



eBay Feedback Keeping it Positive

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Welcome!

This ebook is packed full of information regarding eBay and their feedback policies and, more importantly, ways to obtain a positive eBay feedback rating!

In this ebook you'll also find a selection of highly recommended readings if you are currently selling on eBay or contemplating it.

Now, you may be asking, what does Jeff Willis know about positive feedback ratings - and an excellent question it is!

Well, I have been trading on eBay for a number of years now and in 2003 established an eBay identity to sell ebooks (electronic books) and software.

In the last year I have gained a feedback rating of nearly 400 positive responses. As of today, I have incurred 2 negative and 2 neutral ratings as well. Someone who has a perfect score can tell you how he or she gained a perfect score, but better yet, later on in this ebook I'm going to share with you great tips on how I avoided further negative feedback early in my eBay career. I'm going to show you how I drew on over 20 years of sales and customer service experience, coupled with marketing skills to continue obtaining positive feedback from customers.

Before I go on to show you how to obtain and maintain a positive feedback rating on eBay, I think it is vital to understand the rules and regulations that eBay has put into place to cover its buyers and sellers alike. You'll also see what options are available to you if, for some reason, someone leaves negative feedback for you.

Best of luck in your eBay adventures!
Jeff Willis

eBay rules and regulations

Knowledge is Power!

Knowing exactly what eBay says about feedback is very important if you are a seller or a buyer.

The first thing you should understand is how feedback is accrued. For each transaction, the buyer and seller are allowed to rate each other by leaving feedback.

The feedback rating system is really simple. You receive:

+1 point for each positive comment

0 points for each neutral comment

-1 point for each negative comment

Where the system can sometimes let you down is when you have a fantastic customer who has purchased multiple items from you (or likewise you've bought a number of items off someone). You would imagine that you could score some great positive feedback for each transaction however, the eBay system will only tally up feedback by individual eBay members NOT for each transaction.

Here's an example to put it into perspective:

Ozebookstore has received a feedback rating of 5 based on the following:

Angie buyer purchased 1 item and left positive feedback

Harold buyer purchased 1 item and left positive feedback

David buyer purchased 1 item and left positive feedback

Angie buyer purchased another item and left positive feedback

Sue buyer purchased 1 item and left positive feedback

Tom buyer purchased 1 item and left positive feedback

David buyer purchased another item and left positive feedback

Even though there was a total of seven items sold (or seven transactions), there were only FIVE unique eBay members doing the purchasing so therefore only a total of five feedback would show up next to Ozebookstore.

Feedback is the way we let other members know how we felt about the way in which a transaction was handled. As eBay members, we all have a feedback profile which is identified as a rating number in brackets. There are also comments from other members for each transaction feedback has been left. In the example above, the eBay member would look like this:

Ozebookstore (5) - which means that the eBay member Ozebookstore has received positive feedback from at least 5 other eBay members.

Make sense?

Always Leave Feedback!

As you can see, leaving feedback after a transaction is complete is an important aspect of participating in the eBay community. This is the only chance you have to let other eBay members know how your transaction went. The feedback system is crucial as it helps both buyers and sellers make informed decisions about who to trade with. If you think about it, you are more likely to buy from someone who does not have a lot of negative feedback!

Research is Important

Whether you're placing a bid or you've successfully sold an item, researching your trading partner's previous treatment of other eBay members can give you a good idea of what to expect in your transaction.

As a buyer, it's always wise to check out feedback before entering into a transaction to ensure the seller is trustworthy and professional.

As a seller, you may want to view a bidder's feedback to see how they managed their past transactions. Also, while I have not done this myself but I have seen a number of sellers actually request that buyers with a certain feedback rating should make contact with them before bidding so they can ensure they are legitimate. This can save the seller from the hassle of putting in non-paying bid notices to eBay and relisting an item.

In most cases, if an eBay member has a high rating they are generally trustworthy, however, you should always check their feedback. Remember, there are comments attached to a member's feedback so it is always worth your while checking out the comments.

Likewise, be mindful when leaving comments about someone that you don't just put AAA+++ or similar as feedback. Try to include: satisfaction with the item, quality of communication, quality of packaging and promptness of postage as well as courteousness.

If there are ever any issues with a transaction, make sure and get in contact with the other eBay member and try to resolve issues BEFORE any feedback is left. eBay encourages open and honest communication and most eBay members will be happy to resolve the issue. Remember, feedback can't be erased.

You always have the right to respond to any feedback given to you. I used to respond to all of the feedback left for me in the beginning of my eBay trading, but alas, I decided leaving great positive feedback for buyers was a better option because I doubt anyone who ever purchased from me checked out the responses to the feedback they gave me.

As you'll see later on, communication is the most vital ingredient to obtaining and maintaining a positive eBay feedback rating.

A Few of the Rules

eBay has some strict, but very necessary, policies created to protect their members. There are actions that are considered illegal and will result in various repercussions.

