

DIFFUSING A DIFFICULT CUSTOMER

Negative customer interactions can be detrimental to a company's reputation. It can also create unsafe situations. Always talk and act respectfully and with empathy—but complete the task.

Put 100% attention on the customer and current situation



LISTEN

- People want to be heard and to air grievances before you step in to solve a problem

CLARIFY

- Ask questions and clarify any possible misunderstandings

RESTATE

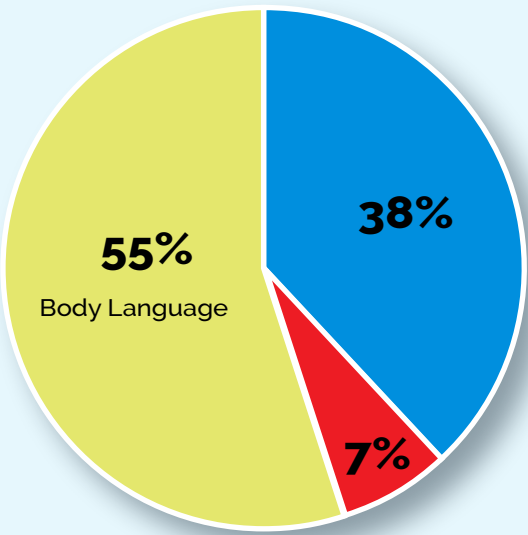
- Use calm wording to acknowledge they're upset when repeating the problem

CONFIRM

- Ask customer to confirm you understand correctly

NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

- **Be courteous**, assertive and business-like but not intimidating
- **Maintain body space** but appear approachable with an open posture
- **Maintain eye contact** but don't appear threatening
- **RELAX!**



Dr. Albert Mehrabian's 7-38-55% Rule

Elements of Personal Communication

- **7% spoken words**
- **38% voice/tone**
- **55% body language**

BEST PRACTICES

Be Safe

Be safe in the home and the neighborhood:

- Be aware of surroundings
- Watch for neighbors and suspicious activity
- Stand back from the door in case a dog may be in the house
- Ask if others in the household are aware you are there

Inform

- What work is necessary and why
- What are their options
- When work will be performed
- About any issues regarding safety

Be Empathetic

- Remember every situation and person is unique—there is not a script to follow
- Document any important information
- Seek first to understand and then to be understood
- Encourage questions

- Summarize your conversation and next steps
- Leave the customer with a positive impression
- If possible, follow-up to be sure they are happy with how the situation was resolved

Extreme and Hostile Customers



Do's and Don'ts

- Do** be assertive but remain calm. Don't apologize for work that needs to be done, just the inconvenience.
- Do** talk slowly and calmly to lower tension.
- Do** walk away to calm yourself or from an unsafe situation.
- Don't** take it personally.
- Don't** sound too formal or you may be treated with more hostility.
- Don't** reciprocate with their anger.



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