Complaint: explaining the problems:

1. In the letter, identify early the reason you are writing - to register a complaint and to ask for some kind of compensation. Avoid leaping into the details of the problem in the first sentence.
2. Provide a fully detailed narrative or description of the problem. This is the "evidence."

If you think you know how the mistake was made you may politely point out this to your supplier:

- *Could you tell your despatch department to take special care when addressing consignments? My name and address are C.J.Schwartz,Bergstr.101 Köln. But there is a C.Schwartz,Bergstr.110 who also deals in electrical fittings.*



## Content of Complaint Letter: suggesting a solution

1. State exactly what compensation you desire, either before or after the discussion of the problem or the reasons for granting the compensation.
2. (It may be more tactful and less antagonizing (противодействовать) to delay this statement in some cases).

If you think you know how the mistake can be corrected, let your supplier know:

- *Rather than sending a credit note you could send six replacements, which would probably be easier than adjusting (корректировать) our account.*

# Content of CL: explaining the problems:

- - Could you ask your accounts department to check my code carefully in future? My account number is 246-642, but they have been sending me statements coded 642-246.
- I think the reason that wrong sizes have been sent to me is because I am ordering in metric sizes, and you are sending me sizes measured in feet and inches. I would appreciate your looking into this.



# Getting feedback

- So...
- How did you understand a "Complaint letter"?
- What is the role of a Complaint letter?
- When do we write a complaint letter?
- What are the language peculiarities of a Complaint letter?
- Is there anything you couldn't understand clearly?

