

HEALTH AND SAFETY.- Session 2.- The training session.

Situation

Read the text and listen to the situation.



It's 9 o'clock and the girls are attending the health and safety training session.

Lewis: Good morning everyone. My name is Lewis Thomson and I'm here today to talk about health and safety. I would like to start by **handing out** a questionnaire on health and safety in the office. Please, read the questions carefully and try to answer them as best you can.

Lourdes: Aha, let's see this list. We have to make sure that everything in the office **complies** with the health and safety regulations.

Susana: Hmm, that sounds complicated. Let me see. Is the furniture safe? (This question refers to poor **ergonomics** -keyboard elevation, chair adjustment-).

Lourdes: Yes, I guess it is. Read another question.

Susana: Are materials **neatly** and safely piled?

Lourdes: Well, not the materials I have on my desk.

Susana: Yes, my desk isn't too tidy either. Oh, here's an interesting one: Are toilets and food preparation areas clean?

Lourdes: Well, the lunch room isn't especially clean. The microwave oven is filthy.

Susana: Yes, I know. I wouldn't anything that has been anywhere near that microwave.

Lourdes: Let's continue: Are the following provided adequately?

Susana: Yes, go on.

Lourdes: Lunch rooms, drinking water, toilets...

Susana: What?! Can you imagine? An office without toilets! I don't know what I'd do!

The girls start laughing and Mr Thomson **tells them off**.

Lewis: Excuse me, ladies at the back. What's going on there?

Lourdes: Nothing, nothing at all. We're really sorry, Mr Thomson.

Susana: Lourdes, health and safety is very important. I think you're not taking this seriously.

Lourdes: I can't believe it!



Now it's your turn

Write in the forum:

- ✓ In your opinion, what are the most important aspects to take into account when making sure that your workplace is safe?



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[Aviso Legal](#)

1.- What to say.

Quotation

"Don't complain about the snow on your neighbour's roof when your own doorstep is unclean."

Confucius.

Situation

The training session has finished and the girls go back to work. Mr Parker has news for them. A **complaint** letter from a customer has been received and Mr Parker wants the girls have to deal with it.

Susana: A complaint letter, wow. Let me read it.

Lourdes: Apparently, there was a problem with one of the deliveries. This customer isn't happy at all and wants a **refund**.

Susana: OK, and what shall we do?

Lourdes: Mr Parker wants us to reply to this letter. He told me that when we're finished he'll come to revise the letter before sending it.

Susana: Right. So, let's get started.



Now it's your turn

Discuss in the forum:

- ✓ Have you ever had to deal with a complaint?
- ✓ What do you think is the best way to deal with a complaint?

Submit

1.1.- Dealing with complaints.

When you are dealing with complaints, you should listen carefully; be polite; and, except when it is absolutely necessary, don't comment until the customer has finished. Then, make a short, clear apology. After that, you should repeat the complaint. This is to make sure that you have fully understood the problem and that there are no misunderstandings. When possible, you should also note down what the customer has said.

Next, you should decide who will deal with the complaint. If it is not a serious one, you can deal with it yourself. You should explain to the customer the action you plan to take and tell him when it will be done. If you decide that a manager should handle the complaint, you should first inform him and then arrange a meeting between him and the customer.



Now it's your turn

Now use the information in the passage to help you put the following items in the right order. Fill the gaps with the appropriate order number, using two digits: 01, 02, ..., 10.

Matching exercise

Information	Order
Be polite.	<input type="text"/>
Repeat the complaint.	<input type="text"/>
Make a short clear apology.	<input type="text"/>
Inform the manager.	<input type="text"/>
Listen carefully.	<input type="text"/>
Decide who will handle the complaint.	<input type="text"/>
Note down what the customer has said.	<input type="text"/>
Don't comment.	<input type="text"/>
Deal with the complaint.	<input type="text"/>
Arrange a meeting.	<input type="text"/>



Now it's your turn

Give your opinion in the forum. In your opinion, which actions should be taken when handling complaints?

- Listen carefully to what the customer is saying.
- Smile and be friendly.
- Apologise in any situation.
- Handle the complaint as soon as possible.
- Put the blame on some members of the staff and apologise.
- Be firm but not too harsh.
- Thank the customer for informing you.
- If there has been really a mistake, say that this is a rare and exceptional case.



Now it's your turn

Give your opinion in the forum. What kind of qualities should you have in order to handle difficult clients?

Friendly, sympathetic, responsible, communicative, efficient, polite, patient, tidy, being nice, non-smoker, happy, naive, gullible, sceptic, reasonable.

2.- How to say it. The Passive Voice (II).

We are going to see the formal aspects of the passive voice.

