

MYRA GOLDEN'S
BEFORE You Hit
Send! Webinar



How to Write Business-Friendly Emails That Create Emotional Connections and Leave Customers Saying WOW!

How a Best Buy
E-Service Rep WOWed Me



What Best Buy Did Exceptionally Well

- 1. Personalized the email**
- 2. Acknowledged my satisfaction with product**
- 3. Explained policy in lay terms**
- 4. Exercised empowerment**
- 5. Restored my confidence in Best Buy**

3

Things customers hate about email -based customer service

1. "Canned" Responses

2. Their questions are not being Answered

46%

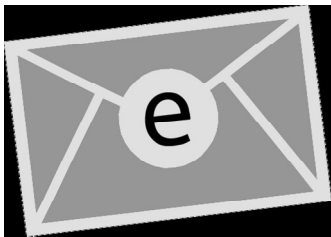
Of customers say they are not getting adequate answers to their emails.

3. Companies are taking too long to RESPOND

2 Days

Average time it takes to respond to customer emails (46 hours)

Today's "instant-gratification" seeking customers aren't happy with a 2-day response time.



What E-service is supposed to do

Email is not a digital business letter

Email Communication is *(supposed to be):*

- **Informal**
- **Concise**
- **Conversational/friendly**
- **A dialogue**
- **More convenient service**
- **Faster service**

The 4 Things Your Email Must Do *(to meet & exceed customer expectations)*

- 1. Prompt response (*less than 24 hours*)**
- 2. Answer every question**
- 3. Business-friendly, conversational style**
- 4. Invite customers to contact you if they need more help**



How to Ensure you answer the customer's questions

Dummy-Proof Tricks for Ensuring You Really Answer Questions

- ü Read the customer's email in its entirety
- ü Copy the customer's email and paste it into **your reply** and then go line by line and ensure you've answered all questions. Then delete customer's email.
- ü Don't simply drop "body" paragraphs into categories

Amazon.Com
Wows even when they can't answer a question.

TONE

The Friendly Customer Service Tone

Most emails don't have it

The Tone of Your Emails Should Be...

- Courteous
 - Helpful
 - Willing
 - Informative
 - Personal
 - Conversational
 - Sincere
 - Warm
- Liability Complaints
- Assertive
 - Formal
 - Impersonal
 - Objective
- But never
- Abrasive
 - Blunt
 - Cold
 - Bureaucratic

The Friendly Customer Service Tone

- 1. Use pronouns to personalize and establish rapport**
- 2. Structure sentences in a friendly, conversational way**
- 3. Write as if you were talking face-to-face to your customer**

Probably no single language choice is as effective in making business documents human and personal as well-chosen pronouns.

Franklin Covey Style Guide

Pronouns You
Should Use In
Your Emails

I
Me
My
You
we
Us
Your

Make your emails personal with "I" (and other pronouns)

I sincerely apologize for the inconvenience you experienced when Flight 1860 was cancelled due to Air Traffic Control. You have every right to expect our flights to operate as scheduled.

We certainly don't intend to cause difficulties for our customers and realize that any service failure, even when the cancellation is mandated by Air Traffic Control, creates a negative impression of our company.



Be personable
In your emails

Chat Transcript

Info: Please wait for a QVC representative to respond.

Info: Welcome to QVC's live chat service. This is 'Kathi P'. How may I help you?

Myra Golden: Hi Kathi. Can you tell me the status of my return of the Canon HV30 camcorder?

Kathi P: Thanks for waiting.

Kathi P: I'll be glad to check for you.

Kathi P: Thank you for waiting while I check on this for you.

Kathi P: Thanks for waiting.

Kathi P: I appreciate your patience.

Kathi P: Ms Golden, I'm so sorry the Canon Vixia HV30 MiniDV HD Camcorder hasn't been processed as of yet. I know you're anxious to have this completed. The return processing time can take up to 17 days from the date an order is returned to QVC. I hope your item is processed soon.

Myra Golden: Thank you.

Kathi P: You're certainly welcome, my pleasure! Have a wonderful day and please don't hesitate to contact us anytime, we're always glad to help.

Info: Your chat transcript will be sent to myra@myragolden.com at the end of your chat.

Relate and Respond



Add the Human Touch

In your emails

The human touch
 Grandmas die everyday. Customer service like this doesn't.

This is one of many such stories about this amazing company and the business magazines are listening. Below are many links to stories, articles and glowing reviews of this amazing company.

