



CARM® Engagement For De-Escalating Telephone Aggression

Telephone Aggression Training

› KEY BENEFITS

- Flexible, contextualised and customised training solutions to meet your business needs
- Employees will be able to cope more effectively with aggressive or challenging customer behaviours, providing more power to your moment of truth
- Reduced human and financial costs that arise from situations that adversely affect staffs motivation, moral and harmony in the workplace, including lost time, welfare & support, staff turnover & absenteeism
- Employees will feel more empowered to deal with sensitive issues and achieve outcomes that are favourable to both your customers and business needs
- Further insuring your reputation with customers, staff and your all important brand
- Increased staff confidence to competently manage escalating situations that are or have the potential to become more hostile or even threatening
- Reduced workplace fear, anxiety and uncertainty amongst staff around challenging behaviours and language
- Blended training solutions available to support continuation training and ongoing learning in time poor work pressured environments
- An ability to demonstrate proactive compliance and due diligence with Work Health Safety (WHS) Legislation and Common Law obligations.

“The Humble Telephone... Your Nemesis or Your Saviour”



For many organisations, the telephone is a key medium for customer contact and customer support, making it a very important business tool. Telephone interactions can define the customer's view of your organisation in terms of its **'levels of service, provision of support, brand and reputation'**.

What experience do your staff create for customers particularly when situations are fuelled by frustration, dissatisfaction, confusion or uncertainty? This is a time when customers are more likely to display some of life's more challenging and colourful language? The outcome of which will define their view of your organisation, your commitment service and your intention towards them.

These are defining moments in the customer experience and your moment of truth. **Can your staff turn these adverse situations into opportunities?** Can they excel and demonstrate what your organisation espouses through its corporate values, by acting calmly and demonstrating positive values? Have they been developed and trained to a point where they can make a shift in their thinking, engage the motivation and language they need to create an unexpected positive experience?

Even if customers use challenging language as a ploy to intimidate, control or manipulate, they still leave the interaction with an experience that either positively or negatively reinforces their beliefs about your organisation and its commitment towards them.

The CARM® Approach for engaging with customer aggression will teach employees how to **think, behave and effectively communicate** in adverse and challenging situations over the phone.

- They will develop the right knowledge, language skills and thinking to be able to adjust their approach in emotionally challenging situations &
- They will learn to focus on mutual outcomes and how these can be achieved for the customer and themselves?

training

> FACTS ABOUT AGGRESSION IN THE TELEPHONE ENVIRONMENT

- (Comcare) - Abusive and/or aggressive calls are likely to cause some level of distress. The impact will depend on:
 1. The severity of the abuse,
 2. The frequency of abusive calls &
 3. The availability of support following an abusive call.
- Frequent abusive calls involve a risk of psychological harm to the employee receiving the calls. If employees feel unsupported, this may lead to low morale resulting in a higher rate of work absence and increased turnover in staff. Supervisors need to be aware of how to deal with such behaviour.
- Worn down by racist abuse and sexual harassment from angry customers, call centre workers are lobbying to have repeat offenders barred and complaints lodged with local police around the world.
- If customers do verbally attack employees, a 'spiral of incivility' (Andersson & Pearson, 1999) may occur where the hostile customer arouses anger in the employee, who must regulate his or her response or risk venting at the customer. Thus customer verbal aggression may be particularly stressful for the employee and problematic for the organization.
- Anxiety, lethargy and depression are essentially stress driven emotional and psychological issues that the **Vidyasagar Institute of Mental Health** said it gets two call centre employees every week seeking professional psychiatric help. The institute has found this disturbing enough to start warning the industry about the mental health potential.

> TRAINING SOLUTION (Award Winning)

The De-escalating Telephone Aggression program is delivered according to client needs & learning outcomes including:

- Experiential based face to face training programs customised to meet your specific operating environment and business setting. **Duration:** 1 or 2 day programs (*depending upon competency requirements*)
- Short Intensive Training Session (SITS) – Continuation training, practical and scenario is based. Designed to test competency and capability as a follow up to the 1 or 2 day session. **Duration: 4 hrs**

> CUSTOMISATION

Our training solutions can be contextualised and customised to meet your specific organisational needs, customer service guidelines and organisational values.



> PROGRAM MODULES

Our training solutions address the following key areas:-

- **Human Behaviour Motivations and Emotions:** Understanding factors that influence human behaviour and lead to anger and aggressive behaviour.
- **The Dynamics of Over the Phone Environment:** Understanding the unique interpersonal dynamics of non physical voice to voice engagement and interpreting messages and language.
- **Determining the Right Approach:** A model that helps guide clarity around intentions, focuses on mindset and determines best courses of action in solving customer problems and concerns.
- **De-escalating Aggression:** A counter-intuitive style of communicating that combines key intrapersonal skills involving emotional intelligence competencies and our proprietary Principle Centred Influence Model, which aims to employ the right communication language and behaviours for de-escalation.
- **Disengage:** Discontinuing a service when staff can no longer 'help the customer'. Typically this situation is reached, when all available avenues of defusing have been exhausted. Applying appropriate, effective and justifiable means to terminate calls where necessary. '**breakaway strategies**' for successfully and respectfully disengaging.

Throughout the program, participants undertake learning and assessment activities, including summative and formative assessments to ensure competency is achieved.

> RESEARCH STUDIES

The mantra '**the customer is always right**' communicates an unequal power in the customer–employee transaction, which is also a key aspect of being a target of aggression (Allan & Gilbert, 2002; Hochschild, 1983). In a study of part-time service workers, participants reported **interpersonal mistreatment** over a 2 week period from customers (**at 43 per cent**), and most of these were verbal aggression (Grandey, Tam, & Brauburger, 2002). With the growth of the service economy, there are high expectations on employees to maintain customer satisfaction. (Bitner, Booms, & Tretrault, 1990).



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