

The Customer ISN'T Always Right: How to Resolve Tension, Conflict and Disrespect with the Public

Increasingly, front-line staff are faced with customers and clients who are disrespectful, demanding and at times, aggressive. Repeated interactions of this nature create a psychologically unsafe work environment for employees and result in organizational costs related to increased resignations, sick leave and health and safety claims.

Public and service sector employers must equip their front-line staff with tools on how to respectfully set boundaries and defuse customer/client disrespect, without reacting inappropriately and only making things worse.

During this workshop, Marli will offer participants a respectful and practical framework to use when faced with challenging clients and customers.

Marli will outline what it means to be a respectful speaker and listener, and how to effectively deal with issues that might arise “in the moment”. Marli also will teach participants when it’s the right time to leave the conversation and seek help from others, what she describes as “respectful escalation”.

Topics Addressed:

- How to speak so others are better able to listen: the importance of respect in your content and delivery
- How to listen so others are better able to speak with respect: the importance of being open-minded, focused and empathetic
- How to address agitation, anger and defensiveness – in yourself and others
- How to be a helpful bystander – how to respectfully disrupt disrespectful interactions
- When (and how) to walk away from conversations going sideways and what to do next
- Understanding which conversations are better left for workplace leaders (“respectful escalation”)
- How to have the “next level” conversation – the key aspects of a 15 minute conflict conversation