

Chat and Email Mistakes to Avoid

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Six chat and email fails



Chat:

1. Failing to use probing questions to clarify the customer's question or concern
2. Failing to use friendly, conversational expressions to enable problem-solving during the chat
3. Failing to set expectations and manage wait time

Email:

4. Failing to customize an email template before sending the response to the customer
5. Failing to create email templates that are easy for agents to customize
6. Failing to express empathy

1. Failing to use probing questions to clarify the customer's question or concern

Start [9:38 p.m.]

info: Welcome to ABC Housewares Retailer. My name is Susan, how may I assist you today?



Mark: Hi - I would like to buy a bird bath or bird feeder. Do you sell either of these?

Susan: Hi there! I'd be happy to help you today!

Susan: I will check for you!

Susan: We have carried them in the past, but we don't have any at this time. I'm sorry!

Mark: Thanks anyway

Susan: My pleasure!

Susan: Is there anything else I can help you with today?

Mark: No thanks

Susan: Enjoy your evening!

Susan: Thank you for chatting with us. We value your feedback. Please click the "End Chat" button at top right to answer a few questions about your experience with us today.

info: Your chat transcript will be sent to Mark@aabbcc.com at the end of your chat.

End [9:43 p.m.]

1. Use probing questions to clarify the customer's question or concern

Start [9:38 p.m.]

info: Welcome to ABC Housewares Retailer. My name is Susan, how may I assist you today?



Mark: Hi - I would like to buy a bird bath or bird feeder. Do you sell either of these?

Susan: Hi there! I'd be happy to help you today!

Susan: I will check for you!

Susan: We have carried them in the past, but we don't have any at this time. I'm sorry!

Mark: Thanks anyway

Susan: I'd like to help you find a substitute item, if possible. May I ask whether you're shopping for yourself or purchasing a gift?

*** *[chat continues]* ***

2. Failing to use friendly, conversational expressions to enable problem-solving during the chat



Mike Peterson of ABC Airlines has entered the session.

Kathy: I am flying on ABC Airlines to ATL. I can leave from Baltimore, Dulles, or Washington, DC. Which airport gives me the most options?

Mike Peterson: Kathy, all the lowest fares are published online. We have the same fares online, via chat and over the phone. I suggest you click on the following link to check the lowest fare and book your reservation:

<https://www.ABCAirlines.com/booking/searchFlights.do>

Kathy: That's not what I am asking. Does ABC Airlines offer MORE flights to ATL from BWI, IAD, or DCA?

Mike Peterson: You need to check it online.

Kathy: Wow. So are you saying ABC has an equal number of flights from each of those DC-area airports?

Mike Peterson: You can check it online by entering the departure and the destination city one by one.

Kathy: OK. I can see this is going nowhere.

Mike Peterson: Is there anything else I may assist you with today?

Kathy: No, there is not.

Mike Peterson: It was a pleasure assisting you. Thank you for choosing ABC Airlines. You have a great day. *Mike Peterson has exited the session.*

2. Failing to use friendly, conversational expressions to enable problem-solving during the chat



Mike Peterson of ABC Airlines has entered the session.

Kathy: I am flying on ABC Airlines to Atlanta. I can leave from Baltimore, Dulles, or Washington, DC. Which airport gives me the most options?

Mike Peterson: Kathy, all the lowest fares are published online. We have the same fares online, via chat and over the phone. I suggest you click on the following link to check the lowest fare and book your reservation:

<https://www.ABCAirlines.com/booking/searchFlights.do>

Kathy: That's not what I am asking. Does ABC Airlines offer MORE flights to ATL from BWI, IAD, or DCA?

Mike Peterson: **My apologies! I misread your question. To find out where we offer the most flights, you'll need to check your three possible itineraries online.** ~~You need to check it online.~~

Kathy: Wow. So are you saying ABC has an equal number of flights from each of those DC-area airports?

Mike Peterson: **Yes, that's right. We have roughly the same number of flights to Atlanta from your three departure airports, but we may have more options departing from one airport or another at a particular time of day.**

Mike Peterson: **It may take a bit of time to do this schedule research, but the best way is to check online by entering the departure and the destination city one by one. With that method, you'll get the itinerary you're looking for!**

***** [chat continues] *****

3. Failing to set expectations and manage wait time

You still there?

Yeah, I'm here.
Are you??

3. Failing to set expectations and manage wait time

Handle delays with grace



Three statements agents can use if they're making a customer wait:

1. Please give me a moment to ...
2. It will take me about X minutes to [complete task]. Can you wait while I do this?
3. Could you wait for a few minutes while I [task]?