From a blog post at
<http://www.zazzamarr.com/blog/?p=240>

I heart Zappos.

I really do.

One bright, extraordinary note in all of the sad stuff of the last few weeks - in May we had ordered several pairs of shoes from Zappos for my mom. She'd lost a lot of weight, and her old shoes were all too big. She had a whole new wardrobe of clothes in pretty colors, that fit, so I wanted her to have some pretty shoes that fit, too. When I took her up to Oregon to stay where her sister is. Out of seven pairs, only two fit. Not bad considering she'd never been this thin, so I was winging it, and the return shipping is free.

The rest were here waiting to be returned. Because of various circumstances - lost label, my mom being hospitalized and me being away, the shoes were never sent back. There's a time limit on the return of 15 days. Remember this. When you do a return to them, they pay the shipping, but you have to get the shoes to UPS yourself. Remember this, also.

When I came home this last time, I had an email from Zappos asking about the shoes, since they hadn't received them. I was just back and not ready to deal with that, so I replied that my mom had died but that I'd send the shoes as soon as I could. They emailed back that they had arranged with UPS to pick up the shoes, so I wouldn't have to take the time to do it myself. I was so touched. That's going against corporate policy.

Yesterday, when I came home from town, a florist delivery man was just leaving. It was a beautiful arrangement in a basket with white lilies and roses and carnations. Big and lush and fragrant. I opened the card, and it was from Zappos. I burst into tears. It's a sucker for kindness, and if that isn't one of the nicest things I've ever had happen to me, I don't know what is.

Log In Sign Up Search

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IF YOU BUY SHOES ONLINE, GET THEM FROM ZAPPOS.

With hearts like theirs, you know they're good to do business with.

The business world is listening. More Zappos stories and accolades below...

Zappos on Startup Review
 Zappos.com Case Study: Why shoes are great for e-commerce %u2026 yes, really

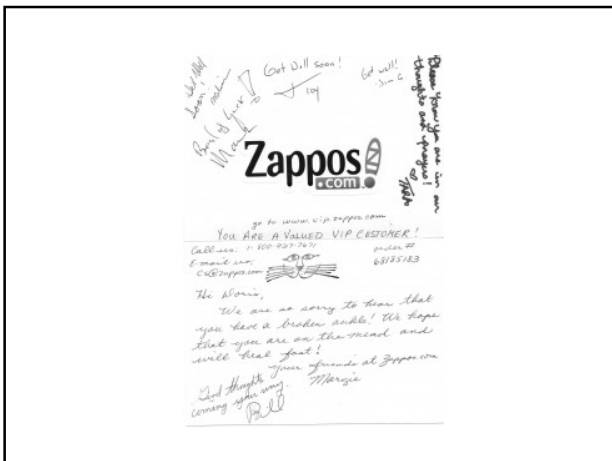
Inc.com article on Tony Hsieh
 How I Did It: Tony Hsieh, CEO, Zappos.com

Startup Nation on Zappos
 Focusing on Service - How Zappos.com's Key Move

Business Week article on Zappos
 A Shine On Their Shoes
 Zappos.com's blue-ribbon customer service is winning market share

Fast Company article on Zappos
 Power to the employees: At Zappos, workers are given power to improve the company.

More accolades from Fast Company



The Friendly Email Tone Summary

- **Courteous, friendly, helpful tone**
- **Use personal pronouns throughout email**
- **Be personable**
- **Try to add the human touch**

Now you

TRY

Take a basic problem you handle and write a personable/friendly statement that you demonstrates your concern.



WOW

Formula for Emails

WOW Formula for Emails

1. Friendly salutation
2. Greet the customer by name
3. Acknowledge issue AND apologize
4. Provide an explanation of how/why the problem happened
5. Explain how you will resolve the issue (or tell the customer what you've already done)
6. Thank the customer and invite them to contact you again if they need to further assistance

Personalize EACH STEP with Customer-Friendly Tone

Friendly & Personable Salutation

"Hello"

