

SFJNHH4

Contribute to developing and maintaining positive caller relationships



Overview

This unit is about maintaining a positive relationship with callers, such as when dealing with complaints made by telephone within a communications centre. It includes obtaining relevant details regarding the complaint, and includes dealing with angry and/or difficult callers.

There are three elements:

- 1 Promote a positive image for the organisation by telephone
- 2 Communicate effectively by telephone
- 3 Manage difficult callers positively

Target Group

This unit is for individuals whose responsibilities include dealing directly with complainants making their complaint by telephone.

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Performance criteria

Promote a positive image for the organisation by telephone

You must be able to:

- P1 ensure your introduction is positive, concise and clear, using words accepted by your organisation
- P2 confirm that you are listening through acknowledging points raised and the response made by the caller
- P3 reflect an interest in the caller's needs through your tone of voice, inflexion and the language you use
- P4 respond positively and maintain a good relationship with the caller
- P5 handle the call in a professional manner and at a pace to suit the needs of the caller throughout the call whilst meeting the levels of service and quality required by your organisation
- P6 address special communication requirements of callers in line with your organisation's procedures
- P7 close calls effectively and on a positive note, using words accepted by your organisation

Communicate effectively by telephone

You must be able to:

- P8 communicate clearly and concisely, and at a pace to suit the caller whilst maintaining control of the call
- P9 use appropriate questions to obtain relevant information and to clarify the caller's requirements
- P10 use a choice of words that fits with the caller's level of understanding and avoids the use of jargon
- P11 throughout the call, acknowledge and confirm regularly your understanding of what the caller is saying
- P12 maintain a flow of conversation, keeping the caller informed of relevant activities that you undertake as you progress the call using your resources effectively
- P13 ensure the average duration of your calls is in line with your organisation's requirements
- P14 inform callers, where you are aware that a colleague is also listening to your call, in line with your organisation's requirements
- P15 inform the caller if you need to transfer the call to a colleague, tell them the reason for the transfer and, where possible, the name of the person to whom they are being transferred
- P16 maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality throughout the call

Manage difficult callers effectively

You must be able to:

- P17 demonstrate empathy in your responses and put the caller at ease as soon as possible

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- P18 address the caller by their name where it is appropriate to do so
- P19 take positive action to develop and maintain a supportive atmosphere with the caller
- P20 remain calm and maintain an effective level of control for the call
- P21 identify accurately the specific needs of the caller using effective questioning
- P22 manage the expectations of the caller, balancing effectively the requirements of the caller with those of your organisation
- P23 take further action, through implementing approved procedures, where problems are encountered in resolving the needs of difficult callers
- P24 follow your organisation's approved procedures throughout the call

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

Promote a positive image for the organisation by telephone

- K1 your organisation's accepted wording when greeting and communicating with callers
- K2 when to use the different types of questioning of open, closed and probing questions, depending upon the information being sought and the requirements of different callers
- K3 the importance of effective listening, and how to apply this
- K4 techniques which demonstrate that you are listening and which maintain the callers' effective participation in calls
- K5 the principal skills required for effective telephone communication, and how to apply and adapt these according to the needs of different types of caller, and the needs of your organisation
- K6 your organisation's procedures and facilities for addressing the needs of callers with special communications requirements
- K7 how to handle calls involving a 'translator' acting on behalf of someone with hearing difficulties, and the importance of being patient during such calls
- K8 your organisation's services within your area of responsibility
- K9 your organisation's call handling standards relating to the quality of calls and the service provided

Communicating effectively by telephone

You need to know and understand:

- K10 the importance of maintaining a flow of conversation with callers, and techniques for ensuring that this occurs whilst you update screens and manage other resources relating to calls
- K11 your levels of responsibility, and to whom to refer when such levels are exceeded
- K12 the importance of time management, and how to apply this effectively in balancing the needs of your caller with those of your organisation

Manage difficult callers effectively

You need to know and understand:

- K13 your organisation's procedures for dealing with difficult callers
- K14 your organisation's procedures for informing callers where colleagues are listening in to your call
- K15 techniques for maintaining control of calls whilst promoting a positive relationship with callers

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Relevant occupations	Public Services; Government and Related Organisations; Public Service and Other Associate Professionals
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Suite	Caseworkers in the Justice Sector
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