



ESL Podcast 436 – Dealing With an Angry Client

GLOSSARY

certainly – definitely; clearly; without any doubt; obviously

* Buying that house last year was certainly a good decision because it's already worth \$20,000 more than we bought it for!

awful – horrible; terrible; very bad

* They served an awful soup that nobody ate because it tasted so bad.

substitution – the replacement of one thing with another; the use of one thing in another thing's place

* The team made a substitution and had Manuel play instead of Ryan.

on behalf of (someone or something) – for someone or something; doing something for someone because he or she cannot do it; as a representative for someone or something

* On behalf of everyone who worked on this film, I'd like to thank the judges for giving us this award.

sincerely – honestly and openly, without lying or pretending

* I'm sincerely sorry to hear that your mother has passed away.

magnitude – size; amount

* It's difficult for many people to understand the magnitude of the problems that global warming will cause.

slogan – a short phrase that is used in advertisements or repeated often, usually to make people buy a product or vote in a particular way

* The presidential candidate's slogan was, "No new taxes."

to get (something) – to fully understand something

* She tried to explain the problem to her boss, but he just doesn't get it.

laughingstock – someone who has done something silly or stupid, so other people laugh at him or her and don't take him or her seriously

* Bernice was the laughingstock of the high school when she fell down during the dance.



ESL Podcast 436 – Dealing With an Angry Client

I can't tell you (something) – an expression used to show that one cannot fully express something because it is bigger or more important than words can say
* I can't tell you how much it meant to us when you sent flowers while my wife was in the hospital.

egregious – a very bad, obvious problem or error that is impossible to hide or deny
* The manager made an egregious mistake that cost the company almost \$2 million.

the least (someone) can do – a phrase used to show that one is very willing to do something, especially when it is small or unimportant in comparison to what should be done
* Sending a thank-you note is the least we can do to thank them for their generous gift.

to make amends – to do something to show that one is sorry and try to make another person forgive one for what one did
* When he was 30 years old, he bought his parents a car to make amends for all the bad things he had done while he was a teenager.

to be called on the mat – to be held responsible for something; to be punished for having done something wrong
* Whoever is responsible for this mess is going to be called on the mat!

rest assured – a formal phrase used to comfort another person and let him or her know that something will definitely happen, so he or she shouldn't worry about it anymore
* Rest assured that our travel agency will take care of every detail of your trip so that you can just relax during your vacation.

heads will roll – a phrase used to mean that the people who have done something wrong will lose their jobs
* If we don't get that important sale, heads will roll!



ESL Podcast 436 – Dealing With an Angry Client

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is Monty so upset about the mistake in the ad?
 - a) Because no one will buy from his company.
 - b) Because everyone is making fun of his company.
 - c) Because he'll have to change the slogan.

 2. What does Monty want the newspaper to do?
 - a) Give him a refund for the ad.
 - b) Turn his store into a laughingstock.
 - c) Fire the person who made the substitution.
-

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

magnitude

The word “magnitude,” in this podcast, means size or amount: “We weren’t expecting sales to increase by such a great magnitude.” Or, “Reporters place a high magnitude of importance on what the president says and does.” The word “magnitude” is also used to talk about the strength of an earthquake: “How many earthquakes has Los Angeles had with a magnitude of 7.0 or more?” The phrase “order of magnitude” is used to talk about differences in the size or amount of two or more things, where one order of magnitude means a difference of 10 times the size or amount of something: “The calculation doesn’t have to be exact, but it does need to have the right order of magnitude.”

to get (something)

In this podcast, the phrase “to get it” means to fully understand something: “I don’t think you get what I’m trying to say. Let me try to explain it another way.” The phrase “to get over it” means to stop worrying about something and move on, continuing with one’s normal activities: “She’s really sad that she broke up with her boyfriend, but that happened nine month ago. She needs to get over it and start dating other people!” The phrase “to get (something) over with” means to stop delaying an unpleasant activity and do it right away: “He hates washing the dishes, but he decided to get it over with and just do it so that he could enjoy the rest of the evening without having to worry about it.”



ESL Podcast 436 – Dealing With an Angry Client

CULTURE NOTE

Most companies in the United States “pride themselves on” (are very happy that they do or have something) their “customer service,” or the way that a company and its employees “treat” (interact with) customers. Americans expect to receive good customer service and become angry when they are treated badly by a company.

