



Resolving Conflict with the Customer

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Conflict Happens





What do these Situations have in Common ?

- Complainant believes he/she is right
- That the situation is not their fault and not of their making
- That they are being treated unfairly
- That their request/their behaviour is reasonable



First Stage of Conflict Management ?



Understanding How to Prevent It

1. Identify likely causes
2. Look for patterns
3. Be pro-active



1. Identify Likely Causes of Conflict

- Latecomers/re-admittance
- Double Bookings
- Sightlines
- Audience Expectation – clash of
 - Audience/artist
 - Audience/audience
 - Audience/venue
- KEY POINT – in advance



2. Look for Patterns

- Event type
- Time
- Audience profile
- Subject of conflict
- Personnel/sections involved

3. Be Pro-active

- Take preventative action, wherever possible
- Keep customers informed
- Brief staff
- Have communication system in place between frontline staff
- KEY POINT – as far in advance as possible AND on the night



Second Stage of Conflict Management



Prepare for Conflict

1. Recognise the warning signs
2. Understand what happens
3. Manage own response



1. Recognise the Signs

Verbal:

- Voice louder (voice softer)
- Pitch higher (pitch lower)
- Muttering
- Repetition
- Offensive language

Non Verbal:

- Agitation and restlessness
- Clenched jaw
- Aggressive gestures
- Coming too close
- Eyeballing
- Thumping furniture



2. What Happens - Physically

- 'Fight' or 'Flight'
- Danger perceived by brain
- Release of adrenalin into the bloodstream
- Breathing gets faster
- Heart beats faster
- Feelings of nausea and dry mouth
- Muscles tense
- Increased activity in body causes sweating
- Judgement may be impeded



3. Manage Own Response

- Don't take the bait
- Keep calm
- Mental step back/count to ten
- Assess the risk
- Deeper breathing
- Consciously slow down response



Third Stage of Conflict Management



Managing Confrontation

1. Calm the situation
2. Engage and understand
3. Consider the options

1a) Calm the Situation

Body language – do :

- Breathe deeply
- Soften facial muscles
- Open body posture and hand gestures
- Maintain eye contact – and blink
- Maintain/create physical space

1b) Calm the Situation

Body language – don't :

- Frown or bite lip
- Cross arms
- Put hands on hips, over mouth, in pockets
- Avoid eye contact or eyeball
- Touch the other person



1c) Calm the Situation

- Lower voice
- Speak more slowly
- Listen
- Don't interrupt
- Don't contradict
- Separate from the crowd



2. Engage and Understand

- Acknowledge
- Don't use jargon
- Be pleasant
- Put yourself in their shoes
- Give full attention
- Humour (highrisk/highgain)

3. Consider the Options

- Be honest
- Apologise
- Focus on solutions rather than blame
- Use positive language
- Am I the best person to deal with this
- Be responsible for follow through
- Have tricks up sleeve
- Use factual criteria
- Develop stock phrases
- Know your stepped complaints procedure

- Have 'exit strategy'



Conflict Escalation

- Risk assessment
- Make safe – for self
- Disengage if unsafe and know where to get help
- Have tested, stepped escalation procedures in place
- Trust your intuition



And After Conflict ?

- Support yourself
- Support your staff
- Log the incident
- Disseminate the learning
- Feed into future preparation

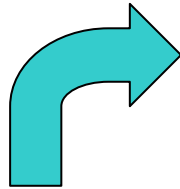


Remember

- Their anger may have come from elsewhere
- Don't take it personally
- Conflict needs fuel
- Good 'Recovery' can increase loyalty

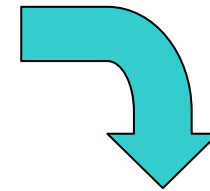
- BE PREPARED

Summary

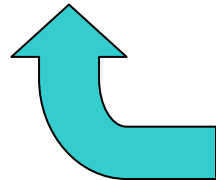


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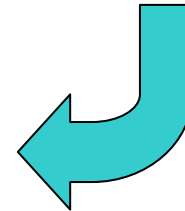
PREVENT



PREPARE



MANAGE





THANKYOU FOR LISTENING !

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