

## Writing a Complaint Letter

The complaint letter should be written in the business letter format. When writing a complaint letter you want to keep it short and to the point to help ensure that your letter will be read in its entirety, if you write a seven-page complaint letter, it's highly unlikely that someone will sit down and read all seven pages. The complaint letter should be addressed to the customer service/consumer affairs department or the head office if there is no customer service department. The address and contact information of the customer service department should be available on the company's products or website.

**First paragraph:** You should identify what the issue is and any relevant information that you believe is important. Be sure to include the following information if it's applicable to the situation: the date/time of the issue, location, name of person on duty, name of product, what the problem was, your account number, model number, price, warranty information and reference number. Be sure to stick with the facts and avoid putting emotions into your letter.

**Next paragraph:** State what you would like done to resolve the situation. If you received poor service, you could request an apology or a coupon. If a product malfunctioned, you could request that you could exchange the product for a new one or request a refund.

**Last paragraph:** Thank the reader for the time. You can also throw in some compliments about something you liked about their company's product or service.

You should include your telephone number/e-mail address after your printed name so that they can contact you ASAP if necessary. Be sure to keep a copy of the letter for yourself and include photocopies of any relevant documents and enclose them with your letter.

## Sample Complaint Letter

Jim Dandy  
2525 E. 34th Street  
Greeley, CO 80631

July 15, 2006

Customer Service  
Cool Sports, LLC  
8423 Green Terrace Road  
Asterville, WA 65435

Dear Sir or Madam:

I have recently ordered a new pair of soccer cleats (item #6542951) from your website on June 21. I received the order on June 26. Unfortunately, when I opened it I saw that the cleats were used. The cleats were dirty and there was a small tear in front of the part where the left toe would go. My order number is AF26168156.

To resolve the problem, I would like a credit to my account for the amount charged for my cleats, I have already purchased a new pair of cleats at my local sporting goods store so there is no need to replace the defective cleats.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I have been a satisfied customer of your company for many years and this is the first time I have encountered a problem. If you need to contact me, you can reach me at (555) 555-5555.

Sincerely,

<Signature>

Jim Dandy

## Letter Writing Tips

- Always proofread your letter after writing it, check for sentence structure, grammar, spelling mistakes...
- Proofread your letter again (and again) after you have revised it.
- Keep the recipient in mind, and write in a way that he/she can easily understand the letter.
- Don't use abbreviated dates, i.e. use November 19, 2005, and not 11/19/05.
- Be respectful when you write, even if you are writing a letter of complaint.

## Business letter writing tips

- Be concise and keep to the point, but don't leave out any important information.
- Try to keep your letter short enough so that it fits on one page.
- If your letter is more than a page long, use another page, don't use the back of the page.
- If you have access to stationary with a letterhead on it, use that instead of regular paper.

## Inquiry Letters

A letter of inquiry is a letter of request. The objective is to get the reader to respond with an action that satisfies the request. The action taken can benefit either the writer or the reader, and sometimes both. That being the case, the scope of an inquiry letter must include enough information to help the reader determine how best to respond.

## Sample Inquiry Letter

1102 West 30th  
Lawrence, KS 66321

August 4, 2005

Dr. Maria Gomez-Salinas  
St. David's Hospital  
1000 Greenberg Lane  
Wichita, KS 66780

Dear Dr. Gomez-Salinas:

I am writing you in hopes of finding out more about how the new Glucoscan II blood glucose monitoring system, which a representative at Lifescan informed me that your clinic is currently using.

Originally, I saw Lifescan's advertisement of this new device in the January 19XX issue of *Diabetes Forecast* and became very interested in it. I wrote the company and got much useful information, but was recommended to write several current users of the system as well.

For a technical report that I am writing for a technical writing class at Johnson County Junior College, I need some help with the following questions :

1. How often does the Glucoscan II need to be calibrated in practical, everyday use conditions?
2. How accurate is the Glucoscan II compared to other similar systems that your patients have used?
3. What problems do your patients experience with this new device?

The Lifescan representative indicated that your clinic is a leader in implementing new technology for diabetics. I am eager to hear from you. Thank you for your time, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Anita Teller  
Student, Johnson County Junior College