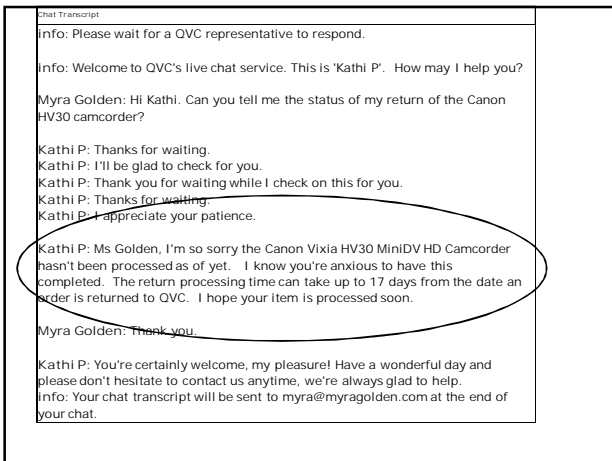
Instead of "Dear"

Acknowledge and Apologize

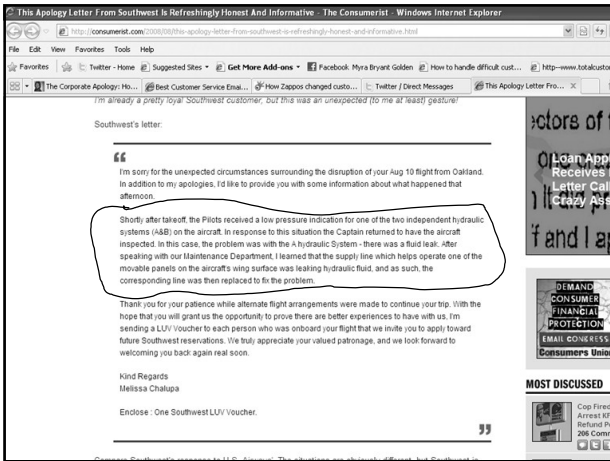
Ø JetBlue, perfect illustration

Ø QVC, again a great example





This is a great example of explaining how/why problem occurred.



Amazon.Com

Example for
Explaining how you will resolve the issue (or telling the customer what you've already done)

Relate and Respond

How to close an

EMAIL

Thank the customer and invite them to contact you if they need to

Color: White/Silver
size: 8.5
width: B - Medium \$99.95

We hope this has brightened your day a little! Thanks for shopping at Zappos.com!

With Love,
The Zappos Customer Loyalty Team

Contact The Zappos Customer Loyalty Team:
Phone: 1-800-927-7671 - 24 hours a day - 7 days a week!
Email: <http://www.zappos.com/contact>
Website: <http://www.zappos.com>

Our Safe Shopping Guarantee:
Zappos.com takes great pride in offering a safe and secure online shopping experience. We also respect your privacy and we're committed to protecting it.

Safe Shopping Guarantee - Shop With Confidence
Secure Shopping - Protecting Your Personal Information
Our Privacy Policy

Subscribe To Our Weekly Shameless Plug! (Our fun and informative newsletter!)

CHECK OUT NEW ARRIVALS | GIFT CERTIFICATES | ENTER OUR FREE CLOTHING GIVEAWAY

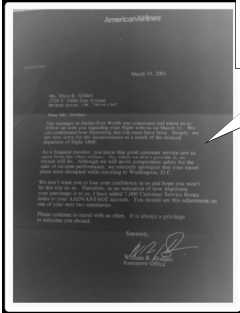
http://www.zappos.com/bn/zapposref=ret_shipping_upgrade_10024?utm_source=prono-ks-2

My Account | My Favorites | About Us | Help | Contact Info | Secure Shopping | Privacy Policy
Website Feedback | Visa Rewards | Facebook | Follow Us On Twitter | Unsubscribe

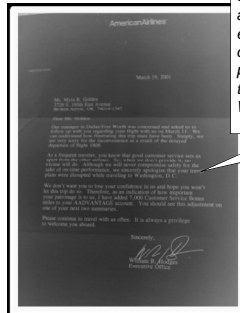
This Shipping Upgrade Email was sent to myra@myragolden.com.

American Airlines Apology Letter to Me

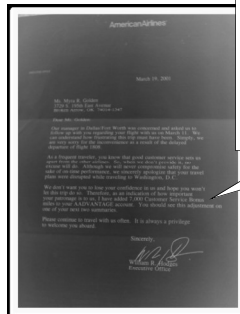
Our manager in Dallas/Ft. Worth was concerned and asked us to follow up with you regarding your flight with us on March 11. We can understand how frustrating this trip must have been. Simply, we are very sorry for the inconvenience as a result of the delayed departure of flight 1808.