Three statements agents can use if the customer is making them wait:

1. Take your time. I would be glad to wait while you [complete task].
2. Let me know when you're finished [completing task]. I'll still be here.
3. While you are [completing task], I will be [completing task]. Let me know when you are ready.

4. Failing to customize an email template before sending the response to the customer



Customer's complaint

I just spent \$4.29 on a box of your ABC Wheat Flakes cereal, and I couldn't even serve myself a single bowl! All the flakes were crushed. The cereal was a disgusting wheat powder, no flakes at all!

How can you sell a flake cereal without a single flake?

Customer service agent's reply

Thank you for letting us know this situation. We appreciate the opportunity to respond.

We do our very best to ensure the food is in the best possible condition when it leaves our manufacturing facilities. Despite our best efforts, many factors, including rough handling, may contribute to damage.

Product quality is extremely important to us. Please be assured that your concern regarding will be reported to our Quality team for continuous improvement.

We truly apologize for your experience.

Hoping to restore your faith in us, I am sending you a free product coupon that should arrive within the next 7 business days by US Postal Mail. You can replace the cereal or try one of our other tasty foods.

Sincerely, John Smith, Customer Service Agent

4. Failing to customize an email template before sending the response to the customer



Customer's complaint

I just spent \$4.29 on a box of your ABC Wheat Flakes cereal, and I couldn't even serve myself a single bowl! All the flakes were crushed. The cereal was a disgusting wheat powder, no flakes at all!

How can you sell a flake cereal without a single flake?

Customer service agent's reply

Thank you for letting us know **the flakes were crushed in the box of ABC Wheat Flakes cereal you recently purchased.**

We want every package of **cereal** that reaches the grocery store shelf to be in great condition, so we are truly sorry to learn that wasn't the case for you. Sometimes, when a package is handled roughly after it leaves our facilities, the cereal can get **broken** along the way.

So you can replace the **ABC Wheat Flakes** or try one of our other foods, I am sending you a \$5 coupon. It should arrive within seven business days by US Postal Mail.

Sincerely,

John Smith, Customer Service Agent



Templates need placeholders, prompts, and white space

Template name: Praise for grocery store associate

We strive to create a culture of caring throughout our organization. This includes caring for our coworkers and especially our customers. We're committed to the communities we serve, and we work hard to make each ABC Grocery store a great place to work and shop.

We're pleased to know that you believe our associate demonstrates the qualities that create a great shopping experience, which helps us build trust and long-term loyalty with our customers.

5. Failing to create email templates that are easy for agents to customize

A very bad template

5. Failing to create email templates that are easy for agents to customize

Templates need placeholders, prompts, and white space



Template name: How to Clean the Filter in Your Window Air Conditioner

You should clean the air filter in your window air conditioner monthly. Doing so will help solve the problem you are having with [*paraphrase the customer's problem*]. For your [*model number*] unit, you can easily access the air filter by removing the front panel. Then remove the filter and clean it gently with a combination of warm water and dish soap or white vinegar. Let the filter air dry completely before reinstalling it.

If the filter has tears, holes or other damage, it should be replaced. If your unit has a foam filter, you can purchase replacement electrostatic filter material at [*one of our retail outlets near you*] and cut it to accommodate the exact size of your model.

These filters should be cleaned once per month during the cooling season. If you have [*pets or allergies*], consider cleaning it more frequently to remove hair, dander, and pollen.

6. Failing to express empathy

January 2021



The question everyone was asking: "When can I get my vaccine?!"



Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 8:51 P

Dear Valued Patient

We have been deluged with calls and portal messages asking about COVID vaccine. We know many are anxiously awaiting the availability of a vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19). **At this time, we do not have the COVID-19 vaccine.** [REDACTED] Physician Associates has registered with the state of Maryland to obtain and administer vaccine but have not yet been permitted to order. We are not currently keeping a "waiting list" for vaccination, as we do not know when the vaccine will be made available for distribution through our practice and have over 30,000 active patients.



6. Failing to express empathy

Nine empathy statements to copy and paste

1. I would be upset too.
2. I realize how complicated it is to ...
3. I can imagine how frustrating that would be.
4. That would be disappointing, especially when [*paraphrase the customer's perspective or efforts*] ...
5. We want to understand what happened just as much as you do.
6. I can see why that made you angry.
7. This situation is unacceptable to us, too.
8. If I were in your situation, I would feel exactly the same way you do.
9. If I were in your situation, I would be asking the same questions you are.



Thanks for joining me!

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