In stores, good customer service means having friendly, “courteous” (polite), and “knowledgeable” (well-informed) employees who can help customers find what they are looking for and decide which things they want to buy. Good customer service also means having enough “cashiers” (employees who take customers’ money and give them what they’ve bought) so that the “lines” (people standing behind each other while waiting for something) aren’t too long. Some stores, and especially grocery stores, have “baggers,” or people who put customers’ purchases into bags and help customers take them to their car.

A store with good customer service also lets customers “make returns,” or take back the things that they buy if they decide they don’t want them. The store gives the customer all of his or her money without asking a lot of questions about why the item is being returned. Stores with good customer service also “stand behind their products,” or believe in the quality of their products. If something breaks, a store might take it back and give the customer a new one, or give back the customer’s money.

Many American businesses have a slogan: “The customer is always right.” When employees believe that slogan, they provide better customer service. When customers are treated well, they come back to the business more often and spend more money there.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – b; 2 – c



ESL Podcast 436 – Dealing With an Angry Client

COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 436: Dealing With an Angry Client.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast number 436. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Our website is eslpod.com. Go there to download a Learning Guide, an 8 to 10 page guide we provide for all of our current episodes that includes all of the vocabulary words, definitions, new sample sentences, additional definitions, cultural notes, comprehension questions, and a complete transcript of everything we say on this episode. While you're on our website, you can also take a look at our ESL Podcast Store, which has some additional courses you may be interested in, in daily and business English.

This episode is called "Dealing With an Angry Client." It's a phone conversation between Shawna and Monty, and, well, let's just say they have some problems. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Shawna: Hello, Shawna Davis.

Monty: Hello, Shawna. This is Monty Lofti at BMC. I need to talk to you about our ad that ran in your newspaper yesterday.

Shawna: Sure, Monty. Was there a problem?

Monty: Yes, there certainly was a problem. Instead of the picture of our model, there was a picture of a dog!

Shawna: That's awful! I wasn't aware of the substitution. On behalf of the newspaper, I sincerely apologize for the error.

Monty: I don't think you understand the magnitude of the problem. Our slogan is: "Look in the mirror and this could be you!" Now do you get it? Our store is a laughingstock!



ESL Podcast 436 – Dealing With an Angry Client

Shawna: I can't tell you how sorry we are for this egregious mistake. We will certainly run a correction in tomorrow's paper, and we will run a corrected version of your ad. That's the least we can do. Is there anything else we can do to make amends for our mistake?

Monty: Yes, there is. I'd like the person responsible to be called on the mat for this.

Shawna: Rest assured. We take this matter very seriously. We'll find out who is responsible and heads will roll.

Monty: Good. That's what I wanted to hear.

[end of dialogue]

This conversation begins with Shawna saying, "Hello, Shawna Davis." Monty says, "Hello, Shawna. This is Monty Lofti at BMC (the name of his company). I need to talk to you about our ad that ran in your newspaper yesterday." The "ad" is the advertisement – the announcement for their company. We say something "ran" in the newspaper when we mean it was in the newspaper – it appeared in the newspaper.

So, Monty is calling Shawna, who works for the newspaper. Monty is a "client" of Shawna's, meaning that he is buying some sort of service or product from Shawna. Shawna says, "Sure, Monty. Was there a problem?" Monty says, "Yes, there certainly was a problem." The use of the word "certainly," here, means definitely, clearly, without any doubt. It's used to emphasize that yes, there was a problem. Monty says, "Instead of the picture of our model (a man or a woman who is in the advertisement), there was a picture of a dog!"

Shawna says, "That's awful!" – that's horrible, that's terrible. "That's awful! I wasn't aware of the substitution." A "substitution" is when you replace one thing for another, when you use one thing in and other thing's place. Shawna says, "On behalf of the newspaper, I sincerely apologize for the error." The expression "on behalf of" means that you are representing that person or organization; you are doing it for them. On behalf of everyone at ESL Podcast, I thank you for listening. That means I'm representing – I'm speaking for everybody else on the podcast. Shawna says, "On behalf of the newspaper, I sincerely apologize." "Sincerely" means honestly, openly, really. It's a formal term, here, that means that I honestly apologize; I am very sorry.



