



# **CUSTOMER SERVICE DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS**

**Leader's Guide, Fact Sheet  
& Quiz**

**Item Number: 5216  
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***This easy-to-use Leader's Guide is provided to assist in conducting a successful presentation.***

## **PREPARING FOR THE MEETING**

Here are a few suggestions for using this program:

- a) Review the contents of the Fact Sheet that immediately follows this page to familiarize yourself with the program topic and the training points discussed in the program. The Fact Sheet also includes a list of Program Objectives that details the information that participants should learn from watching the program.
- b) If required by your organization, make an attendance record to be signed by each participant to document the training to be conducted.
- c) Prepare the area and equipment to be used for the training. Make sure the watching environment is comfortable and free from outside distractions. Also, ensure that participants can see and hear the TV screen or computer monitor without obstructions.
- d) Make copies of the Review Quiz included at the end of this Leader's Guide to be completed by participants at the conclusion of the presentation. Be aware that the page containing the answers to the quiz comes before the quiz itself, which is on the final page.

## **CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION**

- a) Begin the meeting by welcoming the participants. Introduce yourself and give each person an opportunity to become acquainted if there are new people joining the training session.
- b) Introduce the program by its title and explain to participants what they are expected to learn as stated in the Program Objectives of the Fact Sheet.
- c) Play the program without interruption. Upon completion, lead discussions about your organization's specific policies regarding the subject matter. Make sure to note any unique hazards associated with the program's topic that participants may encounter while performing their job duties at your facility.
- d) Hand out copies of the review quiz to all of the participants and make sure each one completes it before concluding the training session.

# 5216 CUSTOMER SERVICE DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS FACT SHEET

**LENGTH: 6 MINUTES**

## **PROGRAM SYNOPSIS:**

80% of companies say they deliver superior customer service, while only 8% of customers feel the same way. Nearly 7 out of 10 Americans will hang up on your business if you do not give them an opportunity to speak with a live agent. It takes 12 positive customer experiences to make up for one negative experience. For every customer complaint, there are 26 other unhappy customers who have remained silent.

Topics include the best way to handle a difficult customer, how to remain calm when dealing with a difficult customer, and how to deescalate and resolve the situation.

## **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:**

After watching the program, the participant will be able to explain the following:

- The best way to handle a difficult customer;
- The steps to deescalate a situation;
- How to remain calm when dealing with a difficult situation.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT:**

### **BACKGROUND**

- 80% of companies say they deliver superior customer service, while only 8% of customers feel the same way.
- Nearly seven out of 10 Americans will hang up on your business if you do not give them an opportunity to speak with a live agent.
- 42% of service agents are unable to officially resolve customer issues due to disconnected systems, archaic user interfaces and multiple applications.
- It takes 12 positive customer experiences to make up for one negative experience. For every customer complaint, there are 26 other unhappy customers who have remained silent.
- An estimated 41 billion is lost by US companies alone each year due to poor customer service.

### **TAKING DIFFICULT INTO PERSPECTIVE**

- The best way to handle a difficult customer is to put the word difficult in perspective.
- Also ensure you're ergonomically comfortable and have a bottle of water close by.
- A customer perceived as difficult may be more in the eyes of the customer service representative or company than the customer. Customers react to stress and disappointment in a variety of ways.
- Reasons a customer can become difficult in the eyes of a customer service representative:
  - Product or service was defective.
  - Product did not meet expectations.
  - Wrong product or service was delivered.
  - Billing was incorrect or contained hidden fees.
  - Took excessive time to reach a customer service agent.

### **LESSONS TO LEARN FROM A DIFFICULT CUSTOMER**

- Assuming the customer service agent answered the call quickly, the customer is probably upset or confused due to their situation.
- They need someone with whom they can vent, someone who will provide a quick resolution.
- How a customer service agent steers the call can turn a potentially explosive conversation into a calm positive experience.
- Here is the secret: complaints are the greatest source of learning. Often complaints uncover problems that need improvement.
- Bottom line: negative comments about customer service leads to lost revenue, so the next time the phone rings, though you do not know the personal, behavioral or medical history of the customer, you do know they are as important to the company as you are and deserve excellent service.

### **HOW TO HANDLE A DIFFICULT CUSTOMER**

- Your challenge is to handle the situation showing you and the company did all it could to resolve the issue.
- Before taking calls, ensure you peruse the latest information on policies and procedures.
- Place the customer first, problem second.
- Use a positive tone. It may not be what you say but how you say it.

- Be attentive and polite and the customer will generally calm down.
- Listen to emotion without emotion or being defensive. Separate your feelings or biases from the situation.
- Listen actively to what the customer is saying. Let the customer finish their story, then repeat what you heard.
- Identify the issues. Assure the customer you know why they're upset. Apologize but do not blame anyone.
- Ask the customer what they would like you to do. Do whatever it takes to resolve the issue amicably and quickly.
- Thank them for the opportunity to fix the situation. Ask the customer if you could be of further assistance.
- Businesses who understand how to handle difficult customers can reap huge rewards.
- Ensure your company has a training process to deal with issues.

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS**

### **ANSWERS TO THE REVIEW QUIZ**

1. c

2. a

3. c

4. a

5. b

**CUSTOMER SERVICE DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS**  
**REVIEW QUIZ**

*The following questions are provided to determine how well you understand the information presented in this program.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Nearly \_\_ out of 10 Americans will hang up if they do not have an opportunity to speak with a live agent.
  - a. 10
  - b. 2
  - c. 7
  
2. It takes 12 positive customer experiences to make up for 1 negative experience.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
3. Which of the following is NOT a reason that a customer could be considered difficult.
  - a. The product did not meet expectations.
  - b. Billing was incorrect or contained hidden fees.
  - c. The product arrived in a timely manner.
  - d. The customer was holding too long to speak with a customer service agent.
  
4. The way the customer service agent steers the call can potentially determine the tone of the rest of the conversation.
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
5. The best way to handle a difficult customer is to be angry and defensive.
  - a. True
  - b. False