

- Properly written letters are clear, to the point, and directed at a specific person(s)
- Purpose: Communicate problem; make a complaint/suggestion/request

LETTER-WRITING TIPS:

- **WRITE WHEN APPROPRIATE:** Making too many requests means your points will be forgotten
- **FIND THE RIGHT PERSON:** Address the letter to the right person. A manager or owner makes more sense than a regular employee
- **BE COURTEOUS AND PROFESSIONAL:** Don't be rude or sarcastic. Communicate your anger/frustration/emotions but being unprofessional will usually mean your letter is ignored. Threats can even work against you!
- **KEEP IT SHORT:** A one-page summary of your issues is all you need.
- **BE FACTUAL:** Identify the issue and provide brief support and that's it. Don't focus on hypotheticals, "could have..." or "would have..." etc.
- **IDENTIFY WHAT YOU WANT:** Is it compensation? An apology? A refund? Explain how the audience can make it right.
- **INCLUDE YOUR INFO:** This could include address and contact information
- **INCLUDE TIMEFRAMES FOR RESPONSE:** Be clear in when you hope to hear back. If you don't hear back within that time, then you can write a new letter, or include consequences, (i.e. reporting to websites, health unit, etc)
- **Use 3x3 Writing Process:** Plan your writing in advance and review it when you are done
- **Use AIDA and IDCA:** Use the formula to persuade your audience as appropriate

PARTS OF THE LETTER:

YOUR NAME
ADDRESS LINE 1
ADDRESS LINE 2
PHONE NUMBER

CONTACT NAME
ADDRESS LINE 1
ADDRESS LINE 2
PHONE NUMBER

Date

Dear _____,

[The first paragraph is used to state your problem, concern, question, etc. It is short and to the point]

I am writing today to express my frustration with your customer service staff. During the last three visits to your restaurant I have been treated rudely and unprofessionally. **[If you're writing about a product, include specific details like model number, serial number, etc]**

[The second paragraph should be used to provide additional details about the issue]

The first time I visited your restaurant was on March 15, 2012 during lunch. While the food was good, I was unhappy because the server told me I was wasting her time and not ordering enough food. The second time, another server brought my order, (a hamburger), that had three long pieces of hair in it. When I asked to send it back, I was laughed at and told this isn't a five-star restaurant. The third time, the server had a cold and kept sneezing and coughing without covering her mouth. I didn't stick around for that meal.

[The third paragraph is used to outline steps you have taken to solve the problem]

I tried to address my issues with the manager on duty but they gave me an apology that seemed fake. I also attempted to come to the restaurant during times when the servers I mentioned weren't working. I feel that as the customer, I shouldn't have to prove that my experiences were bad. Instead, the restaurant should be proving how good they are to customers!

[The fourth paragraph is used to outline what you want from them]

Considering that I gave three tries for your restaurant to improve service and each time was a failure, I am hoping you can prove yourself by refunding the charges for those three meals and offering a sincere apology.

[Last paragraph signs off on the letter]

I would like to thank you for taking the time to address this manner and I look forward to hearing from you within the next two weeks.

[Signature Line]

Yours truly,

Imma Meathead