

Responding to Client Complaints

Objective: Learn to politely respond to a client complaint.			
Introductory Activities (All-Level): Diana's story and discussion (1). Dialogue (2).			
	Lesson Goals	Key Vocabulary	Level Specific Activities
L1	<p>Understand how to use the future tense "will" and "won't" forms to make a promise</p> <p>Learn basic adjectives that show up in client complaints</p>	<p>⇒ Will/Won't</p> <p>⇒ Adjectives to describe basic problems: empty, dirty, wet, broken</p> <p>⇒ Adjectives to fix basic problems: fix, fill, dry</p>	<p>⇒ Future Tense (4)</p> <p>⇒ Future Tense Practice (5)</p> <p>⇒ Complaint Adjectives (6)</p>
L2	<p>Understand how to use the future tense "will" and "won't" forms to make a promise</p> <p>Learn pronoun contractions with "will" (I'll, he'll, we'll)</p> <p>Learn adjectives that show up in client complaints</p>	<p>⇒ Pronoun contractions with Future Tense (I'll, he'll, we'll)</p> <p>⇒ Adjectives to describe problems: stained, cracked, smudged, unplugged, dusty, streaky,</p>	<p>⇒ Phrases for Apologizing and Promising (8)</p> <p>⇒ Future Tense (9)</p> <p>⇒ Future Tense Practice (10)</p> <p>⇒ Using Adjectives to Describe Problems (11)</p> <p>⇒ Letter of Complaint (13)</p>
L3	<p>Review how to use the future tense "will" form to make a promise & pronoun contractions with "will" (he'll, she'll, we'll)</p> <p>Practice formally responding to a complaint</p>	<p>⇒ Vocabulary to formally respond to complaints: bother, unacceptable, over-react</p> <p>⇒ Vocabulary for disciplinary action: corrective action, issue (to have an issue with)</p>	<p>⇒ Phrases for Apologizing and Promising (8)</p> <p>⇒ Future Tense (9)</p> <p>⇒ Future Tense Practice (10)</p> <p>⇒ Using Adjectives to Describe Problems (11)</p> <p>⇒ Letter of Complaint (13)</p> <p>⇒ Responding to a Client's Complaint in Writing (15)</p> <p>⇒ Filling out a Corrective Action Form (16)</p>
Closing (All-level): Levels One and Two write a dialogue between a janitor and a supervisor. Level Three edits their responses to George's letter of complaint. (21)			

ONE CUP OF COFFEE

My name is Diana. I work in Pleasanton as a janitor. One night at work, I was extra tired. I was cleaning the kitchen, and I noticed that there was some coffee leftover. I poured myself a cup because I didn't think that one cup of coffee was a big deal. Also, I needed the caffeine! I didn't think there were any clients left in the building, but one came by and complained to the supervisor. The company gave me a warning. The next time I saw that client I apologized. I promised I would never do it again.



Discussion

- 1) What do clients at your worksite complain about? As a class make a list of the top ten complaints. Copy them on the lines below.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

- 2) Do you think their complaints are always fair?
- 3) How should you respond to a client complaint?

Dialogue

Directions: Have students read aloud the following role play between a Diana and a client and then between the Diana and her supervisor. Notice how the janitor apologizes AND promises to fix the problem.

Dialogue One:

George, a client, speaks with Diana, a janitor

George: I saw you taking coffee from the kitchen last night!

Diana: I'm sorry. I didn't know the rules.

George: That coffee is not for you.

Diana: I'm extremely sorry, it won't happen again.

George: OK. Thank you.

Dialogue Two:

Supervisor: Diana, this morning I received a complaint from a client. He said you drank a cup of coffee in the kitchen last night.

Diana: I did. I'm sorry.

Supervisor: That coffee is for the clients, not for the janitors. You are not allowed to drink coffee while you are cleaning.

Diana: I know. I'm sorry. I promise it won't happen again.

Supervisor: Unfortunately I have to write you up for this. It is company policy that I give you a warning.

Directions: Look over the official warning Diana received for drinking the cup of coffee. As a class discuss the disciplinary process at your worksite. Have you ever received an official warning?

EMPLOYEE CORRECTIVE ACTION NOTICE ABM-631 (Rev. 10/02)

Employee's Name Diana Ventura Soc. Sec. # 546-11-1901
Company ABM Janitor Branch S. Ramon Work Loc. Stoneridge

The above named employee and I met today to discuss the following problem area(s):

ABSENTEEISM: Attendance Tardiness (SPECIFY):

POOR PERFORMANCE (SPECIFY):

MISCONDUCT (SPECIFY):

VIOLATION OF CO. POLICY/WORK RULES (SPECIFY): Rule # 17-6 ON Friday Jun 11. 6:18PM Employee was Seen By Customer Drinking Coffee From Customer Brake Room Customer Very upset
EXPECTATIONS (include time frame, if indicated)

TYPE OF WARNING

(CHECK ONE ONLY)

INFORMAL/VERBAL FORMAL

We have previously discussed these areas of concern on _____ (date). You are currently not meeting the expectations for your position. (OPTIONAL: Because at this time your performance is below expected levels, you are being placed on probation for _____ days.) Unless you make an immediate and sustained improvement in the specific areas of concern (indicated above), your continued employment may be in jeopardy.

