

## HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY RESOLVE A COMPLAINT



### WHY WOULD YOU NEED TO LEARN THIS SKILL?

Let's say you get your phone bill – or electricity – it doesn't matter which. And it's really, really high. But then you look closer and see they have made a mistake. Here's how to get that money back.

### WHAT?

Getting a refund or making a complaint when it's not a clear-cut or easy situation.

### IT'S OKAY TO...

- > not know what you want to do
- > get knocked into the pit
- > move faster or go slower
- > fail (as long as you tried)

### WHAT YOU NEED

- > All the details of the situation – your account number, your bill, any dates you had contact with the company (in person, phone, online), copies of any emails or chat transcripts with them
- > A piece of paper and a pen – you are going to write down what they say in case you need to complain again (it happens!)

### WHAT TO DO

- 01 Write down the essentials of your complaint.** For example, 'Your company charged me for a bundle that I did not order.'
- 02 Collect all the details.** Gather any receipts or your latest bill and any dates of prior contact with the company about this problem, such as chat messages and reference numbers.
- 03 Make contact.** Decide whether you are going to phone, chat message or visit a shop in person. Whichever route you choose, make sure there is a record of your complaint. Get in the habit of taking screenshots of chat help and asking for a reference number. These are super-useful if you need to stand your ground.
- 04 State your complaint clearly.** This helps it to get resolved faster. For example: 'My bill is \$120 higher than usual and I need to know why.' Write it down. This means you can repeat it exactly. You might need to repeat it to several people before they solve the problem.
- 05 ALWAYS ask for a reference number!** Write it down with your script and keep this. Write down the date, time of call/chat, and name and ID number of the person you are talking to. (Ask them for it, they all have this.) Keep this and any chat transcripts.

## WHAT TO DO CONT:

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**Go upwards.** You have every right to ask to speak to the manager of the person you are speaking to. You can also say the magic words, 'I would like to register a formal complaint'. This means you are putting it in writing and it makes it harder for the company to ignore you.

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**Check your rights.** If you are having trouble asserting your rights, check the Consumer Rights information below. There are laws that give you a certain amount of time to change your mind (usually a few days) and to back out of an agreement. Don't leave it too late though!

Here's a real example:

➤ My piece of paper said this:

*'I activated overseas roaming on the \$10 a day deal on 4 May. You confirmed this via online chat. I went overseas on 5 May. I was overseas for 4 days. You have charged me \$900 for 4 days of overseas use. You should have charged me \$40. I have the notification number proving that I activated the \$10/day overseas roaming.'*

➤ Every month for three months the \$900 charge appeared on my bill. Every time I phoned and repeated what I had written down. I gave them the date of my last call and repeated my script. Eventually the charge was dropped, but it took three calls.

There is a government body, the ACCC, whose job it is to protect consumer rights. They are on your side. Get information about common situations here: ACCC – Consumer Rights and Guarantees: [www.accc.gov.au/consumers/consumer-rights-guarantees](http://www.accc.gov.au/consumers/consumer-rights-guarantees)



## GOT IT?

➤ You're sweet when you get a refund or the mistake is fixed.



## TRY THIS

If you feel like you've nailed it but you want to level up, try this:

➤ Read this great overview from the ACCC: Making a Consumer Complaint: [www.accc.gov.au/consumers/complaints-problems/make-a-consumer-complaint](http://www.accc.gov.au/consumers/complaints-problems/make-a-consumer-complaint)

## SO WHAT?

➤ Don't pay for services you don't receive! You have rights, you need to protect them sometimes.

## WHAT ACTION WILL YOU TAKE?

- Check out the guidelines on the ACCC website.
- Write down a simple description of the problem.



## IF YOU LIKED THIS ONE YOU MIGHT WANT TO TRY...

- How to Say No
- How to Rent a House / Find a Flat
- How to Write a Formal Email