Flair Unhappy Clients Workbook

 

# Introduction

My first sales mentor used to rub his hands together in glee when we had a problem with one of our clients. He would say “Any fool can do it when it’s going well but only a real star can do it when it’s not” and he was right.

Obviously, we don't want you to intentionally upset your clients but when problems occur, and they always will, why not use it to your advantage and strengthen the relationship?

The key is attitude and approach.

# Attitude

It’s not your fault, they brought it on themselves, another supplier did it, they were told it worked that way.

Doesn’t matter.

Your client is unhappy, and anything other than an understanding appreciation for that unhappiness will only make it worse and damage the relationship.

The ultimate outcome may be a change request, pointing them to some training or one of their down/upstream suppliers or even, dare I say, acknowledging you screwed up and must fix it.

Regardless the result your first response is to simply apologise for the problem they’re having and understand it as best you can. To assist you, we’ve put together a simple form which you can use to train your people to get the key details for any complaint, and with the right attitude.

It won’t take long for them to memorise it so they can essentially draw it from memory.

1. Have you said sorry yet?

Your clients are people, be one yourself and say sorry. It’s just polite.

1. What has happened?

It’s easy to jump to conclusions, and asking this makes it clear you want to help resolve the situation.

1. What should have happened?

This may seem silly but how often has a problem been miscommunication on what should happen? You may find you lack understanding or they do of what is expected

1. Why is it a problem?
	1. Impact (how bad):
	2. Timings (when does it get worse):
	3. Scale: (how often/many)
2. Who is the primary contact for the issue?

The person who really cares and will remember how you acted.

On the next page is an example document for you to see followed by a blank one for you to fill out.

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| But First … |
| **Have you had an email?**  Pick up the phone and call them**Is it obviously serious?** Get onsite. |

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| 1. Have you said sorry yet? If not say it. If you have, then say it again with meaning.

*We’re not admitting fault, or blame, just being human.* |
| Yes |
| 1. What has happened?

*Neutral, simple facts about what happened, when, to whom* |
| The learning academy is offline and there are x4 training sessions today. All locations and users are affected, both trainers and students.  |
| 1. What Should have happened?

*We don’t want to make assumptions, misunderstandings can multiply the problem* |
| Full online access all day to two modules* Finding High Value New Clients
* Pitching to Win
 |
| 1. Why is it a problem?

*Again, no assumption or failure to realise consequences. Key things: Impact (How bad), Timings (when does it get worse), Scale (how often)* |
| Staff costs and contracted trainers are burning money. Teams are offsite most days so it will be months before we can book in again and we’ve several sales presentations coming up.  |
| 1. Who is the primary contact for the issue?

*Because communication is key*  |
| Trainer Co-ordinator – Mr Joe BloggsExtension -1234 |

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| 1. Have you said sorry yet? If not say it. If you have, then say it again with meaning.

*We’re not admitting fault, or blame, just being human.* |
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| 1. What has happened?

*Neutral, simple facts about what happened, when, to whom* |
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*Because communication is key*  |
|  |

# It’s Your Fault

How you can resolve an issue will always depend on your industry, company and the problem at hand. But some things should be common across these and that’s how you approach the issue, with the key being communication.

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| --- |
| But First … |
| **When problems occur client satisfaction always outranks profit.** **ALWAYS!** |

1. Come up with a plan
2. Get Customer Buy In
3. Agree Timings for updates.
4. Stick to the above.

Seems simple but often the urge to fix or get rid of a problem means things slip, communication drops off and suddenly a client is feeling unloved because they are unaware of the work you are putting in on their behalf.

# It’s Not Your Fault.

Okay, well, what can you do to help?

This is your client, and given that 67% of clients leave because they feel you don’t care\* then now is a perfect opportunity to show that you do.

Be the supplier who fixes something that wasn’t even their job to fix. Go back to 2 and do what you can, even if it’s simply reducing the impact on the client by freeing up some of their resources and time so they can focus on the problem at hand.

# Afterwards

When it’s all sorted head back to the client and see how such an event can be avoided in the future.

Problems can cost you time and money but they needn’t dent your reputation. In fact they can significantly enhance it, building your personal brand and helping you stand out from your competitors as you go.

And don’t forget that these are people on the other end of these problems, this can be a great opportunity to make some non-operational contact and offer to take them out for a drink or meal to say sorry for the inconvenience.