



De-Escalating Telephone Aggression

› KEY BENEFITS

- **Reduce** the negative human, social and financial impact of workplace violence.
- **Increase** workplace harmony and the feeling of safety and wellbeing.
- **Reduce** the stress effects associated with aggression and violence, which can impact staffs behaviour and performance.
- **Compliment** current skills and processes that are proven to be effective in dealing with aggressive or challenging behaviours.
- **Improve** staff's capability to maintain a positive mindset and engage rational thinking and decision making in challenging circumstances.
- **Empower** staff with improved situational awareness skills to better manage challenging settings with confidence.
- **Improve** staff's capability to communicate more effectively with influencing and appealing style language.
- **Improve** your organisations brand reputation and professional image.
- **Enhanced** compliance with national work health and safety statute laws & common law due diligence obligations

› WHY PASSMORE DUFF

- A robust and proven approach, since 1996 for managing the risk of workplace violence.
- Training design, frameworks and tactics developed and delivered by specialists.
- Highly qualified team with more than two decades of risk management consulting and training experience, underpinned by a range of academic qualifications.
- Subject matter experts draw on their expertise from operating in challenging workplace and business environments, where communication and negotiation skills are critical.
- Award winning training solutions for training excellence in workplace violence.

The Humble Telephone “Your Nemesis or Your Saviour”



› ABOUT THIS TRAINING

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. Can your staff turn these adverse situations into opportunities? Can they excel and demonstrate what your organisation 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 and processing of the situation and engage the motivation and language needed to create a more favourable outcome?

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 aggressive customers over the phone will teach employees how to more effectively and persuasive communicate with a range of influencing appeals, supported by good dispositional traits.

› TRAINING AIM

Our program provides the knowledge, skill and a desire to engage proven frameworks that help reduce the impact of aggressive / threatening customer behaviours over the phone. Including how staff can adjust their thinking and approach in emotionally challenging situations. The focus is on de-escalation through a principle centred approach as well as understanding how to respectfully disengage from aggressive or counter-productive engagements.

TRAINING

› Some facts about telephone aggression

- Comcare - Abusive and/or aggressive calls are likely to cause some level of distress. The impact will depend on:
 - The severity of the abuse,
 - The frequency of abusive calls &
 - The availability of support following an abusive call.
- Frequent abusive calls involve a risk of psychological harm to the employee. 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 incidents.
- Call centre workers are continually worn down by racist abuse and sexual harassment from angry customers.
- If customers 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.
- Anxiety, lethargy and depression are essentially stress driven emotional and psychological issues that call centre staff experience.

› TRAINING SOLUTIONS (Award Winning)

We offer specialised training services to address your specific learning and skill development needs.

- Our face to face sessions:
 - *Professional development programs* (assessed or non-assessed) (Duration: 1 Day)
 - *Short Intensive Training Session (S.I.T.S):* Ongoing practical scenario based training in the application of core skills, organisational specific. (Duration 4hrs)

› PROGRAM MODULES

Our training solutions address the following key areas:-

- **Module 1** focuses on human behaviour motivations and emotions: Understanding factors that influence human behaviour and lead to venting, frustration, anger and the resulting aggressive/threatening behaviour.
- **Module 2** focuses on the Dynamics of the Telephone Environment: Understanding the unique interpersonal dynamics of non-physical, voice to voice engagement and interpreting messages and language.
- **Module 3** focuses on determining the right approach: A principle centred model that helps guide clarity around intentions, focuses on mindset and determines best courses of action in solving customer problems and concerns.
- **Module 4** focuses on de-escalating aggression: A counter-intuitive style of communicating that combines key intra and inter- personal skills with emotional intelligence competencies. Influencing language which aims to employ the right communications and behaviours for de-escalation.
- **Module 5** focuses on disengaging: Discontinuing a service when staff can no longer 'help the customer' and the situation becomes counter-productive. 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. A range of effective 'breakaway strategies' for successfully and respectfully disengaging.

› CUSTOMISATION

- Our training solutions are contextualised to meet your specific organisational needs, customer service guidelines and organisational values.

› 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).

For further course details and learning outcomes please contact us on:

Tel: 1300 367 475 **Email:** risk@passmoreduff.com

Safe Work Australia (SWA) report

- Key risk factors for workplace violence:-
 - communicating face-to-face with customers;
 - working in isolation;
 - working offsite or in the community;
 - working in unpredictable environments;
 - service methods that cause frustration, resentment or misunderstanding;
 - providing care or services to people who have unreasonable expectations;
 - enforcement / compliance activities.
- Strategies for the prevention and management include:-
 - Training workers so they are aware of what to do if faced with potentially violent situations.
 - Training should help workers to predict and know how to prevent and manage aggression or situations where they could be assaulted.

