



Customer Service and Conflict Resolution: Achieving Success In Every Customer Interaction



SWPTA Frontline Staff Training

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Participant's Guide



MARLYN GROUP

Perfect Parking Experiences: Achieving Success In Every Customer Interaction

Who's that Parker?

We all serve lots of different types of customers every day, from the airport traveler to the day tourist, from the university student to the hospital visitor. Every type of guest has needs and expectations that are specific to each, so let's start figuring how to serve our guests by first identifying what they expect.

Take a few moments to first list on the left the type of guest you serve and then, below that, list some of their expectations. On the right, then list a few specific examples on how we can meet those expectations.

<p><i>Who is your parker? (It may be more than one.)</i></p> <p>1.</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Who's that parker?</i></p>	<p><i>What can we do to meet those guest expectations?</i></p>
<p>2.</p>		<p>1. Greet every customer with a smile.</p>
<p>3.</p>		<p>2. Don't rely on just the rearview mirrors.</p>
<p>4.</p>		<p>3.</p>
<p>Now list some of the expectations our guests may have:</p>		<p>4.</p>
<p>1. Friendly Face</p>		<p>5.</p>
<p>2. Vehicle Safety</p>		<p>6.</p>
<p>3.</p>		<p>7.</p>
<p>4.</p>		<p>8.</p>
<p>5.</p>		<p>9.</p>
<p>6.</p>		<p>10.</p>
<p>7.</p>		<p>11.</p>
<p>8.</p>		<p>12.</p>
<p>9.</p>		<p>13.</p>
<p></p>	<p>14.</p>	

Customer Service Self Assessment

Consider each statement below and select the response you feel applies to you using the scale provided. Your responses will not be shared with the group.

Question	Response			
	Always	Sometimes	Never	N/A
I have a strong commitment to provide excellent service to our customers.				
I have a good understanding of what our customers expect and require.				
I know what excellent customer service is and how I can deliver it in my job.				
I want to resolve my customers' issues correctly the first time I become aware of them.				
I feel responsible to make sure my customers' issues are addressed whether or not I am the one with the answer.				
I am patient with customers, even when their actions frustrate me.				
I respond to emails within one business day.				
I respond to voicemails within 4 hours.				
I show respect for customers and coworkers.				
I look for creative ways to address problems.				
I focus on the results I can achieve by solving customers' difficult problem and keep these goals in mind at all times.				
I take responsibility for addressing issues for customers even when someone other than myself created the issue.				
I follow up with customers to make sure they are satisfied with our service and don't have any questions or additional needs.				

Review your responses to each of the above questions, and identify three areas for improvement. Use the space below to create three goals for today’s session and following the session that will help you to deliver excellent service.

How Many Words Are These Pictures Worth?

Review the two pictures on screen, and below write down what you think the guest sees:

First Impression	What does the customer see?	
	Left Image	Right Image
1 Facial Expression – Friendly, Helpful?	•	• • •
2 Clean and pressed uniform?	•	• • •
3 Body Language	•	• • •

Sam Screwball has just completed his first and perhaps his last shift. Listed to the left are all the things Sam has either said or done that have put his career in jeopardy. To the right, list what he should have said or done to improve Sam's performance.

<i>What Sam Screwball said or did...</i>	<i>Your suggestion for improvement....</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stood at the lot staring down with his hands in his pockets. 	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greeted the customer with a "Yo! How are ya doing?" 	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waited for the guest to speak first. 	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asked the guest to toss her keys his way to speed things up. 	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He placed the guest's luggage at the curb and then went on to help the next guest. 	•

Answer

One of the more challenging aspects of the job can be answering customer questions and resolving customer issues. Let's look at each one separately.

To be able to answer customer questions, you first have to know the answer. In order to do that, you need to learn your location from inside and out. Take a few moments, and work together as a group to answer the following questions. Note at the bottom of the page there are two lines that allow you to ask questions about the location to which you'd like to know the answer.

Location Questions	Location Answers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the location's days and hours of operation? 	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some special events scheduled that could affect our operation? How do we find out about these changes in the future? 	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the local areas of interest and what are the directions? Do we use Directional Cards? 	•
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we find out about any changes to the operation (e.g., upcoming construction, 	•

road closures, etc.)

- Do we post information anywhere on the property for the customer and if so, where (e.g., weather reports, building information, etc.)
-

Attitude Anchors

The concept of an attitude anchor is an activity or thing that you can do that helps you maintain the positive attitude you need in order to be effective in customer service.

There are two types of attitude anchors: maintenance anchors, which help you maintain a positive attitude, and repair anchors, which help you bounce back from bad moods.

Using the table below, identify the maintenance and repair anchors that help you to maintain a positive attitude.

Maintenance	Repair
1. Ex. Drink coffee or tea	1. Ex. 5 minute break
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

Customer Service Commitments

The best first step towards creating perfect parking experiences is to make Customer Service Commitments. Below, list for yourself up to three ways you are willing to commit to delivering excellent service to your customers.

My Commitments

1.

2.

3.

Conflict Resolution: How to Manage Difficult Customers & Interpersonal Relationships

A Simple Complaint Gone Bad

Many conflict situations start out as simple customer complaints where customer service skills in resolving the situation can make a big difference. Poorly handled complaints may result in lost customers and damage to the company's public image. In some cases, a simple complaint can turn into a more difficult conflict or even become a dangerous situation.

