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Caves

敦煌加碼挑戰賽

## The king of complainers

Clive Zietman loves complaining – but not shouting in hotel lobbies, or angrily telling a salesperson to call the manager, or making a waitress cry. He loves complaining properly and in writing. Over the last 20 years, he has written over 5,000 letters of complaint. His successes include refunded vacations, countless free meals, and complimentary theater tickets.

So how has he achieved this? “Screaming and shouting is a complete waste of time and is usually directed at a person who is not in a position to do anything,” he says. “I like to write a polite letter to the company. People won’t want to help you if you are aggressive. They respond much better to good manners.”

It all started many years ago, on a boring train trip home to West London. The train passed by a cookie factory, and the smell of the cookies made Clive feel hungry. He wrote a letter to the managing director to complain, in a humorous way, about the fumes coming through the train window. The result? Some free packages of cookies. But since then there have been more serious victories as well. On one occasion he managed to get a Volkswagen Golf GTI within 24 hours for a friend who had been complaining for almost a year (without any success) about his faulty vehicle. On another occasion he got a travel agent to refund the cost of a vacation after Clive’s wife Bettina broke her leg when she slipped in a puddle of water in their vacation apartment in Spain.

## Information overload

If you type the words “information overload” into Google, you will immediately get an information overload – more than 7 million hits in 0.05 seconds. Some of this information is interesting – for example, you learn that the phrase “information overload” was first used in 1970, before the Internet was invented. But much of the information is not relevant or useful: obscure companies and even more obscure bloggers.

Information overload is one of the biggest irritations in modern life. There are news and sports websites to watch, emails that is need to be answered, people who want to chat with you online, and back in the real world, friends, family, and colleagues who also have things to tell you. At work, information overload is also causing problems. A recent survey has shown that many company managers believe that it has made their jobs less satisfying and has even affected their personal relationships outside work. Some of them also think that it is bad for their health.

Clearly there is a problem. It is not only increase in the quantity of information, it is also the fact that everywhere, not just in the home and in the workplace. Many people today do not go anywhere without their smart phones. There is no escape from the internet.