



5 Business Problems Solved (In One Page or Less)

By: Jeanette Mulvey, BusinessNewsDaily Managing Editor

[Excerpted from Article]

Problem: Dealing with difficult customers

No matter how good you are at what you do or what business you're in, at some point, you will find yourself facing an irate customer. Customer service strategist [John Tschohl](#) says that when dealing with an irate customer, most employees want to turn and run – but this is actually a great opportunity to win a customer over for life if you know how to take control of the situation.

He says follow these steps to defuse any situation involving an irate customer:

- Listen carefully and with interest to what the customer is telling you.
- Apologize without laying blame, regardless of who is at fault.
- Put yourself in the customer's place, and respond in a way that shows you care about his or her concerns. