“How To Hold A Hot Potato”

Handling Angry Citizens and Difficult Behavior with Care
Two kinds of Customers...

1) External Customers—the Citizens, residents, visitors, businesses

2) Internal Customers—your co-workers, your supervisor, your employees, & elected officials

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“I Pay Your Salary!”
“2.3% of all the people on earth are placed here primarily to irritate YOU!”
Customers With “Productive Behavior” (PBs)

Customers With “Unproductive Behavior” (UBs)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSON</th>
<th>PROBLEM</th>
<th>LAST STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreman</td>
<td>Too many bosses</td>
<td>“...and I just don’t know what to do.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Mate gambling</td>
<td>“...I’m getting a divorce.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks Director</td>
<td>Potential job threat</td>
<td>“I don’t know what I’m going to do”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Assistant</td>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
<td>“I wish I’d never worked for this stupid city/county.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUPPORTIVE LISTENING

1. Silence-Eye Contact
2. Acknowledgement
3. Door Openers
4. Summarize
5. Feeling Paraphrase

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Supportive Listening
A Tool For:
Clarifying and Understanding
Reducing the Level of Emotion
Reducing Differences
Causing Visible Support
4 Ways to Handle Problems (When **YOU** own the problem)

1. Assertively **Problem Goes Away**
   Knowing what you want and being able to take action toward getting it for yourself without putting another down.

2. Aggressively **Problem Gets Worse**
   Putting another person down; using judgment words.

3. Timidly **Problem Doesn’t Go Away**
   Avoid dealing with the conflict. Hinting.

4. Timidly/Aggressively **Problem Worsens**
   Appear to be agreeable, then talk/act negatively about it later.

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ASSERTIVE REPLIES

1. “I understand, but....”
2. Broken Record
3. “I do not agree.”
4. Stress Your Feelings
5. “That’s Not the Point!”

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“2.3% of all the people on earth are placed here primarily to irritate YOU!”
“Customer Impossible”
Diffusion Techniques
ANGER COMES FROM THREAT TO:
Security
Power
Freedom
Fun

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Anger And Reason Are Inversely Proportional
Diffusion Statements

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Diffusion By Recognizing The Problem
1. That a problem occurred

2. What the customer expected

3. The emotional impact of the problem

4. The importance of the problem

5. That something needs to be done

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Two types of Apologies:

1) Complete Apologies

2) No-Fault Apologies
When We Can “Completely Apologize” We:

- Admit the fault
- Express regret for how the mistake has impacted them
- Make up for the problem to the extent possible
Use “N0-fault” Apologies When:

- Our city is not at fault
- We do not know whether it is
- Or we should not admit it because of legal or regulatory aspects of the job

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Resolve the emotion;
Then solve the problem.
“T.I.P.”
(TAKE IT PERSONALLY)
“Replace Anger [or substitute your own emotion] with Curiosity”

--Crucial Conversations

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WHAT **NOT** TO SAY:
1. “Calm down!”

2. “There’s no way you can do that!”

3. “That’s the policy” or “The code clearly states that…”

4. “I’m not hassling you, I’m just doing my job.”

5. “I didn’t write the rules.”

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