

The A,B,C's of Handling Tough Issues Over the Phone

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Wouldn't it be nice if every time people ordered a product or signed up for a service, it worked! We live in an imperfect world. However, while accepting imperfection as the norm, people want restitution- and they want it now. Their inconvenience often causes them to be very unpleasant, particularly when speaking to someone over the phone. For the person who receives these calls, it can be discomfobulating. There is an art to handling tough issues, and that is to remember some simple **A, B, C's**.

A is for Attitude

If you do business by phone, you will undoubtedly deal with upset callers. It is part of your job so have the right attitude. Put on your Teflon suit when you walk in the door and don't take a caller's attacking statements personally. The offense is with the company, not you. Thus, the attitude you must have is one of concern and interest, not just for the first caller of the day but for each and every caller.

A good tip for having the right attitude is to think of your caller as a guest. Obviously, when we have a guest in our home, we go out of our way to make them feel welcome. Lay out the welcome mat when you pick up the phone.

B is for Behavior

It is one thing to think you have a positive attitude but another thing to demonstrate it. Callers will determine your attitude through the tone of your voice. A negative tone can be ascertained within seconds.

To bring warmth and friendliness into your voice, pause often for breaths. Smile and look in the mirror. What do you see on your face? If you look annoyed, inevitably, you will sound annoyed. If you are tired or pre-occupied with other tasks or business issues, the

caller will hear it in your voice. Make a determination every time you take a call to be fully present. Let the person voice their complaint. Don't interrupt, but allow your self to be interrupted.

C is for Content

When a caller has taken the time to pick up the phone, their expectation is that they will be speaking to someone who is knowledgeable and competent about the products and services the company offers. If you aren't sure, don't guess. Quickly, re-direct the call to someone who does have the answer.

Obviously, products and services change. Make sure to stay up-to-date on product knowledge. Learn all you can. Take being a professional seriously and become a subject matter expert. Customers will seek you out.

Disgruntled clients are a reality. However, if you have demonstrated you care, the person will feel better for having talked to you. If you have displayed competence, your clients will feel comfortable. Ultimately, you will create trust. Who wouldn't continue to do business with someone they trust!

Impact Communications, Inc. consults with individuals and businesses to improve their face-to-face and over the phone communication skills. When you have to have impact, phone (847) 438-4480 or visit our web site, www.ImpactCommunicationsInc.com.