Unit 8

**Top tips on complaining**

http://www.howtocomplain.com/info/advice.shtml

* [Before you complain](http://www.howtocomplain.com/info/advice.shtml#beforeyoucomplain#beforeyoucomplain)
* [Who to complain to](http://www.howtocomplain.com/info/advice.shtml#whotocomplainto#whotocomplainto)
* [What to remember](http://www.howtocomplain.com/info/advice.shtml#whattoremember#whattoremember)
* [Complaint letter template](http://www.howtocomplain.com/info/cl-template.shtml) - This template is to help you draft your own letter of complaint. You can download a copy into your own word processor application.

**Before you complain**

**Be clear in your mind why you are dissatisfied**. Was it the way you were treated? A wrong decision? Defective goods? What exactly went wrong?

**Be clear in your own mind what you want to happen as a result of making a complaint**. Do you want an apology? Do you want a different decision? Do you want the proper service that should have been provided in the first place? Do you want replaced goods? You should mention this to the organisation you are complaining to and ask for prompt action.

**Who to complain to**

This will be different depending on what type of organisation you are complaining to and the scale of your complaint. The following four steps are a general guideline. For more specific complaint procedures see the Information Section where you can find the specific steps for each organisation;

1. **You should attempt to resolve your complaint directly with the parties involved**: i.e. take the product purchased back to the shop, or attempt to have the service redone.
2. **You should contact the relevant senior management or customer services department.** It may be necessary to communicate with them several times before taking the next step. Most good organisations will have internal complaints procedures and complaints are often resolved using these. However sometimes they aren't and that's when you should consider the third step. It is worth mentioning that you are considering or have decided to take your complaint to the relevant authorities, sometimes this may provoke more serious consideration of a complaint
3. **You should contact the relevant authority or overseer** who will be able to give advice on how to exacerbate your complaint if you are still not satisfied. Ask the institution which is the relevant independent ombudsman or adjudicator to whom you can take your complaint (you can also find this information by browsing the Information Section of this site). Alternatively you can contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau or Trading Standards Office who will be able to help and give you advice on who you should contact next. Some Ombudsman or executive agencies such as Oftel or Ofgem may take complaints up for you.
4. **Finally, if all else has failed then court or arbitration services maybe the final choice**. The [Legal Section](http://www.howtocomplain.com/info/legal.shtml) on this site contains information regarding legal options. Small claims court proceedings are inexpensive but time consuming and arbitration is available for many industries and services.

**What to Remember**

Various valuable hints which should help you to get the result you are looking for:

* **Keep a record of events**. If you speak to someone on the phone make a note of who you speak to, when and what was said. If you use 'snail mail' then keep a copy of your letter and any replies you receive.
* **Keep the evidence**. Retain all receipts/invoices, letters and e-mails regarding products and services that you may have purchased/received. If you are asked to present these at any stage then present copies and keep the originals yourself.
* **Stay Calm.** If you have confronted someone directly then don't let the emotion of the moment get to you. If you are clearly not getting an adequate response then simply take the next step in the procedure as advised above. Don't be shy to use a bit of humour.
* **Write clearly and concisely**. Be polite and courteous but don't be afraid to convey the detail of any incident and to articulate your disappointment. Be clear about what you think would resolve your complaint.
* **You should make an attempt to know your rights**. See the [Know Your Rights Section](http://www.howtocomplain.com/info/kyr/index.shtml) of this site if you are unsure.
* **Don't give up**.
* **Praise where praise is deserved**. Organisations welcome complaints but most certainly praise too!

[How to Persuade People](http://www.wikihow.com/Persuade-People)

http://www.wikihow.com/Persuade-People

Convincing people that your way is the best way is often very difficult but is possible

**Timing is everything**. Knowing how to persuade people correctly largely depends on the right time to talk to them. Approach people when they are more relaxed and you will achieve far better results.

**Smile**. Be polite, cheerful, and charismatic. A good attitude will help you more than you think. People will hear what you have to say without thinking that you want to force your point of view on them.

**Show them all the benefits of your idea**. (If possible, tell them how it will benefit ***them***. That always gets their attention.)

**Minimize any gain you stand to receive should the person choose your preferred course of action**.

**Prepare for any contradictions and be ready for any that you may not have thought of**.

**Don't be afraid to agree with the person a little**. Say things like: "Okay, but..." or "Yeah except..." or just say yes but don't let them completely prove you wrong.

**Try to find out why the other person is rejecting your preferred course of action**. If you can find out why, it gives you a tactical advantage.

**If you realize that you may have been wrong in one aspect then admit it**. It will make you seem more trustworthy.

**Ask them just to consider it and think about your idea, given time to think they may realize their mistakes**.

**Be generous with your opponent; give them something they want, and they will be more inclined to give you something you want**.

**All persuasion should be suggestive not demand**. But at the same time know what you want.

**In general when trying to convince someone always talk about positive things and pleasant memories, never bad things that happened**. Not about personal life experiences.

**Try not to appear to be going to great lengths to persuade somebody**. In fact, you are most persuasive when your audience does not know you are attempting to persuade them.

**At times, it helps to let your audience know that something is really, really, really important to you, and other times it does not; use discretion**.

**Most importantly, know when to give up**. Your opponent may find you talking very annoying. If your opponent perceives you as a pest, it will make you much less persuasive in the future.