

## Dealing With Negative Feedback on Ebay

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Ebay's feedback system is the backbone of sellers' success. All the top sellers have large quantities of positive feedback. On the flipside, negative feedback can hurt sales and prevent businesses from taking off. The feedback system was intended to be a collection of impartial reviews of the performance of buyers and sellers. If a buyer pays quickly, their seller will leave positive feedback. If a seller ships quickly, their buyer will leave positive feedback. This way, future buyers and sellers can get the scoop on who to buy from and who to avoid, from people who have been there.

Negative feedback has an enormous impact on sellers in particular. If your feedback score falls below the nineties, or even into the lower ninetieth percentile, buyers might take their business elsewhere. But what if you feel like the negative feedback was unjustified? Maybe the buyer was just unpleasant to work with, or had unrealistic demands. As a seller, do you have any recourse? You do, but it's not easy. The best strategy is to avoid negative feedback in the first place. But if that's not possible, turn to a mediation service like Square Trade. With a mediation service, you're able to file a case regarding your negative feedback. Explain why you think the charge is unjustified. The other party will have two weeks to respond. Square Trade says that most cases are resolved for free without having to turn to a mediator. But if a mediator's services are used, case resolution will cost between twenty and thirty dollars. There are certainly times when amicable resolution is worth the price. As a seller, it's up to you to decide when to pay up, and when to leave things as they are.

Never make the mistake of arguing with or harassing customers who leave you negative feedback, deserved or not. Nothing looks more unprofessional than a seller and buyer fighting back and forth over feedback comments. It's understandable that you might be angry or emotional when hit with negative feedback, especially if you don't feel that you did anything wrong. But for the sake of your professional reputation, learn to overcome those emotions before responding. Employ the 24 Hour Rule; that is, don't make a reply until you've had a day to cool down.

When you do respond to unfair negative feedback, stick to the facts. If the buyer claims that the item was not as described, point out that every defect was carefully documented in the item's description. (It was, wasn't it?) If they complain about slow shipping, post the shipping dates as well as the shipping policy that they agreed to when they purchased the item. Never use personal attacks, only facts.

If you did make a mistake that earned you negative feedback, respond with courtesy. Apologize for the honest mistake you made, and mention that you were not given a chance to rectify the situation before feedback was left. This type of follow-up can make buyers more sympathetic to your situation.

There are right ways and wrong ways to deal with negative feedback on Ebay. As long as you respond with class and professionalism, you can minimize the damage to your reputation.