One of these is 'Feedback Extortion'. Here are some examples of feedback extortion:

'Pay me \$50.00 or I will...';

'I want you to sell me all of the items in the multiple item auction or I will get all of my friends to...'

Don't ever take part in feedback extortion and if you ever are the victim of it, please make sure and contact eBay via their help links right away! They need the full header of any emails you may have received as evidence as it allows them to trace the pathway of the email.

If you have trouble finding the email header, eBay suggests that you visit SpamCop, a site that contains information on how to obtain headers for many email clients.

Please note: Feedback extortion does not qualify for feedback removal under eBay's 'Feedback Removal Policy'.

The other activity I'll let you know about that eBay frowns heavily upon is 'Feedback Solicitation'. Offering to sell feedback, buy feedback, or trade feedback undeservedly is strictly against eBay's feedback policies.

eBay regulations state that they will cancel any listings that include the term 'feedback' or any reference to eBay feedback in the listing title as they deem it feedback solicitation. The only exception is if the term 'feedback' is directly describing the item listed.

Feedback Abuse and Removal

As I mentioned earlier, feedback can't be erased so you should use caution and good judgment when leaving feedback for another member of the eBay community. Feedback that you leave will become a permanent part of a member's eBay record that is published to the entire eBay community. Be mindful for, according to eBay, 'if a court were to find that your remarks constitute libel or defamation, you could be held legally responsible for damages to that member's reputation.'

'Under U.S. federal law (the Communications Decency Act), because eBay does not censor feedback or investigate its accuracy, eBay is not legally responsible for the remarks that members post, even if those remarks are defamatory. However, this law does not protect the person who leaves the feedback from responsibility.'

Common sense would tell you to be mindful of what is said in feedback, however it is good to know that there is possible recourse if members leave defamatory feedback about you.

To ensure that feedback is used for its proper purposes eBay will remove feedback in a few limited situations

eBay considers the following to be feedback abuse and may be subject to removal:

- eBay is provided with a valid court order finding that the disputed feedback is slanderous, libellous, defamatory or otherwise illegal.
- The feedback comment contains profane, vulgar, obscene or racist language or adult material.
- The feedback comment contains personal, identifying information about another member, including real name, address, phone number, or email address.
- The feedback makes any reference to an eBay or law enforcement organization investigation.
- The feedback comment contains links or scripts.
- Negative feedback intended for another member will be considered for removal only in situations where the member responsible for the mistaken posting has already placed the same feedback for the correct member.
- Feedback left by a member who provided eBay with false contact information and could not be contacted.
- Inflammatory language, such as 'fraud, liar, cheater, scam artist, con-man' etc. is strongly discouraged but will not be removed.

You can contact eBay via their webforms if you feel that you have been subjected to any of the above examples of feedback abuse.

Feedback Abuse and Removal (continued)

eBay will also withdraw feedback if provided with a ruling or settlement agreement from an eBay-approved certified third party dispute resolution service (like www.squaretrade.com) or a settlement resolving a lawsuit. 'Such a ruling may be issued if the feedback recipient initiated a dispute resolution process and the member who left the feedback did not respond to the request for mediation or if the dispute resolution service confirms that both members agreed to have the feedback withdrawn.'

'Mutual Feedback Withdrawal'

Members that use the eBay mutual feedback withdrawal process will have their feedback rating withdrawn once both members have completed the process. Mutual Feedback Withdrawal allows members to withdraw feedback for a transaction if both members are able to agree on a resolution.

Very important - Withdrawn feedback is not counted in the feedback score or ratings, but remains in the list of comments.

Once approved and both members agree to completing the online form, then feedback left by both members is withdrawn at the same time and the feedback score will adjust accordingly with no rating next to the comment and a notation from eBay stating that the feedback was mutually withdrawn will appear next to the comment as well.

Again, it is good to remember to make only fair and factual comments. If any aspect of your transaction was unsatisfactory then consider contacting the other member to resolve the issue either by email or phone.

When I gained my negative feedback this option wasn't available but it is a great addition. If you have resolved any issues after a transaction and get the agreement from the other member to mutually withdraw any negative feedback, I'd say go for it!

The only time eBay will remove both the feedback rating and the comment is when it is in violation of their feedback removal and abuse policy.

Obtaining and maintaining a positive feedback rating

Well, by now you should have a very good insight into the eBay feedback system and how it works. Now it's time to learn how you can use the knowledge to your advantage in order to get positive feedback and maintain it.

Communication

As I mentioned earlier, communication is the absolute key to obtaining positive feedback.