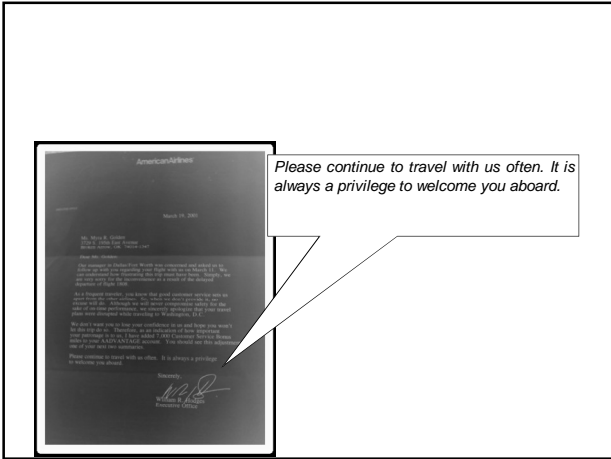


As a frequent traveler, you know that good customer service sets us apart from the other airlines. So, when we don't provide it, no excuse will do. Although we will never compromise safety for the sake of on-time performance, we sincerely apologize that your travel plans were disrupted while traveling to Washington, D.C.



We don't want to lose your confidence in us and hope you won't let this trip do so. Therefore, as an indication of how important your patronage is to us, I have added 7,000 Customer Service Bonus miles to your AADVANTAGE account. You should see this adjustment on one of your next two summaries.





WOW Formula Summary

1. Friendly salutation
2. Greet the customer by name
3. Acknowledge issue AND apologize
4. Provide an explanation of how/why the problem happened
5. Explain how you will resolve the issue (or tell the customer what you've already done)
6. Thank the customer and invite them to contact you again if they need to further assistance

Personalize EACH STEP with Customer-Friendly Tone

Myra enjoys answering your questions...so type your question in the chat box now. You can also text your questions to 918-383-0835.

Friendly, Conversational Sentence Structure

Sentence Structure Tips

- § **Keep sentences short – no more than 15-20 words**
- § **Use short paragraphs and bullet points**

Avoid Passive Sentences

- *Your email has been received.*
- *Thank you for taking the time to write to us.*

- *We hope this incident will not adversely affect our relationship.*
- *We will make every effort to deal with this situation in such a way that you will still have confidence in us.*



Write As if you were sitting side-by-side with your customer

As much as possible, use the customer's words and phrases



Quick

recap

Write Meaningful

SUBJECTS

Don't do this

∅ [Blank]

∅ [Re: Customer Contact
Form]

Think of your
subject line as
the headline of
a news article

Meaningful Subject Lines

- q “John, the lawn mower manual you requested is attached.
- q “Lynn, your replacement Widget will ship tomorrow.
- q “Susan, here is the list of ingredients in our XYZ Bar.”
- q **“Ms. Johnson, thanks for contacting Bumble Bee (Reference Number: 000355735A).”**

9

Reference Slides for you

7 Grammar Gaffes That Rob You of Credibility

- 1. Your vs You're**
- 2. It's vs Its**
- 3. There vs Their**
- 4. Affect vs Effect**
- 5. Then vs. Than**
- 6. Different than vs Different *from***
- 7. The Dangling Participle**

Your vs You're

All it takes to avoid this error is to take a second and think about what you're trying to say.

"Your" is a possessive pronoun, as in "your car" or "your blog."

"You're" is a contraction for "you are," as in "you're going to be so more effective at writing emails because you attended this webinar."

There vs Their

This one seems to trip up everyone occasionally, often as a pure typo. Make sure to watch for it when you proofread.

"There" is used many ways, including as a reference to a place ("let's go there") or as a pronoun ("there is no hope").

"Their" is a plural possessive pronoun, as in "their bags" or "their opinions."

Always do the "that's ours!" test—are you talking about more than one person and something that they possess? If so, "their" will get you there.

Its vs It's

"It's" is a contraction of "it is" or "it has."

"Its" is a possessive pronoun, as in "this blog has lost its mojo."

Here's an easy rule of thumb—repeat your sentence out loud using "it is" instead. If that sounds odd, "its" is likely the correct choice.

Affect vs Effect

“Affect” is a verb, as in “Your ability to communicate clearly will affect your income immensely.”

“Effect” is a noun, as in “The effect of a parent’s low income on a child’s future is well documented.”

Then vs Than

No: The accounting department had more problems then we did.

Yes: The accounting department had more problems than we did.

Tip: When a sentence construction begins with If, you don't need a then. Then is implicit, so it's wordy:

No: If you can't get Windows to boot, then you'll need to call Ted.

