



## RESOLVING CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE



## Resolving Customer Complaints

**Better to have a customer complain to you than to a potential new guest or customer.**

A complaint is a gift because it gives us the opportunity to turn a negative situation into a positive one. So... see each complaint as an opportunity rather than an aggravation. You might consider tough situations a personal challenge. It feels great when you can help turn a frown upside down.

## Handling Complaints -----

- A.** Listen to the full complaint.
  - a. Let the customer finish before asking clarifying questions.
  - b. Jot down notes, if appropriate, to be sure you have all the necessary information.
- B.** Thank the customer for bringing the situation to your attention.
- C.** Apologize that the situation has occurred.
- D.** Show concern without being negative.
  - a. Don't waste time placing blame.
  - b. Don't complain about, criticize or condemn other employees or customers.
- E.** Create a "me and you against the problem" atmosphere.
- F.** Focus on what you can do, not what you can't.
- G.** Involve others as needed and provide all necessary information.
  - a. Avoid making the customer have to repeat the complaint.
- H.** Offer options, when possible.
  - a. Example: *Would you like me to move you to another room, or send housekeeping up to re-clean the tub?*
- I.** Implement agreed upon solutions as soon as possible.
- J.** Ask if there is anything further you can do for the customer.
- K.** Be sure to notify appropriate management team members of customer complaints.

## Dealing with Angry Customers-----

- A.** First, remember that the customer is angry about the situation and not you personally.
  - B.** If possible, provide a more private environment for your discussion.
  - C.** Do not interrupt; allow the customer to vent.
  - D.** Really listen!.
    - a. Listen to what is being said and take cues from what is not being said.
  - E.** Express empathy for what the customer is experiencing.
    - a. You can do this without agreeing. Say something like:  
*I'm so sorry you have had difficulty or I'm sorry you are disappointed.*
  - F.** If possible, start to explore at least one area where you and the customer are in agreement.
  - G.** Act the way you want them to act.
    - a. If they are raising their voice, you speak in an even, calm tone.
    - b. If they are using negative body language like shaking their finger, you use calm, warm body language like gesturing with an open hand, palm up.
  - H.** Work toward a mutually agreed upon solution.
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