- ✓ **TWO OBJECTS:** When there are two objects (direct and indirect), two passives are possible.
 - **Active:** *Robert sent her some flowers.*
 - Her: Indirect Object / **Some flowers:** Direct Object.
 - **Passive:**
 - 1. *Some flowers were sent to her.*
 - 2. *She was sent some flowers.* (This form -Indirect Object as a subject- is more frequent).
 - **Active:** *They asked me lots of questions.*
 - Me: Indirect Object / **Lots of questions:** Direct Object.
 - **Passive:**
 - 1. *Lots of questions were asked to me.*
 - 2. *I was asked lots of questions.* (More frequent).
 - **Summarising:** When there are two objects, it is more frequent to begin the passive sentence with the person (Indirect Object).
- ✓ **INTERROGATIVE AND NEGATIVE PASSIVE FORMS.**
 - In the **negative form** we use the verb to be in the negative.
 - *America wasn't discovered in 1495.*
 - *The best wines aren't produced in Denmark.*
 - For the **interrogative form**, we use: Wh-word + Auxiliary (be) + Subject + Verb?<
 - **Active:** *When did Columbus discover America?*
 - **Passive:** *When was America discovered?*
 - **Active:** *Where have they found the jewels?*
 - **Passive:** *Where have the jewels been found?*
- ✓ **MODAL AND AUXILIARY VERBS IN THE PASSIVE VOICE.**
 - When there is a modal verb, we use the modal verb + be + past participle.
 - *We must close this door after 10:00 pm.*
 - *This door must be closed after 10:00 pm.*
 - *He should explain the lesson again.*
 - *The lesson should be explained again.*



Active and passive voice

Active voice	Passive voice
<i>They will open a new restaurant soon.</i>	<i>A new restaurant will be opened soon.</i>
<i>A little boy can drive this car.</i>	<i>This car can be driven by a little boy.</i>
<i>We mustn't make noise at night.</i>	<i>Noise mustn't be made at night.</i>
<i>They should tell him the truth.</i>	<i>He should be told the truth.</i>

Translation

Click to read the Spanish translation.

2.1.- Now you put it into practice.



Now it's your turn

Put into the passive these sentences with two objects. You must write the two possible answers for each sentence.

1. They have sent her some flowers.
2. They didn't offer Tim the job.
3. My brother gave me 600 Euros for my old car.
4. The company will pay us a good salary next year.
5. She has asked me a lot of questions.

Submit



Now it's your turn

Put into the passive these sentences. Future and modal verbs.

1. The mechanic will repair my car very soon.
✔ My car (by the mechanic) very soon.
2. They will organise next Olympic Games in London.
✔ Next Olympic Games in London.
3. Some people can type lots of letters in one day.
✔ Lots of letters in one day.
4. Somebody should warn Peter about the risks of smoking.
✔ Peter about the risks of smoking.
5. We must leave the bicycles at the university entrance.
✔ The bicycles at the university entrance.
6. Amenabar will make a new film this year.
✔ A new film by Amenabar this year.
7. Adult people can drive this car.
✔ This car by adult people.
8. They are going to build a new sports pavilion.
✔ A new sports pavilion is going to .

Submit

2.2.- Weak forms.

Weak forms are syllable sounds that become unstressed in connected speech and are often then pronounced as a schwa. For example, in the sentence below the auxiliary verb 'do' is a weak form and the second do is stressed.

✔ *What do you want to do tomorrow?*

Many common function words have both a strong form and a weak form.

For example, **them** has a strong form /ðem/ but a weak form /ðəm/. Unless the word is specially emphasized, it is usually pronounced in its weak form.



You should know

If you want to listen to the difference between those two forms, check out this website.

[Them \(strong and weak forms\).](#)

All these words have a strong form and a weak form: **can, must, are, was, from, than, of.**

You should know

Let's practise weak forms. Try to predict which words can fill the gaps, then listen to check your answers.

[Weak forms Exercise 1.](#)

Again, try to fill in the gaps first. Then listen and check your answers.

[Weak forms Exercise 2.](#)

3.- Words you need. The language of written apologies.

Most businesses take complaints very seriously; but some complaints are more serious than others and some customers complain more than others. It is often the responsibility of an individual member of staff to deal with the problem. Sometimes, of course, it is necessary for the staff member to refer an unhappy customer to someone else, such as a manager.

If you are dealing with people who are upset, angry or have a complaint try this way of handling the situation:

- ✓ *"I'm glad that you have brought this to our notice."*
- ✓ *"I'm sure that we can sort it out."*
- ✓ *"I'm sorry that you have a problem."*



Sometimes it is necessary to reply to a complaint by writing a letter of complaint. If you must do that, below there are some expressions you can use.

The language of apologies.

Written apologies.