Yes: If you can't get Windows to boot, you'll need to call Ted.

Different than vs Different from

No: This setup is different than the one at the main office.

Yes: This setup is different from the one at the main office.

Yes: This setup is better than the one at the main office.

The Dangling Participle

The robber ran from the policeman, still holding the money in his hands.

After being whipped fiercely, the cook boiled the egg.

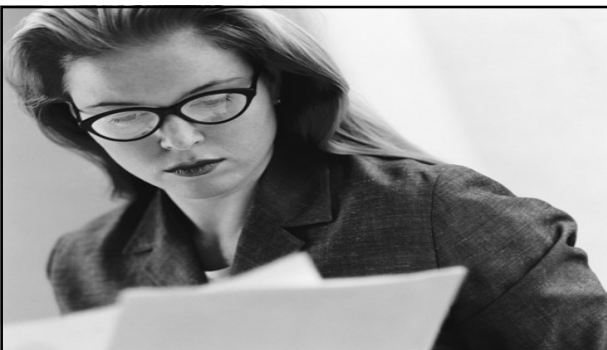
The grammatical problem here rests with the -ing and -ed words used in these sentences: "holding," "whipped." They are participles.

The antecedent—that is, the noun to which the participle refers—must be clear to the readers in order for them to understand what's being said. Otherwise, an action may be subscribed to the wrong person/thing, such as "boiled" to cook. That's called a "dangling participle," because it's left "dangling" without a clear antecedent.

Tips for Better Punctuation

- Commas should be used to join introductory clauses, after introductory clauses and phrases, to set off interrupting elements, with restrictive and nonrestrictive elements, with appositives, and between items or modifiers in a series.
- Semicolons are used to join closely connected independent clauses and between items in a series.
- Colons are used to introduce a list, formal statement, or restatement in a sentence.
- The dash, used to add interrupting phrases or clauses, and the parentheses, which sets off incidental information, should be used sparingly.
- Use quotation marks to identify quotes.
- Punctuation usually belongs inside the quotation marks.

Source: <http://www.clibnotes.com/WileyCDA/Section/Grammar-Usage-Style-Cheat-Sheet/id-305499/articleid-30163.html>



Proofing techniques

Proofing Techniques

- **Read backwards** *so the content doesn't distract you from watching for errors*
- **Point with your finger** (or mouse) **and read every single word**
- **Read aloud** *so you slow your reading speed are more alert to flaws in grammar and sense*
- **Print out your email and proof**
- **Have someone else read it**
- **Never proof immediately after writing**

Expert Editors' Tricks for Proofing

- Listen to music or chew gum. Proofing can be boring business and it doesn't require much critical thinking, though it does require extreme focus and concentration. Anything that can relieve your mind.
- Read something else between edits. This helps clear your head of what you expect to read and allows you to read what really is on the page.
- **Proof for only one mistake at a time.**

Proofing for one mistake at a time

- Typos and misspellings
- Easily confused words (e.g., "to" for "too" and "your" for "you're")
- Ambiguity
- Inconsistencies
- Formatting problems
- Factual errors
- Missing words



Never

send out an email that you wouldn't want shared around the globe through a powerful blog

Be careful not to come across

Defensive or Accusatory

Not This

Concerning the April bill, the local service representative may have been called, but these calls cannot be verified unless the representative's name and the dates when the representative was called are provided to this office.

This

During the discussion of your April bill, you mentioned that you had called your local service representative at least three times during the month. Do you remember the representative's name and the dates when you called?

. And be careful not to come across

Cold or Too Formal

Not This

We have received your email alleging that a mouse was in your room. We shall, of course, investigate the matter. In the interest of customer service, we would like to offer you a gift card for \$50 off of your next stay with us.

Please reply to this email with your mailing address and a gift card will be mailed to you.

Sincerely,
ABC Customer Care
888-888-8888

This

It was unfortunate that you had to endure a mouse in your room. I can certainly appreciate the disappointment you experienced. Please accept my sincere apology. I assure you we will do everything it takes to resolve this issue.

I realize you have come to expect the finest from any Ritz-Carlton Hotel. At this point, it is my endeavor to rebuild the trust you originally placed with us. It would be my pleasure to invite you back to the Ritz-Carlton, New Orleans for a 2 night complementary stay. When you know your travel plans, please contact me directly at ...

Bonus

TIP

Make Your Contact Form Landing Page as Friendly As Your Emails

