

# THE COUNTER-INTUITIVE APPROACH TO COMMUNICATING WHEN OUTCOMES ARE CRITICAL

“Finding a good outcome to a difficult situation is like bringing a splash of colour to an otherwise grey day.”



## Influencing Difficult Customer Behaviour

### Program Overview

We always seem to remember those people that have the ability to connect with us. The language they use and the way they use it can brighten our day and shape the thoughts we think. How we go about coding our messages and then communicating with others makes a world of difference, particularly during a difficult encounter.

How a customer ultimately feels about us and our ability to generate what they perceive as a good outcome will be largely influenced by our first impressions and the communication path we then choose to take.

Providing excellent customer service in any work environment is a challenge because the expectations of 'good service', vary with each and every customer, according to their needs.

It is however your mind set and your language skills that will make

all the difference when it comes to influencing a difficult customer positively, so you can achieve a good mutual outcome. It is this outcome that will determine whether the customer feels happy and satisfied or unhappy and disgruntled. It's in this moment of truth, that we face our greatest customer service challenges.

Just one disgruntled customer tells ten others who then tell ten others and so on (as the multiplier effect unravels).

Just one negative experience can result in hundreds of potential customers forming a poor view of what you and your brand ultimately represent. Whilst customers may not always be right, they are always the customer.

To use an analogy, those that manage these moments poorly will find themselves constantly swimming against the current, tiring from all the effort. The end result is a battle weary workforce who have developed a high degree of cynicism. In this type of environment, an organisation

quickly becomes non-customer oriented and is destined to drift out to sea and become isolated.

Our programs are designed for staff in Customer Service positions to empower them with great communication skills to influence the most challenging interactions. This provides a benefit not only for the customer, but also the staff, the culture of your organisation and ultimately your brand.

We provide employees with a unique counter-intuitive approach to 'thinking' and 'communicating' during these all important encounters. When facing the most difficult customer situations, where disagreement, frustration and even aggression can occur, **great communication becomes pivotal to achieving a good outcome.**



## Key Learning Areas

### → Customer Service Principles

Participants explore a core set of customer service principles and then examine the inter-relationship dynamics between the customer, service representative and environment. With this framework in mind we then seek to identify and challenge the manner in which difficult customer situations are handled as a means of gaining the best outcome.

Participants also explore reasons for aggressive behaviour and triggers for anger and aggression towards Customer Service staff, identifying how and why these behaviours occur.

This includes any associated motives in connection with the customer and service provider relationship, which is fundamental to understanding how best to respond.

### → Assess Value

CARM® Training presents a decision making model centered around 'risk to service' assisting participants to assess a situation based on 'Value'... valuing the customer, the brand, and the relationship.

This value based guide helps employees determine the most appropriate course of action to pursue with customers who are presenting difficult, challenging and at times aggressive behaviours.

Participants are led through specific and contextualised examples of customer behaviours that present a challenge in the workplace to see when, why and how the values based model is applied.

### → Influencing the Customer

Participants will work through the CARM® three part framework for communicating through these challenges, creating opportunities to optimise outcomes and improve the risk to service.

The CARM® Approach develops skills in navigating through emotional thinking. This includes the art of deflecting destructive monologue to guide it towards both mutual and respectful communication.

The 'soft power' communication approach is a core framework that focuses on developing the right 'mindset' and 'intent' complemented by the right voice, appearance and dialogue.

Participants work through communication techniques that foster the art of influence, which enables them to employ empathy or persuasive techniques at the right time and in the right balance. This is engineered towards improving a situation and moving it towards a better outcome.

### → Disengaging From A Customer

Disengage is the 'other option' in the CARM® Approach. It is an essential consideration when value is deemed at risk beyond a productive or reasonable level. In this segment a range of realistic strategies are discussed that enable participants to know when it may be better to withdraw from a situation and how to achieve this.

The strategies presented in the programs provide the customer service professional with a dignified means of withdrawal within a range of workplace environments, including individual and team based approaches.

## Benefits

- ✓ Reduce the likelihood of difficult situations escalating
- ✓ Reduce a range of negative impacts and costs that affect customers, staff and the organisation (both human and financial)
- ✓ Reduce fears and stresses associated with these situations – otherwise affecting your wellbeing, your behaviour and your performance
- ✓ Maintain, compliment and reinforce those skills that have already been developed and proven to be effective in dealing with difficult situations that may involve disagreement or aggressive behaviour
- ✓ Improve your confidence and capability to communicate well and maintain positive and rational thinking under stress. Including when subjected to criticism or verbal attack that can inflame your emotions and adversely affect your responses
- ✓ Improve relationships with your customers as well as the reputation of your organisation, generating positive 'word of mouth'.

## Who would benefit/ Who should attend

For staff working in customer service roles including team leaders, supervisors and frontline staff in the moment of truth for both

- ▶ Face to Face, or
- ▶ Telephone encounters.

## How are the programs delivered?

The 'CARM® Approach to Communicating When Outcomes Are Critical' Programs can be delivered via a range of formats subject to client need and outcomes sought. These include:

### 1. **Nationally Accredited Competency Based Face to Face Programs – focused on Communication and Customer Service Skills**

- Training delivery and assessment aligned to units of competency for dealing with conflict.

**Duration:** 2 days

### 2. **Face to Face Professional Development Programs**

#### ■ **Introductory Level**

Introduces all key concepts, principles and techniques relating to CARM® Training's Approach to De-escalating Aggressive behaviours.

**Duration:** 1 day

#### ■ **Intermediate Skill Building**

Further develop strong communication skills focused on influencing the customer in a positive way and navigating through emotional thinking.

**Duration:** 1 day

#### ■ **Advanced Skill Building**

Focused on the development of higher level communication and influencing skills, the refinement of the application of CARM® principles with progression towards technical mastery.

**Duration:** 1 or 2 day programs

### 3. **Self Directed Programs**

- **Interactive online E-Learning program:** for 'higher risk' service environments:

Includes online assessment with results tracking. Hosted from the website

[www.carmtraining.com](http://www.carmtraining.com)

or your intranet server.

**Duration:** 4 x 35 minute modules

- **Own Pace / Own Time Workbooks** enabling staff without access to face to face or online facilities to work through all the fundamental CARM® principles.

### 4. **In-house training accreditation**

CARM® can also train your in-house trainers to deliver our programs under licence. Through an RTO partnering agreement with CARM®, your staff can still receive Nationally Recognised qualifications.

## Learning & Assessment Formats

- ▶ Theory presentations and discussions
- ▶ Case Studies (work-context specific)
- ▶ Experiential Skills Practice (work-context specific)
- ▶ Formal & informal knowledge testing (for assessment programs)

## Recognition

All participants completing CARM® face to face training programs receive a certificate to reward their effort and enable evidence with respect their level of achievement.

Where participants undergo the Nationally Accredited Competency Based Training, they are awarded a Statement of Attainment aligned

to the appropriate qualification. All participants attending a CARM® training program, whether it be a face to face training program or an on-line e-learning program, will have their details and results captured and recorded in CARM® Training's student database to enable continued evidence of their participation and level of achievement.

“*You can't provide extraordinary service with an ordinary approach...*”

## Further Information

For more comprehensive information about these CARM® Training Courses including detailed course outcomes, learning and assessment methodology and delivery options please phone our toll free number **1300 367 475** or email [contact@cartraining.com](mailto:contact@cartraining.com)

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The CARM® Approach

- essential for your customers
- critical to your business