Research by the Technical Assistance Research Program (TARP) shows how complaints affect both the rate of return of a customer and the company image.

Can you guess what TARP research reveals?

Guess the answers to the following questions.	
What percentage of people who make a complaint will return to your business if the issue is resolved?	%
What percentage of people who make a complaint will return to your business if the issue is resolved quickly?	%
Most customers with an unresolved complaint will tell others about the issue. How many people do you think they tell on average?	

Self Assessment

How do you react when a customer becomes difficult to deal with, or when a customer makes a complaint or becomes upset for other reasons? Before we talk about techniques that can help to improve your skills, please take a minute to think about the way you currently deal with conflict situations.

Directions: Answer the following questions to assess your skill level in dealing with conflict. Mark the number that indicates how often you do the following.

	Always 1	Usually 2	Some- times 3	Rarely 4	Never 5
1. I think that when a person makes a complaint, they are just trying to get something for nothing. It's a scam.					
2. I do not pay any attention to emotional people; I just deal with the complaint.					
3. When there is a problem with a customer, and the other person raises their voice, I tend to get angry and raise my voice also.					
4. If a customer gives me a hard time, they will get the same treatment from me.					
5. When I know a customer has made a mistake, that is the first thing I tell them.					
6. In a difficult situation with a customer, I feel that I must say whatever is necessary to get the customer to move on, no matter what.					
7. In emergency situations, I feel unprepared.					
8. When a conversation gets heated, I may switch from arguing my point to attacking the other person.					
9. Instead of being direct about what I want to say, I try to use jokes or sarcasm to deal with an angry person.					
Total Columns					
Total Score					

Scores will range from 8 to 40. Scores 31 and lower indicate that you most likely need to spend more time learning new techniques and practicing in conflict resolution skill areas. Higher scores of 32 and above indicate that you have already developed some skills in conflict resolution.

Too Many Complaints?

If it is your personal view that there are a lot of people who complain, you may be interested to find that customer service research shows that most people who are dissatisfied do not complain. According to TARP, 26 out of 27 people would rather walk away dissatisfied than get into some kind of hassle to make the complaint. Customers, when asked, reported that they did not want to make a complaint for a number of reasons, including:

- They did not know how to make a complaint;
- It was too upsetting for them to think of complaining;
- It was too much trouble;
- It would take too much time; and
- They thought that no one would do anything anyway.

(Note: Statistics vary depending on the cost of the product or services. For expensive purchases, between 50% and 75% will complain.)



Common Sources of Complaints and Conflicts Where You Work

Conflicts are inevitable and unavoidable, so it is a good idea to be prepared to handle them when they come up. Let’s discuss some of the common complaints that can lead to a conflict with a customer.

Exercise:

What are some of the reasons that customers complain or get angry where you work?

Directions:

1. Working in a small group with one or two other people, talk about some of the reasons people complain or get angry where you work. You can make notes below.
2. Take 3 to 5 minutes.
3. At the end of your discussion, we will ask your group to share their ideas with the rest of the participants.

Bull’s – Eye

How does effectively resolving conflicts affect you, your team and your organization? Take a few minutes and write down below the benefits of effective conflict resolution and alternatively the negative impact of ineffective conflict resolution at each of the three levels.

	Impact of Effective Conflict Resolution	Impact of Ineffective Conflict Resolution
You		
Team		
Organization		

Now, discuss your responses in a small group with those around you to see what other people identified. Update your lists based on what others share that is applicable to you and your work environment.

Emotional Button Pushers

One part of managing through a customer’s emotions in a conflict situation is to avoid being drawn into the emotion yourself. We all have things that push our emotional buttons that are good to be aware of in these situations.

Working in your small groups, brainstorm a list of all the things that can push your emotional buttons.

It really pushes my buttons when:

Someone is rude		
Whining		
Yelling		

What Do You See?

Exercise:

Directions: Look at the body language of the people in the pictures below. In one word or in a short phrase, try to describe the person’s emotional state revealed by his body language.

Use the lines below the pictures to write your answers. The first one is done for you.



Figure 1 looks	Relaxed and listening
Figure 2 looks	
Figure 3 looks	
Figure 4 looks	
Figure 5 looks	

Show off Your Verbal Style!

Change the phrases below using Magic Words like those we have discussed.

Deadly	Magic
I want you to...	
I can't do that...	
I got your email...	
What, huh?	
I'm not aloud...	
OK, All Righty	
You guys can't...	
See ya....	
Hey, What's Up...	
Nope, Naw...	
Yep, Uh-huh, Yeah...	
Girls, Gals...	
It's against company policy...	
Repeat that last part...	

Exercise - Get the Memo

In the space provided below, list the name of someone else in this session next to To:. Then list your own name next to From:. Finally, list a task for the other person to complete that would be possible for them to complete in the session such as say the alphabet backwards, draw a picture of a cat, do three jumping jacks. Once completed, tear this page out of your workbook and hand it to the facilitator.

To:

From:

Task:



Exercise - Check It Out

Working in small groups, create a checklist you can follow in conflict situations following today's session that will help you to achieve successful outcomes.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.