

Angry customers - what can we do with them?

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All is well when it ends well. And until it ends be sure not to panic; no matter how bad it looks. Your customers only want you to do your best when they complain. They can see things that you might miss and every complaint will give your insight on how to improve your business. Here are some tips of handling with complains:

- Be empathetic and come them down - which means that you should acknowledge the person's feelings (you don't have to agree with them to do that). In the NLP practices this is called "to build rapport". For example, you can say: "I understand how upsetting that might be..."
- Do not defend yourself - you will surely want to say something to defend yourself - don't! Getting defensive will never help. The issue is not about who is right, it is about helping a disappointed customer and keeping their repeated purchases.
- Take responsibility - no matter whether you are guilty for the complaint or not, you still represent your company. Therefore, you should take the "blame". By doing that, you emphasize the company's trustworthiness and reliability. If you can't handle the issue alone, be sure to hand the customer off in a classy manner.
- Make commitments - only that way the customer is assured that something will be done in a precise time interval. You have to state your actions clearly, for example: "Our team will come to your place tomorrow at 15:00".
- Make some offer before they ask for refund - that's what most of your customers say in cases of dissatisfaction: "We want our money back". But that is the least you want, because it leaves your customer disappointed in your company. You will have to be cleverer and offer them something of a value for their trouble and time before they ask a refund.
- Do more - every company can do things the regular way. We are sure you can come up with something more. After all, the complaining customer only wants you to be better, and you can use this interaction to prove that you can.
- Walk the talk - make sure to do what you have promised.

- Follow up - check back with them after some period. Phone them up or e-mail them and ask if they need anything else and if the arrangement you made works properly. That way you show them that you care and can also trigger word-of-mouth referrals.

At the end, let's use the statistics as a guide: it shows that about seven out of ten complaining guests will do business with you again if you resolve the complaint in their favor.