


# HOLDING AN EVENT: Communicative Activities



## Caso práctico

If you remember session 2, Mr Adams was complaining about the bill when checking-out. This is something that customers have the right to. He was doing it  face to face, but there are more ways of complaining such as by phone, by e-mail or letter as Mr Sorensen did when he wrote the letter of complaint after leaving the hotel because of the disgraceful service provided.




Alan Bennet, as manager of the hotel, wrote a letter of apology:

Dear Mr Sorensen,

I am writing to apologize for all the inconveniences that arose during your stay at our hotel.

I am extremely sorry that you found the service provided by reception and cleaning staff not up to our usual standard. I apologize for this and will make enquiries about it.

With reference to the restaurant service, I must say that the weekend you stayed with us was a busy weekend since we were holding a medical conference and that was the reason why service was rather slow. However, I would like you to accept our apologies for the service offered.

Although it is difficult to compensate you for the inconveniences caused, I hope we will continue to receive you again and that, if you have a complaint, you will  inform my staff immediately so that we can deal with the problem there and then. Once again, I apologize for any inconveniences this may have caused you.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Bennet.

Manager.



## You should know





When writing a letter of apology there are some useful tips to consider:




- ✓ You should start the letter by saying that you are sorry to the recipient.
- ✓ Next you should give an explanation as to what went wrong.
- ✓ Then you should try to rectify the problem.
- ✓ And finally you should apologize again.

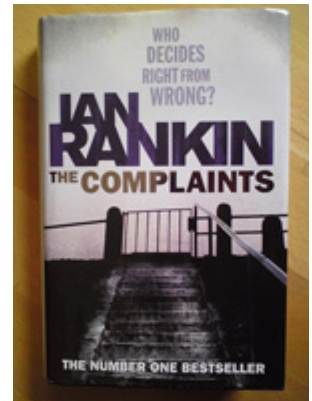
# 1. Reading activity I

## HANDLING COMPLAINTS

The first thing that you should always remember is that nine out of ten complaints will be about the shop, restaurant, hotel, the food, products or services you offer and not about you. Your attitude will play a vital part in how effective you are in dealing with customer complaints. Always have a positive attitude toward both the customer and the complaint.

There are key stages in how to effectively deal with both the customer and the complaint. First of all you have to be aware of what the complaints policy of your shop or restaurant is. Do you have the responsibility/authority to deal with the complaint through to its conclusion? Or do you have to pass the situation over to a colleague or superior? Don't get defensive. You do not want to get into an argument with your customer, even if they want to get into one with you. Never say "it's not my job". Politely ask the customer for their name and remember it. First of all you have to  find out what the problem is. Ask the customer to tell you exactly what the problem is. Listen very carefully to what they tell you. It might be helpful to take notes at this stage to verify later with the customer, or, if passing the complaint over, to give your colleague the full story.  Whilst the customer is talking to you, don't interrupt or jump to conclusions. The next stage is probably the most difficult – you have to apologise! You need to empathise with the customers' feelings, in other words, you understand how they feel so that you take the problem seriously. Don't  blame other people or say it  has nothing to do with you.

You then have to decide what to do and take the necessary action. If you have to pass the customer and the complaint over, remember that the customer complained to you and will not want to repeat the story to someone else. Make sure you explain the problem fully. If you are dealing with the complaint yourself, make sure you follow the accepted procedures within your shop/restaurant (  refunds, replacing meals etc.). Always explain fully to the customer what you are doing, so they  are aware of what is happening and why. Finally, always ask if the customer is happy with the  outcome. If dealt with professionally and courteously, you will have won your customer back.



## Self-evaluation

**Read the text and say if the following sentences are True or False.**

**It doesn't depend on your attitude to be effective when dealing with a complaint**

- True.
- False.

**Be polite even if your customer wants to get into an argument with you.**

- True.
- False.

**While the customer is talking, don't waste your time taking notes.**

- True.
- False.

**If the complaint has nothing to do with you, blame your colleague.**

- True.
- False.

**Probably the most difficult stage is when you need to empathize with the customers' feelings.**

- True.
- False.

**Although customers complain, they can trust you again if you deal with a complaint professionally.**

- True.
- False.





