

Below is a form for organizing your attempts to resolve any problem you may have with a company, from poor service to billing problems.

There are separate areas of the form for entering the basic contact information (who to call, write, email), telephone numbers and addresses, what the problem is, and what you expect from the company in order to resolve it.

Writing down what the problem is in a concise fashion may actually help, because you can clarify your thoughts and keep any telephone conversation regarding the problem on topic, rather than drifting away into little arguments about minutia. Clarifying what you want from them is also helpful, because it isn't worth calling a business to complain if there isn't a solution that will at least make you feel better, if not make you whole. If you're just calling to vent and expect nothing to come of it, then don't bother writing it down.

There is a lot of room on the first page for notes. If you've already wasted time trying to get the problem resolved over the phone, use some of the space to document your efforts as best you can. The second page contains four separate blank logs that you can use to keep track of who you've called, emailed or written about the matter, when calls were made or mail sent, and what, if anything, was done. If your problem takes a number of calls and letters to resolve, you can just print a few more copies of the second page, rather than the whole file.

A few notes on how to go about getting your problem solved:

1. Unless you were a clear victim of fraud, it's generally best to assume the best, that is that you'll be dealing with a professional organization who genuinely wants to keep its paying customers happy and keep their company name clean. Most times, most companies would rather solve your problem than risk the damage to their reputation that an unhappy customer can cause, by yapping at everyone about how badly they've been treated.
2. As such, you may be able to solve the problem with a simple phone call to the manager of the location where your problem occurred. Keep your conversation clear, concise, and professional. If the company has a customer service telephone number, you may want to give that a try as well, but don't waste your time calling back again and again if they fail to resolve the matter. Be prepared to ask for the supervisor if you are told that customer service cannot help you. Give them one chance, and then go straight to the top.

President, CEO, Chairman of the Board. These are the people who have the power to get your problem solved, and each of them has a vested interest in keeping the company's name in good standing. All the people under them are little dogs, and little dogs only know how to bark "no."

3. Be reasonable and realistic. Trying to return cut flowers that were purchased a month ago by proclaiming "These are wilted!" usually will not result in you getting your money back. And you shouldn't get your money back in that situation. They're *supposed* to be wilted after a month. If you have a legitimate problem, be firm, stubborn, hardheaded... and reasonable.
4. Threats. It isn't a fine line at all with respect to threats. Don't threaten to kick their teeth in. Do threaten, if necessary, to file a complaint with your state's Consumer Protection organization, the BBB, and any professional organizations the business may belong to. Or to set up a **<companyname>sucks.com** web site, if you're able and willing to do so. If they are licensed by any government body, you can complain there, too.

Good luck !

Problem Resolution Log

Company:		Location:	
Address:		Gen'l Manager:	
		Phone #, Ext.	
Telephone:		Corp. CEO	
Toll-Free:		Phone #, Ext.	
Cust. Service:		Chairman:	
Fax:		Phone #, Ext.	

Problem: (Narrative)	
--------------------------------	--

Proposed Solution: (What I want done about it)	
--	--

Notes:

Date:		Time:	
Action Taken:		<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/> Email
		<input type="checkbox"/> US Mail	<input type="checkbox"/> Certified
		<input type="checkbox"/> Return Receipt	
Contact Name:		Contact Title:	
Notes:	Result:		

Date:		Time:	
Action Taken:		<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/> Email
		<input type="checkbox"/> US Mail	<input type="checkbox"/> Certified
		<input type="checkbox"/> Return Receipt	
Contact Name:		Contact Title:	
Notes:	Result:		

Date:		Time:	
Action Taken:		<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/> Email
		<input type="checkbox"/> US Mail	<input type="checkbox"/> Certified
		<input type="checkbox"/> Return Receipt	
Contact Name:		Contact Title:	
Notes:	Result:		

Date:		Time:	
Action Taken:		<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/> Email
		<input type="checkbox"/> US Mail	<input type="checkbox"/> Certified
		<input type="checkbox"/> Return Receipt	
Contact Name:		Contact Title:	
Notes:	Result:		