

Earlier in the semester I wrote a complaint letter to Papa John's to express my dissatisfaction with the service delivered by their company. Many factors led to my complaint. Since we ordered our pizza during the week and at 9:00 pm, we did not expect Papa John's to be busy. However, we had a delay in receiving our food. We were told it would be 30 minutes. After an hour passed, I finally called to check on it, and was told it should be here anytime. Well an additional 15 minutes went by until it came. The delivery boy was unfriendly, and did not seem to care about our long wait. I expressed my disappointment to him in hopes of getting a free pizza, or even coupons for future use. But he did not even offer us an explanation as to why it had taken so long or any compensation for the service failure, but just said "sorry" and that was about it. Not only was the pizza over 45 minutes late, but it looked as if it was cooked hours ago and was not even what we had ordered. We ordered a large pepperoni pizza, but there was no pepperoni on it. I've always had high expectations of Papa John's because we order from them all the time and our food is always on time, hot and fresh, and delicious. However, this was not the case this time, so I was extremely dissatisfied with the whole experience.

Because I have given Papa John's a lot of business over the years, I was hoping there would be a resolution to my complaint. First of all, I wanted an apology in the form of a letter. I also would have liked a coupon for a free pizza, or even discount coupons for future uses. If Papa John's really cared about keeping my business, this would be a good way to do so. It would also provide them with repeat purchases. Even though I would have liked these things in

response to my complaint, I did not have the highest expectations I would get them. I did not really think Papa John's would take time to respond to a letter from a dissatisfied customer or even care that much to do so when they get so much other business from other people. They make so much money from college students, that losing me as a customer probably would not have a negative affect on their business. Realistically, this is how I felt. Even though I would have liked an apology and maybe a free pizza out of the situation, I did not totally expect it.

As I figured, I did not receive a response to my complaint letter. There could be a few reasons for this. One reason for this could be that they just did not care. My business just did not mean that much to them, and maybe they figured that losing me as a customer would not impact their business in any major way. Another reason that they did not respond could be because they did not think it was that big of a deal. They may have had bigger, more important issues to deal with at that time then trying to recover from one service failure. Time could have also been an issue. School had just started back, and maybe they were just very busy and lacked time to respond. They could have been poorly staffed, so maybe the managers were performing roles that they normally do not have to. This could have taken time away from other things they usually do, like responding to complaints. All these reasons could have played a role in why Papa John's did not respond to my complaint, but I think the main reason was the way in which my complaint letter was written. I did not really specify what I wanted them to do to make up for their mistake. I just told them what happened and that nothing was done to make up for it (hoping they would take it upon themselves and fix it). I explained how I wanted them to be aware of the situation, so that it does not happen again. However, I did not say that I expect a letter of apology, a free pizza, or discount coupons. I also should have stated in the complaint

letter that I will no longer give them business and will now switch to a different pizza company if they do not recover from their service failure. If I would have taken this approach, maybe they would have responded differently. So, maybe it was unclear to them what I wanted them to do. They might have figured, “Why give out free pizzas or coupons when she does not expect them.” If I could have changed anything about my letter, clarifying what I wanted them to do in response to my complaint and what I would do if they did not fix the problem, would definitely be it.

I have attached a letter to myself on behalf of the company that addresses what I believe should have been done. This letter is an adequate response because Papa John’s not only apologizes for their service failure, but also reassures me of my importance to their company. They also include a voucher for a free pizza along with coupons and discounts for further purchases. This was done in hopes of the customer making repeat purchases and remaining loyal to Papa John’s. I would have been more impressed with Papa John’s than I was before if they would have done this, and I would have been satisfied. They would still be my first choice when ordering pizza. Overall, this letter is an adequate way of recovering for the service failure, while also offering incentives for future purchases.

I do not think registering the complaint online had any influence on the firm’s response, especially because I did not receive one. I registered the complaint on [complaintbook.com](http://complaintbook.com), which then would have sent the complaint to Papa John’s. It said basically the same thing that I said in the complaint letter. If they really cared, they would have responded to my complaint letter in the first place. After Papa John’s knew I registered my complaint online, I would think this would have made them want to respond even more because others can view the complaint.

This provides bad word of mouth for them and gives them a bad reputation. I would not think they would want that because they could lose more valuable customers.

My feeling towards Papa John's has definitely changed since this experience. First of all, I do not order from them anymore. I feel as if they do not care for their customers and about keeping them. College students give them their main business here in Bowling Green. I would think they would want to maintain a good rapport with all of us. If they would have fixed the problem, I would have been satisfied, thrilled with the compensation, even more impressed with Papa John's than I was before, and would have remained loyal to them in the future. Knowing that I am a college student, I would think they would have wanted to fix the problem to avoid any bad word of mouth I would give them to other college students. It would not have taken too much hassle or time to send me an apology letter and maybe a coupon for a free pizza. I would definitely have a different feeling towards them and would have continued giving them business. This would have showed they cared, and that I am important to them. I realize mistakes are made, but there was no action of recovery and this just gives me a bad attitude towards them. I would even feel different if the employee acted caring and sympathetic, but he was rude. I felt as though I was a burden to him. The employees should be trained to know what do when problems arise, and he did not seem to know. The whole experience definitely changed how I feel about Papa John's especially because I used to have such high expectations of them. As a customer who has given them a lot of business, I now feel that I do not matter to them.

I believe that "The customer who complains is the firm's friend." By me complaining, I am showing them I care about how they provide their service, and that it is important to me. Companies should encourage and welcome complaints to see what they need to improve on, and

to make sure it never happens again in the future. When companies have recovery strategies, the customers feel like they are important and actually are viewed as a “friend” to the company.

This will make customers stay loyal and continue using them as service providers.

I learned a lot from this experience. First of all, I learned what it takes to be a “good complainer.” In the future I know that if I am going to complain about something I need to be firm and strong on what it is I expect and want. I should have clearly explained the compensation I wanted, and if they did not take appropriate steps to recover, than I would go to Dominos next time. This could have affected the outcome of their response. I also learned that some companies simply do not care about their customers. They do not take pride in their customers and making them satisfied. I learned that not all customers are important and treated equally by companies. I learned many companies have not implemented recovery strategies, and if they have, employees are not always made aware of them, and what to do when problems arise.

As I enter the business world, I now have a deeper understanding of the importance of customers to firms and their success. How companies treat their customers can definitely impact the success of your company. You cannot “blow off” certain customers or make others feel less important. Everyone should be treated equally if you want to maintain a positive reputation. “The customer is truly the king,” and as a service provider, you should do whatever it takes to make them feel this way.