

# There is a Lesson to be Learned from a “Bad Call”

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How many times have you had to placate an irate or distressed customer in a day? For many of us that number is too large to calculate. Most often, we are successful in de-escalating an upset caller, but on occasion, we have a call from hell. Understanding exactly what went wrong and could have been done differently is important.

After hanging up from a bad call, write down, in as much detail as you can remember, the caller's issue, what you said in response, what the caller said and what you suggested as a solution. If the call did escalate, it is important to identify the pivotal point in the conversation. Also, recall your feelings as you handled the call. Were you annoyed, under a lot of personal stress, concerned about other in-coming calls or worried that you were spending too much time with one caller?

Most sales centers and call centers record calls. After your written analysis, take the time to listen to the call in its entirety. Often, what people find is their responses weren't exactly what they thought. Their tone of voice sounded defensive. They gave the customer a lot of orders or laid blame with statements such as, “What you need to do...” OR “What you should have done...” Perhaps, you responded with one of three deadly statements: “NO,” “Don't take it out on me,” or “It's not my fault.”

Once one knows what actually happened, you can ascertain the right direction for next time by talking it over with more senior people or your manager. Maybe in the future, you might re-adjust your language with a caller and avoid giving orders or sounding defensive. You might have to watch the tone of your voice so that it doesn't sound unsure or timid. With knowledge, there is power.

Obviously, it takes courage to dissect a call, but the best phone people always strive to get better. They take be-

ing a professional seriously. They actively seek to learn from their mistakes. Speaking to an upset caller can be stressful, but the more you can learn from the past, the more productive your efforts in the future will be.

*Impact Communications, Inc. consults with individuals and businesses to improve their presentation and telephone communication skills. It is not what you know but how you communicate it that makes a difference. When you have to have impact, phone (847) 438-4480 or visit our web site, [www.ImpactCommunicationsInc.com](http://www.ImpactCommunicationsInc.com).*