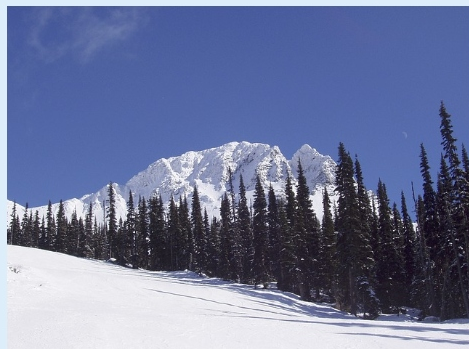
# Reading Activity II

## Self-evaluation

Read this text about the tourism strategy for the town of Whistler, Canada, and answer the questions below.

### Event Tourism Strategy

Whistler's largest resort partners- Tourism Whistler, the Resort Municipality of Whistler and Whistler Blackcomb Mountains- recognized in March 2017 that there was a need to develop a resort-wide Event Tourism Strategy to help Whistler expand upon its ventures that complement tourism (i.e. events) in an effort to build and stabilize customer visits. This strategy evaluates the role of event tourism (as an economic driver for Whistler, consistent with the Resort's Whistler2020 vision project), explores the impact of event tourism on the Resort's *stakeholders*,



community and its guests, and provides recommendations for Whistler to reach its vision for events ("Whistler is an internationally recognized tourism destination - *renowned* for its superior quality and diverse events - making it a place to visit again and again"). Specifically, it *addresses* the following goals for event tourism:

- Grow and promote a portfolio of events that supports Whistler's brand, values and needs, and *enhances* Whistler's image (focusing on Whistler's existing events).
- Develop the infrastructure to support large events in Whistler.
- Access funding to grow events in Whistler.
- *Streamline* Community Partner roles & responsibilities to better serve events.

To date, Whistler has *hosted* a wide range of events from small local gatherings and regional celebrations, to "signature" events attracting national and international attention. In addition to annual festivals and events, animation has also played an integral role in *enlivening* the Resort and the guest experience. At the other end of the event scale, Whistler was also a host venue for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, a "mega" event that is already garnering international attention for the Resort.

Whistler's stakeholders, specialists in the field of event tourism and destinations that are already engaged in event tourism strategies, widely accept that it is necessary to adopt a long-term, strategic approach to event tourism in order to realize the full tourism potential of events. The stakeholders interviewed for this strategy also support an integrated approach that considers both the needs of the guest (or "event tourist" or "tourist") and the community. They unanimously agree that authentic, organic events that celebrate the destination and are aligned with Whistler's brand and values have much greater potential to grow and attract new and repeat visits.

Since the majority of Whistler's most recognized regional and "signature" events have been established over time, it is important that Whistler's Community Partners continue to focus on *nurturing* existing events and look for opportunities to grow smaller events into economic generators for the Resort (i.e. attract regional, national and international event tourists). Smaller, grass roots events are typically championed by locals and therefore have already established some level of community buy-in and participation. These events are also more likely to reflect the values, community passion and products of the Resort, and provide a competitive *edge* over other destinations (e.g. other resorts).

It is also recognized that there are some gaps in Whistler's event portfolio (i.e. specific types of events) and event calendar (i.e. times of the year when there are no events). This provides an opportunity for Whistler to attract and develop new events that can potentially fill these gaps and attract new and repeat visitation during key times of the year. Continuing to focus on Whistler's unique and natural attributes and talents as well as the products that Whistler offers will be key to setting the destination apart from its competitors and ensuring that events remain authentic and aligned with its brand, garnering greater community support and tourism appeal.

1. The purpose of the strategy is to increase mass tourism in the area.

True  False

2. The strategy says that Whistler needs more infrastructure in order to be able to hold events.

True  False

3. So far, except for some music festivals, Whistler hasn't held any big events.

True  False

4. Among the stakeholders, there is a small disagreement that the events held should be aligned with the Whistler brand

True  False

5. The events held in Whistler have been held for several years now.

True  False



True  False


6. The strategy needs to focus on finding events for those dates where there are currently no events.

True  False

## Understanding vocabulary in context

Look at the words in italics from the text. Decide the correct meaning of each in that context.

