

CUSTOMER AGGRESSION DE-ESCALATION TIPS

Using the CALM approach

CHECK YOUR BODY LANGUAGE

- Maintain a relaxed, open and approachable posture. Keep your arms uncrossed and make it clear you're receptive to the customers' concerns.
- Keep a calm facial expression, try not to reflect on any aggressive behaviors being exhibited by the customer.
- Maintain a safe physical distance from the customer
- Keep your voice even slow and steady
- Make it clear you are there to help and to listen as much as possible by appearing friendly, open and receptive.

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ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR CONCERNS

- Allow the customer to speak without interrupting.
- Use active listening cues, nodding, eye-contact; try not to rush the customer though their complaint.
- Validate the emotion *"I understand this is a frustrating situation"*.
- Avoid blaming language or overly technical or legal jargon.
- Stay neutral and objective, make it clear that you and the customer will overcome the problem together.

LOWER THE INTENSITY

- Keep your voice calm and slightly slower than usual.
- Use the customers name if known, or ask for their name if needing to refer them to a manager: *"John is wondering if we are able to assist with..."*
- Do not raise your voice, even if the customer does.
- Avoid defensive or emotional responses, try to provide solutions rather than explanations.
- Breathe slowly and take pauses if you feel overwhelmed.
- Try phrases like: *"Let's take a moment to figure this out together"*.

MOVE TO A SOLUTION OR EXIT THE SITUATION

- If possible, offer a clear next step: *"Let me discuss your concern with my manager, and I will get back to you"*.
- If they continue to escalate: *"I want to assist you, however I cannot help until we take a pause from this conversation"*.
- If you feel unsafe, disengage politely and alert a manager or security: *"Excuse me, this issue is something I am not able to resolve right now, please let me find someone to help you"*.

Remember

Your safety is the number 1 priority. It is ok to walk away if the other person becomes threatening or abusive. If you would like more assistance to help your teams deal with customer aggression, you can book training tailored to your needs by scanning the QR code.

