



Reporting verbs in business phrases

As well as being used to report what people have said, reporting verbs like “agree to” and “guarantee” can be used in business functional phrases, especially formal ones. Fill the gaps below with reporting verbs to make typical formal business expressions, using verbs from the list at the bottom if you need to.

1. We regret to _____ you that the item you ordered is no longer available.
2. We _____ a rise of 50% in the next twelve months.
3. We would like to _____ a discount in our next order.
4. Could we _____ using a different delivery company next time?
5. I am sorry to _____ that negotiations broke down.
6. I _____ you that the same problem will not occur again.
7. I am writing to you to _____ about the late delivery of my parcel.
8. We would like to _____ a solution to your time management problems – the new Super Scheduler.
9. Did I _____ that I visited your hometown while I was in England?

How could you say the things above in different ways not using the reporting verbs?

Can you use any of the other verbs in the same way to make other useful business phrases? What situation might each phrase be used in?

acknowledge
agree to
bring up
confirm
discuss
guarantee
introduce
outline
propose
refuse
stress

admit
ask for
complain
decide
emphasize
inform
mention
point out
raise
report
suggest

agree on
assure
concede
deny
explain
insist on
offer
predict
recommend
request
summarise



Suggested answers

1. inform/ I'm afraid the item...
 2. predict/ We think that it will rise by 50% in the next 12 months
 3. request/ Could we possibly have a discount on our next order?
 4. suggest/ We think that it might be better to use...
 5. report/ I'm afraid the negotiations broke down.
 6. assure/ You can rest assured that the problem will not occur again.
 7. complain/ Unfortunately, my parcel did not arrive on time.
 8. propose/ Problems with...? How about trying the new Super Scheduler?
 9. mention/ By the way, I visited your hometown while I was in England.
-
- acknowledge – We acknowledge that there were issues with... (Responding to complaints)
 - admit – I must admit to surprised at the demand for the iPad. (Talking about mistakes)
 - agree on – We all seem to agree on the need for change, it's just what kind of change that there are some different views on (Chairing a difficult meeting)
 - agree to – We will agree to sale or return if you double your order (Negotiating)
 - ask for – We would like to ask for a little more time to fulfil the last order (Request)
 - bring up – Can I bring up the production problems now? (Starting a new topic or going off topic in a business meeting)
 - concede – I concede that it will not help our finances in the short term (Admitting that there are weaknesses in your argument when disagreeing with someone)
 - confirm – Could you please confirm the agreement in writing as soon as possible? (Near the end of a negotiation)
 - decide – We have decided to order 200 to start with, with more orders dependant on how well those sell (After a negotiation and reporting back to your company)
 - deny – We strongly deny any wrongdoing on our part (Very strong reply to a complaint)
 - discuss – I'll discuss it with my boss and get back to you in the next couple of days (At the end of a negotiation)
 - emphasize – I really can't emphasize enough how much of an improvement the new version is (Sales talk)
 - explain – Please let me explain our reasoning (Negotiating)
 - guarantee – We guarantee that a service engineer will arrive within... (Sales talk)
 - insist on – I'm afraid I must insist on the same terms as last time (Negotiating)
 - introduce – Please allow me to introduce my colleague...
 - offer – We would like to offer you a further discount on your next order (Responding to complaints)
 - outline – Let me outline our position (Starting a negotiation)
 - point out – I should perhaps point out that all voice recorders have the same issues (Responding to complaints)
 - raise – Can I raise the issue of quality control? (Changing topic in a meeting)
 - recommend – I would recommend bringing in a consultant (Brainstorming in a meeting)
 - refuse – I refuse to accept that this is typical (Strong disagreement)
 - stress – I must stress that none of our other suppliers said... (Strong complaint)
 - summarise – To summarise,...