1. stakeholders

- a. a tourist agencies
- b. people or businesses with a particular interest in something
- c. people possessing  shares in a company

2. Renowned

- a. infamous
- b. abandoned
- c. well-known or talked about

3. Addresses

- a. deals with
- b. writes the name on the envelope
- c. protests to

4. Enhances

- a. lessens
- b. increases the quality of



b. increases the quality of

c. mixes

#### 5. Streamline

a. prepare new lines of a strategy

b. make more efficient

c. complexify

#### 6. Hosted

a. proposed participating in

b. stored as a website

c. held

#### 7. Enlivening

a. making more interesting or appealing

b. giving life to

c. making more understandable

#### 8. Nurturing

a. encouraging and developing

b. caring for and protecting

c. making more natural

#### 9. Edge

a. chance

b. possibility

c. advantage



## 2. Listening activity I

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### You should know

Click on the following link to watch a video where Basil encounters the ferocious Mrs Richards, who is not entirely happy with her room in the hotel, and is also very 🙅 deaf. Classic clip from the hilarious comedy Fawlty Towers starring John Cleese.

Vídeo de BBC Studios alojado en [Youtube](#)

# Self-evaluation

While you are watching the video say if the following sentences are true or false.

The first problem is that the woman has booked a room with a bath and she thinks she doesn't have one.

- True.
- False.

She is happy with the her room with a view.

- True.
- False.

She wanted to see the sea from her room.

- True.
- False.

All in all, she expects to get a reduction because the room has no air conditioning.

- True.
- False.



## Listening II

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**True or False?**

Listen to this text and choose the correct answer.

1. A nationwide website did a survey on hotel guests' complaints.

True  False

2. The site asked 400 staff from international hotels in 39 countries.

True  False

3. Most of the guests' unusual requests were about the shower and bathroom.

True  False

4. The article suggests that it is fairly easy to satisfy most people

True  False

5. One hotel guest requested 60 cucumbers a day.

True  False

7. The staff were surprised to find that the left leg of a chicken is tastier.

True  False

8. A man in London complained he couldn't see the sea

True  False

9. A woman wanted a discount because her boyfriend snored.

True  False

10. The last guest mentioned was unhappy as he was expecting to enjoy himself more.

True  False



## Gap fill

Listen to a conversation between a dissatisfied guest and a hotel manager. Complete the gaps.

The client wants to complain in general about the food and mentions last night's [redacted] as an example. In particular, she thought it was [redacted] and too [redacted]. The manager asked if she had said anything about it to the waiter because he could have brought her a [redacted]. However, she didn't draw it to his attention because she thought it was just a [redacted] thing.

Another thing she mentions is the fact that there are no [redacted] on the menu and they had been promised at the travel agent's that there would be. When he looks, the manager can only find [redacted] and [redacted] on the menu. And the guest also says that in general there is insufficient [redacted] for everybody, especially when they are staying for [redacted] days.

The manager [redacted] her for bringing this to his attention and promises to talk to [redacted] and that the guest will see a change starting [redacted].

Submit

## 3. Writing activity

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Samantha Harbinson has stayed at your hotel, but she is not happy with the service provided. That's why she has written a letter to complain about the poor service your staff offered (see below).

Write a letter to apologize for the inconveniences caused during her stay at your hotel.



### You should know

Click on the following link to read the letter of complaint that Samantha Harbinson has written.

[Letter of complaint for poor hotel service.](#)



### A step ahead

As a model, you can use the letter written by Alan Bennett or click on the following link where you will find another sample letter:

[Hotel apology letter](#)



## 4. Speaking activity

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Look for a partner in the forum to role-play a situation to handle guests' complaints. Student A will be a member of the hotel staff and Student B will be the guest. Then switch roles.



### You should know

Click on the following link where you will find sample dialogues and a list of possible situations to complain about.

[Handling guests' complaints.](#)

[Useful language for complaining and apologizing](#)

# Appendix: Licences of Resources

## Licences of Resources used in Communicative

Resource (1)	Resource information (1)	Resource (2)	
	<p>By: uniondocs.            Licence: CC by-nc-sa.            From:  <a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/uniondocs/5445928563/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/uniondocs/5445928563/</a></p>		<p>By: Bill M            Licence:            From:  <a href="http://ww">http://ww</a></p>
	<p>By: dfrancis.            Licence: CC by-nc.            From: <a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/dfrancis/127673432/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/dfrancis/127673432/</a></p>		<p>By: hey r            Licence:            From:  <a href="http://ww">http://ww</a></p>
	<p>By: Andrewthecook.            Licence: CC by-nc-sa.            From:  <a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/andrewthecook/530227748/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/andrewthecook/530227748/</a></p>		<p>By:nature            Licence:(            From: htt            Whistler-</p>