- ✓ May we apologise for...
- ✓ I would like to apologise for...
- ✓ May I offer my profound apologies for...
- ✓ We would like to extend our sincere apologies for...
- ✓ Please accept my sincere apologies for...
- ✓ Once again I would like to apologize for... and any inconveniences this may have caused you.
- ✓ We sincerely regret the inconvenience caused to you because of this.

Accepting responsibility.

- ✓ We accept responsibility for...
- ✓ I accept (the fact) that...
- ✓ This problem was caused as a result of / because of our...

Assurances.

- ✓ Please accept our assurance / guarantee that...
- ✓ Let me promise / guarantee / assure you that...
- ✓ I assure you that such a thing will not happen in future.
- ✓ We reassure you of our...

Think about it

Read the following information.

A good customer ordered 5 boxes of your product P67. The order should have been delivered on 20 January. However, due to problems at the courier company you use, the delivery is late. Your customer has telephoned to complain. You have contacted the courier company and have got a guaranteed date of 2 February for delivery.

Now write a brief note in the forum explaining the problem and promise delivery on 2 February. Use expressions from the table above.

3.1.- Answering a complaint letter.

Let's see now how to answer a complaint letter.

VERY IMPORTANT:

Decide, before you write the letter, if the complaint is wholly or partly justified or not; if so, decide whether you are going to merely apologize, give excuses or offer some kind of compensation.

If something is not attributable to you, say so, while expressing sympathy (*I can understand...*). Do not be rude.

- ✓ **First paragraph:** Thank for previous letter and make general apology.
 - *I am sorry to hear that...*
 - *I am writing to apologize for all the inconveniences...*
 - *caused by...*
 - *that arose during your stay/ holiday at...*
- ✓ **Second paragraph:** Make specific apology and give explanations or reasons for each complaint.
 - *Concerning..., I would like to explain that...*
 - *With reference to..., I must say that...*
 - *Regarding... , I was surprised to hear that... ; we are looking into the matter and hope to give you an explanation as soon as we find out what happened.*
 - *While we understand that... was inconvenient/ not to your satisfaction, we must remind you that.../ we must tell you that we are not responsible for...*
 - *I would like you to accept our apologies for (the lack of... the poor standard in...).*
- ✓ **Third paragraph:** offer some kind of compensation (if applicable).
 - *As a sign of our concern, we would like to offer...*
 - *Although it is difficult to compensate you for the inconveniences suffered, we would like you to accept...*
- ✓ **Fourth paragraph:** Repeat apology/promise it will not happen again.
 - *We would like to apologize again, and can assure you that such situations will not occur in the future.*
 - *We have detected the problem, and have taken immediate action to ensure it does not happen again.*



A step ahead

Here you have an article on how to write a polite complaint letter.

[Polite complaint letter.](#)

Another website with lots of information and sample complaint letters.

[How to write a complaint letter.](#)

3.2.- Sample complaint / apology letters.

Here is the main part of a letter of complaint to British Corporation.



Dear Mr Bennet,

I am writing this letter regarding the unsatisfactory delivery of the items that I received on 20 June. Upon delivery, I found the items were severely damaged.

I would like to make arrangements to return it for a full refund including the shipping charge to send the items back to your warehouse.

I would appreciate your prompt response upon this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me for any questions. Thank you in advance.

Yours sincerely,

J. Sorensen.

Here is the reply from the Manager.

Dear Mr Sorensen,

We are very sorry that the delivery of goods that you received on 20 June was defective. We understand your disappointment and appreciate the inconvenience this must have caused your organization and the logistics problems that ensued. There is no question that the product we delivered did not meet the very high standards our customers have come to expect and should continue to demand.

I can promise you that the highest quality standards will be met in the future because protecting our reputation for delivering the best product on the market is a key priority for us. Again, I apologize for our mistake and regret any inconvenience caused as a result.

Although it is difficult to compensate you for the inconveniences suffered, we would like you to accept a replacement of the product and a full refund including the shipping charge.

If there is anything else that we can do to minimize your inconvenience in regard to this matter, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,
Alan Bennet,
Manager.

Text adapted from <http://www.lettersandforms.com/free-complaint-letters/damaged-goods-complaint%20-letter.html> and <http://www.perfectapology.com/sample-business-apology-letter.html>

You should know

Listen to a man leaving a complaint on an answering machine and answer the questions.

[Answering machine complaint.](#)

A step ahead

Here you can find some tips for dealing with complaints.

[Dealing with complaints.](#)

You can read a short article about customer complaints.

[Customer complaints.](#)

Appendix.- Licenses of resources.

Licenses of resources used in session 2. "The training se

Resources (1)	Resources information (1)	Resources (2)	
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