

# Handling Detractors

It is inevitable. You aren't perfect and most clients don't expect you to be. But when they are upset, they do expect you to fix it and recover perfectly from the issue. The ClearlyRated survey provides you and your team with the information you need to take positive action to recover from a service failure and retain your key clients. However, if not done carefully, you run the risk of making a bad situation worse.

## Sample Detractor Notification Email:

### Jane Doe

**Director:** Eric Gregg › Nathan Goff

**Email:** [janedoe@email.com](mailto:janedoe@email.com)

**Phone:** 555-123-4567

**Company:** ABC Company

**Tags:** Portland, Industrial, Top 100

**Based on your most recent experience, how likely is it that you would recommend us to a friend or colleague?**

6

**What is the primary reason behind the rating you provided?**

Nathan wasn't as responsive as he has in the past.

**What is one thing we could be doing differently to increase the value of our services to you?**

No Response Provided

**Choose a resolution after following up:**

[Resolution in Progress](#) | [Can't Resolve](#) | [Not an Issue](#) | [Resolved](#) | [Escalate](#)

# 5 Steps for Detractor Follow-up

## 1. Make a phone call

Even if they don't provide a specific issue in their comments, you have enough information to reach out and start the conversation. If it is a key relationship for your firm, contact them and do it quickly. Don't reference the score directly. While survey participants are not promised anonymity in the survey, some will be taken aback if you repeat back their responses verbatim.

## 2. Show empathy

They are frustrated, and whether you agree with the reason or not, you need to avoid becoming defensive while recognizing and acknowledging their right to be upset or annoyed. This alone saves many relationships. Additionally, don't make the person defensive. It is easy to make someone defensive when you go after more information. Be sure to address the issue, without excuses or blame.

## 3. Overdo it

If your mistake is big, your recovery has to be bigger. It has to be surprisingly good; otherwise the focus remains on the mistake and not the recovery.

## 4. Correct the problem

If you find a solution and earn a second chance, make sure to communicate why the issue won't happen again and then deliver on that promise. The survey provides one frame of reference. Find out more about the situation from other team members, and approach the solution holistically.

## 5. Recover with the person, not just the company

Individual contacts at your clients' organizations are negatively affected when mistakes are made, yet many recovery efforts are almost always aimed at the organization level (money-back, free service, etc.). Remember to focus your recovery on the people as well as the business.

# Suggested Phone Scripts

## WHAT TO SAY:

“Hi [[first\\_name](#)], I wanted to touch base with you. We are in the midst of our quarterly satisfaction survey and as part of that process I am making some calls out to our key accounts to discuss areas where we can improve. Although a lot of our feedback has been very positive, it is clear that we can improve in a few areas.

One of those areas is [insert issue they highlighted in their survey response in a general manner]. I know it can be very frustrating to have that issue arise and I wanted to talk to you a little bit about your experience with that issue and what we can do to improve.”

## WHAT NOT TO SAY:

“Hi [[first\\_name](#)], I just got your survey response and saw that you gave me a 2 out of 10 because we weren't being responsive enough. I feel like we are always getting back to you within a day or so, and wanted to better understand the reason behind the low score.

We work really hard to make sure we're doing the best we can for you, so I was a little surprised to see we aren't doing that well and I really want to make sure we can improve that score for next time.”