

Customer Service

Dealing with Difficult Customers

A Professional Training Seminar by MERIT Management Resources, Inc.

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What is meant by the term “customer service”?

- ◆ Way people are treated when purchasing a product or service
- ◆ Appearance of employees, merchandise, and environment
- ◆ Way problems and/or complaints are handled
- ◆ Handling of telephone and/or written inquiries
- ◆ Way employees talk about business to friends, family, and acquaintances
- ◆ Overall impression of agency’s products, services, and employees

Dealing with Difficult Customers

Remember...

1. Take remarks _____ and not _____
2. Treat each person in organization as a _____
3. Solve problems without _____ yourself or others
4. Encourage ongoing _____
5. _____ to the customer.



Customer Complaints

A complaint is a _____-a new way of looking at it!

1. Listen _____.
2. Hear him or her out and take the _____ seriously.
3. Dealing with your reaction - _____.
4. _____ the problem.
5. _____ the problem.
6. Remember you are the _____ as far as the customer is concerned.
7. Listen _____ and _____.
Why? _____
Gives opportunity to _____.

When You “Know” You’ll Say “No”

- 1.** Adjust your attitude: caring, courteous
- 2.** Listen to the entire statement.
- 3.** Avoid the phrase, “It’s agency/department policy.”

- 4.** How to say “no” or explain policy:

Empathize – “I understand how you feel.”

Acknowledge emotions – “I see/hear how concerned/upset you are.”

Decline – “I can’t give a full refund, but I can...”

Suggest alternative – Tell what you can do

Decline with reason – explain safety/privacy/etc.

Use self-disclosure – “I have felt like that too...”

Ask open-ended questions – “How will that work for you?”

Use the broken record technique – Repeat what you’ve said.

- 5.** When the customer insists on speaking to “your boss”

Practice scenarios in advance with “boss.”

Explain customer’s complaint and your actions in front of customer.

If possible, listen to solution – it shows your concern, and you’ll know actions to take if boss asks you to complete the transaction.

Even if the boss waives a policy, accept it and act pleased for the customer.

If appropriate, ask your boss if you can apply the same solution to future customers with the same complaint.

Case Studies

How do you respond?

1. Jean Smith has missed a Tuesday appointment that was necessary to continue receiving food for herself and formula for her infant daughter. There are no available appointments for the remainder of the week. Jean is on the phone with you and she says, “You are starving my baby!”
2. Tammy Wantsitnow has come into the office to request a specific formula for her two-month old son. She read on FaceBook that it was better for infants who were under six months of age. She has no medical reason for the formula and it is not one that can be provided. She is adamant that she deserves the formula she is requesting.
3. Barbara Leftathome has come in for her appointment to continue to receive benefits. She did not bring the requested information for the appointment and so the meeting will need to be rescheduled. She is highly annoyed as she is “Very busy attending to my six children and so I don’t have time to come in again. Nothing has changed from last year, so why can’t you just renew the benefits and let me go?”
4. Wannita N. Shouldgetta is annoyed by all the information required in order to receive WIC benefits. She doesn’t care about the other benefits of WIC (nutrition education, referrals, guidance to make health behavior changes). “Don’t tell me what to eat, what to buy, or what to feed my kids. Just give me the card and let me go live my life.”

Inflammatory “Triggers”

1. State _____ not _____.
2. Say _____ not _____.
3. Don't say “I'll _____.”
4. Don't say “It's your _____.”
5. Don't say “....._____” – be specific
6. Say “_____” or “_____” instead of “_____”
7. Refer to your “_____” or “_____” or “_____” not your “_____.”
8. Don't make excuses or quote the policy.

WE CAN

5 Tips for Customer Service

WELCOME: Make all customers feel welcome. This will make a difference in every future contact we have with them.

EMPATHY: Treat each customer as you would want to be treated. This includes listening carefully.

COURTESY: Begin every conversation with a smile and a greeting. Tell customers “Thank you” as they leave.

ATTITUDE: Regardless of what kind of day you are having, the last customer you dealt with, or this customer’s attitude, always be courteous and have a GOOD ATTITUDE.

NONVERBALS: Your nonverbals are talking loudly even when you are not saying a word. Make sure your nonverbals are presenting the best YOU.

*Together, **WE CAN** be the best representatives the WIC program has ever had!*