FINAL WARNING:

We have met on _____ (date) and _____ (date) to discuss the above problem areas. In addition, you were given a formal written warning on _____ (Optional: Because at this time your performance is below expected levels, you are being placed on probation/suspension (circle one) for _____ days.) If you are unable to make immediate and sustained improvement in all areas listed above, you may be subject to further disciplinary action up to and including termination of your employment.

If you are unclear of the Company's expectations, please let me know. I will assist you in taking the necessary corrective measures and will help in any way I can.

Employee Acknowledgement Diana Ventura Date 6-14-04
Manager/Supervisor Signature Marcel Starnal Date 6-14-04

Employee has read the above and problems were discussed. Employee refused to sign.

(Witness Signature to Employee's Refusal to Sign)

DISTRIBUTION: WHITE - Employee CANARY - Supervisor PINK - Personal File

LEVEL ONE

Future Tense

Directions: When responding to a client's complaint, it is polite to apologize and then promise to fix the situation. To make this promise it is appropriate to use the future tense forms of "will", "will not" and "won't". Here are examples:

Positive Examples:

I will clean the bathroom.

I will empty the trash.

Negative Examples:

I will not move the papers.

I will not unplug the computer.

(Will not = won't)

I won't move the papers.

I won't unplug the computer.

Future Tense Practice

Directions: Practice using the contracted forms of **will** and **won't**. After you have completed the exercise, practice reading the sentences aloud.

Examples: (I will) **I will** empty the trash.

(I will not) **I won't** move the desk.

(I will) _____ clean the bathroom.

(I will) _____ take out the garbage.

(I will not) _____ unplug the copy machine.

(I will not) _____ move the pile of papers.

(I will) _____ use water on the computer.

(I will not) _____ clean the windows.

(I will) _____ erase the board.

Note: To promise not to do something again, say:

I will not do that again

I won't do that again.

Complaint Adjectives



broken
chair
dispenser



wet
floor



dirty
kitchen



empty
soap

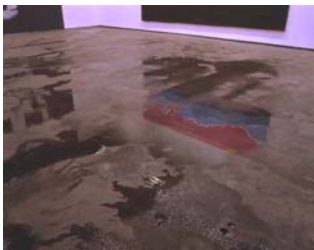
Directions: Match the answers in the box to the situations pictured below. For the last two, write your own answer. Here are some words that might help:

fix = arreglar

dry = secar

fill = llenar

I will fill it. I will dry the floor. I will fix the lamp.
I will clean the sink. I will dry the window.



1. The floor is wet!

Response: _____



2. The sink is dirty!

Response: _____



3. The towel dispenser is empty!

Response: _____



(lamp)

4. The lamp is broken!

Response: _____



5. The window is wet!

Response: _____



6. The floor is dirty!

Response: _____



7. The toilet is broken!

Response: _____

LEVELS TWO AND THREE

Phrases for Apologizing and Promising



Client: We asked for the bathrooms to be cleaned twice a day. This bathroom is a mess.

Janitor: I'm sorry. I will get to it right away

I'm sorry I don't know what happened. I'll look into it.

I'll do it as soon as I finish this.

I will take care of it.

What would you like done in the future?

My apologies.

I will get to it right away.

I am very sorry. It won't happen again.

Future Tense

Directions: When responding to a client's complaint, it is polite to apologize AND then promise to fix the situation. To make this promise it is appropriate to use the future tense form of "will". Here is the construction of this form:

Pronoun + will + infinitive ...

Examples:

I will get to it right away.

I will take care of it.

He will clean the bathroom.

For negative statements in the future tense, insert "not" after "will", or use the contraction "won't"

Pronoun + will not + infinitive... = Pronoun + won't + infinitive...

Examples:

I will not move the papers. = I won't move the papers.

He will not unplug the computer. = He won't unplug the computer.

They will not come. = They won't come.

For positive statements in the future tense, "will" is often contracted with pronouns in both speech and informal writing.

I will = I'll you will = you'll she will = she'll

he will = he'll it will = it'll we will = we'll

they will = they'll

Examples: I'll do it as soon as I finish this.

She'll look into it.

In speech, "will" is also contracted with nouns. This does not happen in writing.

Alicia will = Alicia'll

The janitor will = The janitor'll

Examples: (Remember these are **speech only**.)

