

# Answering the letter of complaint, accepting or rejecting it.

## Useful Expressions

Acknowledging receipt of a complaint letter

- Thank you for your letter of ... regarding / concerning / in connection with ...
- I refer to your letter of ... about / relating to ...

Apology for the error or fault

- We must apologise for ...
- We sincerely apologise for ...
- Please accept our apologies for ...
- I would like to apologise for the error made by our company in (verb+ing)

Accepting the Complaint

- We agree that the usual high standards of our products / services were not met in this instance.

A short explanation of the fault

- Introductory phrase
  - As a result of our investigation, we found that... (Not: After our investigation...)
- Causes
  - The error was caused by ... / was due to ...
  - Apparently, the problem was the result of ... / resulted from ...
  - The cause of / reason for the mistake was ...
- Effects
  - As a result ...
  - This led to ...
  - Consequently ...
- Solutions
  - We have modified / changed our ...
  - We have implemented a system to...
  - To prevent re-occurrences we have set up a verification procedure.
- Assurances
  - We assure you that this will not happen again.

Investigation to be made

- We are currently investigating the cause of ...
- We will investigate the cause of...

#### Proposal to settle the difficulty

- As a gesture of our regret, we are prepared to .../ we are willing to .../ we would like to ...
- To show goodwill, we will ...

#### An offer to take goods back, make a replacement, give a discount etc.

- We have dispatched the new items by express courier. They should arrive by Friday, 28 November 2008.
- To show our goodwill, we would like to offer you a 5% discount on your next order with us.

#### Regret at dissatisfaction

- While we can understand your frustration, ...
- We understand how disappointing it can be when your expectations are not met.

#### Rejecting responsibility for the problem leading to the complaint

- I regret to inform you that ...
- I am afraid that ...
- Unfortunately, I must point out that ...

#### Reasons for the rejection

- This is because the guarantee period has expired.
- This is due to the fact that the guarantee period has expired.

#### If a third party (another person or organisation) is to blame, direct the complainer to that party

- We therefore suggest that you contact...

#### A concluding paragraph aiming at retaining the goodwill of the customer

- We look forward to receiving your further orders, and assure you that they will be filled correctly / promptly.

**EXAMPLE:**

**Everlong Batteries**

171 Choi Hung Road  
Hung Hon, Hong Kong  
Tel/Fax 2235 2449  
25 Nov 2008

Mr J Wong  
Purchasing Officer  
Fortune Goods  
317 Orchard Road  
Singapore

Dear Mr Wong

**Order No. 2639/L**

Please accept our apologies for the error made by our company in filling your order no. 2639/L dated Friday, 21 November 2008.

You ordered 12,000 size Ultra super-long-life premium batteries, but our dispatch office sent 1,200. This was due to a typing error.

The balance of 10,800 batteries was dispatched by express courier to your store this morning and will arrive by Wednesday, 3 December 2008.

Since we value your business, we would like to offer you a 10% discount off your next order with us.

We look forward to receiving your further orders and assure you that they will be filled correctly.

Yours sincerely  
David Choi

David Choi  
Distributions Manager