

The following self-test provides a convenient, non-confrontational way for CSRs to rate themselves on how well they handle complaints. The scoring key at the bottom suggests a strategy for improvement.

— **Editor**

The Customer Communicator

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Rate yourself on how well you handle complaints

Self-test

Check off how often you do the following when dealing with complaining customers.

	Always	Sometimes	Never
1. I listen carefully to the customer's complaint before I try to resolve it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I am able to take complaints professionally and not personally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I value complaints as an opportunity to win back the customer and to see where things are going wrong.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I maintain an open body language and a helpful attitude when dealing with angry customers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I am able to apologize to the complaining customer even if the problem is not my fault.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I am able to say "no" to a customer in a tactful way.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Scoring: Six "always" answers means you are a pro at handling complaints. Four or five "always" answers means that you have good skills, but need some improvement. Fewer than four "always" answers means your complaint-handling skills need to be improved. Pick two of the skills above and work on them through role-playing or with your next complaining customer. Keep doing that until you have mastered all the skills.

Source: Customer Service: How to Do It Right! (Southern Mountain Press).