



# Telephone Aggression

*The Counter-Intuitive Approach to Communicating .... When Outcomes are Critical*

**CARM®** A State of Mind ... A Way of Behavior

## KEY BENEFITS



## *“The humble Telephone.... Your Nemesis or your Saviour?”*

For many organisations, the telephone is the number one medium for customer contact and customer support, making it a very important business tool. Telephone interactions can define the customer’s view of your organisation in terms of **“levels of service”** & **“provision of support”**.

What is the customer’s experience like with your organisation? Is it your nemesis or your saviour? When customers behaviour is aggressive, fuelled by frustration, dissatisfaction, confusion or uncertainty, are your staff capable of responding appropriately? And when a customer uses aggressive language / behaviour as a ploy to intimidate or manipulate, do your staff :-

- Have the knowledge and skills to vary their approach accordingly?
- Understand the unique characteristics of the telephone environment and how these contribute towards a positive or negative customer experience?
- Know how to manage their instinctive defensive responses towards aggressive language and avoid behaviour that escalates incidents with customers?
- Focus on achieving a good outcome over the phone and are they skilled in achieving this?

By taking the CARM® approach in Dealing with Telephone Aggression, employees will learn how to think, behave and effectively communicate when faced with an aggressive customer situation over the phone.



- Employees will be able to cope more effectively with aggressive or violent customers, which gives more power to your organisations moment of truth
- Increased employee awareness of risk factors and appropriate response options for dealing with aggressive customers
- Enhanced employer and employee compliance with Occupational Health and Safety Legislation and Common Law obligations (due diligence)
- Further protects your reputation with your all important customers, your staff and your all important brand
- Your workforce will be more confident, motivated, and better trained to deal with some of the more challenging customer behaviours
- Employees will feel more empowered to deal with sensitive issues and achieve outcomes that are favourable to both your customers needs and the business needs
- Reduced human and financial costs that arise from incidents of aggression where staff are poorly prepared including lost time, welfare & support, staff turnover & absenteeism, moral and not to mention litigation.
- Training that delivers real and tangible skills into the workplace along with training outcomes that are professionally maintained in full compliance with Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) requirements.

## CARM® TRAINING

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## Training Solutions

The Customer Aggression Program can be delivered via a range of mediums subject to client needs including:-

- Competency based face to face training program. All successful participants will receive a CARM® Training Certificate of Attendance.  
**Duration:** 1 day
- Self directed training workbook, including written assessment. Suitable for remote locations where access to face to face training is limited.

## CUSTOMISATION

All CARM® Training Solutions can be contextualised and customised to meet your organisations specific needs. This can include incorporating your internal policies and procedures into the programs.

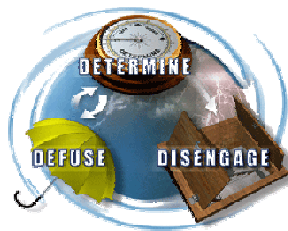
## PROGRAM MODULES

CARM® Training Solutions comprise the following key modules:-

**Introduction to Telephone Aggression**—Amongst a myriad of causes, employees learn to identify a customers motives and reasons for using aggressive language and personally targeting abuse at them and in so doing learn best how best to modify their own response to get the best outcome.

**The CARM® Approach** — The core of the program is learning the CARM® Approach which focuses on developing “a state of mind” and “a way of behaving” that equips participants with the skills to de-escalate aggressive behaviour and abusive language, including how to:-

- **Determine** the risk to customer service and the ability to help the customer, so they can either:
- **Defuse**—effectively employing the right skills to navigate the aggression and exploit opportunities to create the best outcome. This involves staff understanding their own emotional responses to hostile treatment and being able to manage all aspects of their own behaviour. For staff, the essence of defusing is concerned with “de-escalating” the situation using the CARM® three key steps:- **Rapport, Empathy, Influence.**
- **Disengage** - discontinue the call when staff consider they are no longer able to “help the customer”. Typically this may be the only appropriate course of action when customer behaviour is intolerable or when all available avenues of defusing have been exhausted. In either of these scenarios, staff need to apply appropriate, effective and justifiable means for terminating the call. Effective “**breakaway**” strategies are taught during the program. These strategies ensure participants end calls appropriately with one of the organisations most important asset—**its customers.**



**3. Assessment**—Throughout the program, participants are undertaking learning and assessment activities, including both summative and formative assessments.

## PROVIDER ACCREDITATION

CARM® Training is a trading brand of Passmore Duff Pty Ltd, a Registered Training Organisation (RTO number 90783)

### Here’s what some recent global reports into telephone aggression had to say:-

- (Comcare) -Abusive and/or aggressive calls are likely to cause some level of distress. The impact will depend on:
  - severity of the abuse;
  - frequency of abusive calls &
  - the availability of support following an abusive call.

*Frequent abusive calls involve a risk of psychological harm to the employee receiving the calls. If employees feel unsupported, this may lead to low morale resulting in a higher rate of work absence and increased turnover in staff. Supervisors need to be aware of how to deal with such behaviour.*

- Worn down by racist abuse and sexual harassment from angry customers, call centre workers are lobbying to have repeat offenders barred and complaints lodged with local police around the world.

- Young Professionals Collective, said staff were subject to so much abuse and that many workers are quitting in despair.

*"They are facing a dual anger: one is because the customer is not happy with the service, and two is anger about outsourcing jobs," said Mr Shetty, a labour lawyer who helped form the collective out of concern for the vast, young and vulnerable workforce employed in the largely new industry.*

- Anxiety, lethargy and depression are essentially stress driven emotional and psychological issues that the Vidyasagar Institute of Mental Health said it gets two call centre employees every week seeking professional psychiatric help. The institute has found this disturbing enough to start warning the call centre industry about the problem.