In my first days of trading ebooks I had very basic auction ads that didn't really stipulate what an ebook is. I assumed that everyone knew that ebook stood for 'electronic book'. Within the first few transactions I had one gentleman send me a very irate email saying that what I sold him didn't have any pages so how could I call it a book! I had a bit of a chuckle to myself and promptly kicked into customer service mode and advised him that I would refund his purchase (in accordance with my 30 day money back guarantee, which I've always had) and that he was more than welcome to keep and use the ebook to assist with his online eBay sales (he was establishing an eBay store which sold fishing equipment). I even went out of my way to hunt down a few more ebooks on fishing (how to tie fishing flies, etc) that he could use as bonus items for his own auctions and emailed him the links as a kind gesture. Needless to say, he didn't care about the service I gave him nor the fact that I promptly refunded his money, and he left me negative feedback - ignorance at its finest!

Well, I thought I had made all the right moves on a customer service level, and with the majority of buyers out there, it would have worked. What I did learn from this experience was to put a notice on all of my auction ads stating exactly what an ebook is, as well as a note that asks potential buyers to contact me with any questions about the auction before they place a bid.

I also received neutral feedback from someone who understood that the item they had purchased would be posted out to them because my auction ad stated that there was 'free shipping'. They felt this was misleading considering that the item was emailed. In reality, I guess it can be assumed to be so and I have started changing all my newly created auctions ads to read 'no shipping or handling charges'. This is a true and fair statement because I sell ebooks which are digital items. There are a number of sellers out there charging shipping and handling fees for digital products and by offering this free service gives a competitive advantage.

So, in the two cases above, I learned that it is necessary to communicate very clearly in all my auction ads in order to define what a customer is going to receive and also what my terms of service are.

Another form of communication that is really important is direct communication with the other member via email. I had another customer leave a neutral feedback because he felt my email communication was a bit slow, which admittedly it was at the time. I still left them positive feedback as, indeed, I hadn't necessarily actioned my emails in an appropriate time frame, but it has really made me stay on top of my emails now!

Learn from my mistakes and the mistakes of others you may hear about!

Leaving Feedback

I leave feedback for all eBay members who purchase from me - it's not only important to them but important to me in order to complete the transaction.

One thing I've seen other sellers do which I haven't done is to put a reminder in the final email communication to advise the purchaser that feedback will be left for them once it is given. I guess as a seller, this helps to ensure that feedback is left, but it also ensures that if you leave them positive feedback, they won't give you negative feedback.

I still haven't decided if I will add a note into my emails as I have a system where everyone who purchases gets feedback whether or not they give any to me. Of course, I've probably missed out on quite a bit of feedback of the last few years. Maybe a simple line like this might work: Positive feedback is kindly accepted and kindly returned.

Non-paying bidders

This is my opinion - rather than leave yourself open to receiving feedback from someone who doesn't finalise a transaction, put in a 'non-paying bidder notification'; to eBay. After three strikes eBay will suspend their account. Once you've done this you can also block the person from bidding on future auctions to ensure there is no retribution.

Making Your Feedback Profile Public or Private

By making your Feedback Profile private, you will prevent other eBay members from reading all comments that you have ever received - only you will be able to see them.

However, buyers and sellers live and die by feedback and if you keep your feedback private, there is a good chance you will miss out on a number of transactions as people might think you have something to hide.

I don't recommend making your feedback profile private. There is no need and only appears to indicate that you might have negative feedback in your comments.

Customer Service

I have been involved in customer service and sales starting with my first job at Burger King 20 years ago. Through the years the most important thing I have learned is to go out of my way to make a customer happy. In the end, if they are happy, I am happy. **Positive-breeds-positive.**

Have good interactions with your customers and listen to what they have to say. If you put a customer offside this can be reflected by negative feedback and it may damage your future business. Ensure your emails are courteous and prompt and that they address your customer's needs.

Quality products and guarantee

Of course it goes without saying that if you're going to make selling on eBay a means to earn money you are going to want to ensure you are selling quality products. If you are selling new items, make sure they are of good quality and aptly described. With second-hand products it is doubly important that the condition of the item is described as they would receive it.

Not everyone can offer this but a 30-day money back guarantee on all your products would add one more level of service on top of the great service you are already providing. Chances are customers will be happy with their purchase and you'll never have to provide a refund. However, it is an added level of satisfaction guarantee and will help to ensure an adequate measurement of feedback is left for you.

Some Complimentary Auction Tips and Reports

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Auction Riches - hosted by Robbin K. Tungett

This site is one of the richest resources you will find on the internet for your auction needs. Their membership area is AWESOME. I totally recommend checking them out by [clicking here](#).

Auction Sources Exposed by M. Fiegl

[Click Here](#) to find the best liquidators, wholesalers or dropshippers out there

The Silent Sales Machine Hiding on eBay by J. Cockrum

There's a reason this ebook made it to the #1 spot at clickbank. [Click here](#) to find out why!

Auction Tactics revealed by Brett Pieratt

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Final Farewell

Thank you for taking the time to read about the very important topic of how to obtain and maintain a positive eBay feedback rating. I am sure the info will come in handy!

If you ever have any questions please make sure and send me an email to jeffrey@ozebookstore.com

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