

5 ways to be assertive in a customer interaction



Basic

Simple expression of your personal rights, beliefs, feelings, or opinions.

Things you can say

If you are interrupted, you might say to the person: *“Excuse me, I’d like to finish what I’m saying as it will be helpful for you.”*



Empathetic

Acknowledgement of another person’s situation or feelings followed by a statement standing up for your rights.

“I know you are feeling angry and frustrated while you stand in line and I completely get why you would feel like that. The best I can do is give you a ballpark estimate of how long it will take.”



Escalating

Begin with an assertive response, however the other person fails to respond. You would then gradually escalate the assertion becoming increasingly firm without being aggressive.

“I know what you have to say is important, but I really want to finish what I was saying.”



i-language

Very effective during conflict.
Description of behaviour: *“When you...”*
How it affects your life: *“It affects...”*
Describe your feelings: *“and I feel...”*
Describe your desire: *“Therefore, I would like...”*

“When you raise your voice like that, I find it difficult to help you because I feel scared. Therefore, I would like for you to use a softer tone of voice to tell me what you want.”



Positive

Expressing positive feelings about yourself or someone else.

“I really feel I am doing the best I can do at the moment in managing this.”
Or *“Wow, it must be hard for you to share how distressed you are feeling right now. I do understand and appreciate that you can be open with me about it.”*

Respect
& Resilience

Understanding, preventing, containing, and coping with customer misbehaviour.

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**RISK
EDUCATION
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The reference to customer can also apply to guest, visitor, stakeholder, client or any similar term that describes a person you are serving.