

# I CAN'T GET NO SATISFACTION

## Vocabulary and Other Tricky Stuff about How Business Operates

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Max writes to the “**Guy in Charge of Quality Control.**” This is a real person. Most business that produce things need someone to make sure the things are all being made properly so that there will be no defects in the products. He/she would be known as the **Head of Quality Control.** (See, Max is pretty smart.) But the Tasty Tidbit Company sent the letter to Alfred Matooley, who’s in the **Public Relations Department.** That’s exactly what it sounds like: that department tries to maintain good relations between the company and the public.

Notice that on a proper business letter, such as the one from the Tasty Tidbit Company on June 10, the **company’s letterhead** goes at the top, then comes the date, then the recipient’s name and address and finally the **greeting** (Dear Mr. Reitman).

1) **Company letterhead**

2) **Date**

3) **Recipient’s name and address**

4) **Greeting (with a comma for a friendly letter or a colon for an official letter)**

(Hey, check out Max’s letter of June 27. He has that stuff above down to a T. Good going, Max!)

Mr. Matooley writes in his first letter: “Without meaning to cast doubt on your **allegation...**” An **allegation** is a statement that hasn’t yet been proven. An **allegation** is like an accusation. That’s why TV new programs always say, “The **alleged** criminal has been taken into custody by the police.” See, the guy’s been accused of a crime, but it hasn’t been proven yet. Therefore, it’s still just **alleged.** In Max’s case, he’s made an **allegation,** but according to Mr. Matooley, it hasn’t been proven yet.

Mr. Matooley writes in his June 20 letter: “Normally I would start by thanking you for your **correspondence,** but in this case I will defer.” Correspondence is communication by letter or email. It has to be in writing.

Mr Matooley continues in that same letter: “... your sample does contain **residue** of Strawberry Sloopy...” **Residue** is what’s left after something has been taken away or cleaned up, **e.g.,** there was a **residue** of blood at the crime scene.

BTW (you already know what that means), **e.g.** means “for example.” It’s the abbreviation for *exempli gratia* from Latin. You also see it spelled **eg.** at times but many spell checkers don’t approve of that.

In that same letter, Mr. Matooley writes: “... accusing food and beverage companies of **adulterated** food is a common practice...” To **adulterate** food is to make it nasty by adding improper or inferior ingredients (such as a mouse head).

“Nevertheless, we value your **patronage...**” A **patron** is a customer, especially a regular customer. So **patronage** is the support of the customer. That means the customer will keep coming back. That’s why the Tasty Tidbit Company values Max’s patronage. He’s a regular customer and they want his support.

Finally, Mr. Linguini writes in his June 31 letter that he wants to work out a **mutually satisfactory agreement** with Max. This means a deal that both sides are satisfied with. If something is **mutual,** it is shared. You could say, “My friend and I, we have a **mutual** admiration of Justin Bieber.” (Oh, do I hear any booing and catcalls out there? I thought so.) (Whew, that’s enough of this business stuff. Not easy, is it?)