ESL Podcast 436 – Dealing With an Angry Client

Monty says, “I don’t think you understand the magnitude of the problem.” “Magnitude,” here, just means the size or amount of something. So, it’s a large problem is probably what Monty is saying here. “Magnitude” has a number of different meanings; take a look at the Learning Guide for some additional explanations of that word. Monty says, “Our slogan (the slogan of the company) is: ‘Look in the mirror and this could be you!’” A “slogan” is a short phrase that often appear in advertisements, usually trying to make people to buy something or perhaps to vote for someone in an election. Political candidates have slogans. Coca-Cola company had a slogan: “It’s the real thing.” That was their advertising slogan to get people to buy Coca-Cola.

Well, the slogan for Monty’s company is: “Look in the mirror and this could be you!” meaning what you see in the mirror could be you. Monty says, “Now do you get it (now do you fully understand what I am talking about)? Our store is a laughingstock!” Monty is saying that his store (his company) is now a laughingstock. The word “laughingstock” means someone has done something very silly or stupid, so everyone is laughing at him. You don’t want to be the laughingstock – the person that everyone laughs at – and that’s what Monty says has happened here.

Shawna says, “I can’t tell you how sorry we are for this egregious mistake.” “I can’t tell you” is an expression that we use to show that you know this is a very big or important problem, and you are not able to express completely what you want to say because it is so big, because it is so serious. So, she’s trying to make Monty happier, trying to calm him down perhaps, by saying “I can’t tell you how sorry we are for this egregious mistake.” “Egregious” (egregious) means a very bad, obvious mistake or problem, something that you cannot possibly hide.

Shawna says, “We will certainly run a correction in tomorrow’s paper,” meaning they will publish (they will print) in the newspaper tomorrow a correction to the ad. “That’s the least we can do,” she says. The expression “it’s the least I can do” is a phrase used to show that you are very willing to do something, even though it is small or unimportant. So, you go to a hotel, and the hotel does not have your reservation even though you called that day to make one, and the hotel manager says, “I’m very sorry. The least I can do is give you a free dinner.” It doesn’t make up for the entire problem, but it’s a small or smaller thing that you are saying that you will do. Shawna says, “Is there anything else we can do to make amends for our mistake?” The expression “to make amends” (amends)



ESL Podcast 436 – Dealing With an Angry Client

means to do something to show that you are sorry for what mistake you have committed

Monty says, “Yes, there is. I’d like the person responsible to be called on the mat for this.” “To be called on the mat” (mat) means to be held responsible for something, to be punished for having done something wrong. Shawna says, “Rest assured,” which is a formal expression that means don’t worry. “We take this matter very seriously. We’ll find out who is responsible and heads will roll.” This expression, “heads will roll,” means that people who have done something wrong will lose their jobs – will be punished. Usually it means they will be fired, so if your boss says, “I’m going to find out who made this mistake and heads will roll,” and you made the mistake, well, you might want to start looking for another job!

Now let’s listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

[start of dialogue]

Shawna: Hello, Shawna Davis.

Monty: Hello, Shawna. This is Monty Lofti at BMC. I need to talk to you about our ad that ran in your newspaper yesterday.

Shawna: Sure, Monty. Was there a problem?

Monty: Yes, there certainly was a problem. Instead of the picture of our model, there was a picture of a dog!

Shawna: That’s awful! I wasn’t aware of the substitution. On behalf of the newspaper, I sincerely apologize for the error.

Monty: I don’t think you understand the magnitude of the problem. Our slogan is: “Look in the mirror and this could be you!” Now do you get it? Our store is a laughingstock!

Shawna: I can’t tell you how sorry we are for this egregious mistake. We will certainly run a correction in tomorrow’s paper, and we will run a corrected version of your ad. That’s the least we can do. Is there anything else we can do to make amends for our mistake?



ESL Podcast 436 – Dealing With an Angry Client

Monty: Yes, there is. I'd like the person responsible to be called on the mat for this.

Shawna: Rest assured. We take this matter very seriously. We'll find out who is responsible and heads will roll.

Monty: Good. That's what I wanted to hear.

[end of dialogue]

The script for this episode was written by a person who is certainly one of the best podcast scriptwriters in the world, Dr. Lucy Tse.

From Los Angeles, California, on behalf of everyone at ESL Podcast, I thank you for listening, and invite you to come back and listen next time on ESL Podcast.

English as a Second Language Podcast is written and produced by Dr. Lucy Tse, hosted by Dr. Jeff McQuillan. This podcast is copyright 2008.