Bob'll take out the trash.

The janitor'll take out the trash.

Future Tense Practice

Directions: Practice using the contracted form of will. After you have completed the exercise, practice reading the sentences aloud.

Examples: (We will) We'll empty the trash.
(He will not) He won't move the desk.

(I will) _____ get to it right away.
(She will) _____ vacuum right now.
(They will) _____ take out the garbage.
(I will not) _____ unplug the copy machine.
(She will not) _____ throw out the pile of papers.
(They will not) _____ touch the computers.
(He will) _____ wipe off the furniture as soon
as possible.
(It will not) _____ happen again.

Directions: Read the following statements aloud. Practice contracting will with nouns in speech.

Carlo will replace the liners on the trash cans.
Maria will not use water near the computer.
Pablo will sanitize the bathroom.
The janitor will collect the recycling.
Claudio will refill the dispensers right away.
Diana will not take a cup of coffee.

Using Adjectives to Describe Problems



broken
chair



wet
floor



dirty
kitchen



empty
soap dispenser



streaky
window



smudged
writing



dusty
floor



cracked
vase



unplugged
cord



stained
shirt

Directions: Using the pictures on the previous page, fill in the correct adjective that describes the problem. Then practice apologizing to the client and promising to fix the problem.

1. **Client:** The kitchen is dirty!
Janitor: *I'm sorry, I'll clean it.*

2. **Client:** The shirt is _____!
Janitor: _____

3. **Client:** The floor is _____!
Janitor: _____

4. **Client:** The soap dispensers are _____!
Janitor: _____

5. **Client:** The writing is _____!
Janitor: _____

6. **Client:** The cord is _____!
Janitor: _____

7. **Client:** My vase is _____!
Janitor: _____

8. **Client:** The floor is _____!
Janitor: _____

9. **Client:** The window is _____!
Janitor: _____

10. **Client:** The chair is _____!
Janitor: _____

Letter of Complaint

Directions: Read the following e-mail of complaint by a client. Using the questions on the next page, discuss the content of the letter and an appropriate response.

From: George Stine <Gstine@clientcompany.com>
Sent: Friday, June 11, 2004
To: Kerry Green [Kgreen@janitorcompany.com]
Subject: Janitorial Services

Kerry,

It is 6:18 p.m., and I just walked past our kitchen. I saw a woman who is a janitor in our building drinking our coffee. She used our sugar, milk, on of our cups, etc. This is not the first time that I have seen janitors up here drinking the coffee.

What is just one cup of coffee? The problem is I think it is more than just that! That was just one night and one worker. There are over 100 janitors and they work five nights a week, and how do I know they aren't all drinking our coffee? This is totally unacceptable to me.

Please look into this for me.

-George

Reading Comprehension:

⇒ What is *George's* complaint?

⇒ Do you think *George* over-reacted?

⇒ What do you think *Kerry*, the janitors' supervisor, will do to fix the situation?

⇒ What should the janitors do to fix the situation?

LEVEL THREE **EXTRA PRACTICE**

Employee Corrective Action Notice

Directions: The following three pages are an example of an official notice given to workers when they are being warned for doing something against the rules. Imagine you are Diana's supervisor, based on George's letter of complaint above, work in pairs to fill out the Employee Corrective Action Notice. Write any words you don't know in left-hand column below. Look them up in a dictionary and write the translation in the right-hand column.

NEW WORDS:

TRANSLATION:

Employee Corrective Action Form

Date Presented: _____
Employee Name: _____ Position: _____
Location: _____ Supervisor: _____

Disciplinary Level**

___ Initial (Verbal) Discussion –
(This template is used as an outline and not presented to the employee)

___ Second (Written) Discussion –
(This template can be used as the document that is presented to and signed by the employee.)

Area of Focus: _____

- ___ Policy/Procedure
- ___ Performance
- ___ Behavioral/Conduct

Background/Prior Discussions - Summary of previous coaching regarding issue¹. Include dates, time, what was discussed, expectations and action that would be taken if issues continued.

Current Behavioral and/or Performance Issues:

1. Dates and details regarding current performance issues.
2. Describe: who, what, when, why, where, and how
3. Make thorough description
4. Describe employee's response to your questions

¹ The definition of issue in this context means the matter in question, i.e. the janitor's offense.

Summary

Consequences: clear, specific, unambiguous consequences that will be applied if the employee fails to improve performance. Use: “additional disciplinary action up to and including termination.”

Employee Comments (optional)

In the second corrective discussion, the employee may write comments on the form, or may submit additional comments.

Signatures

Note: only second (written) corrective discussion requires employee signature.
In the initial corrective discussion the employee signature should not be requested.

I have received a copy of this corrective action notice and it has been discussed with me.

Employee Signature

Date

Supervisors Signature

Date

Witness

Name

Date

