

When dealing with emotions, it often is easy to become emotional yourself. To avoid this trap, remember the following points:

1. Angry people may be used to receiving hostile responses when they exhibit hostile behavior. Responding in an angry manner, however, will create a win-lose situation (where someone wins and someone else loses). You want to achieve a win-win solution.
 2. Don't take the anger personally. Look at the angry response as a communication and a problem that needs to be resolved.
 3. Remember that feelings are never right or wrong. They are just feelings.
 4. Be confident, not aggressive. Use statements that let the customer know that you are confident and assertive. Aggression will only make matters worse; confident behavior will help set the tone for mutual problem solving.
 5. Recognize that people who are angry go through stages of frustration. Stage one is feeling helpless or powerless. Stage two is feeling restrained or frustrated. Stage three is the full anger stage. It is difficult for people in the third stage to listen because actual physiological responses, including an increase in adrenaline, are taking place.
 6. Make sure you follow listening guidelines because listening is the most important skill in dealing with anger. Often, if someone who is upset sees that you care enough to listen to his or her problem, the anger dissipates and the person is able to move toward a solution. Be sure to offer empathy and support and to validate ideas and feelings.
 7. Practice "sorting," a listening technique that isolates the problem at hand by ignoring sarcasm, exaggeration, and personal attacks.
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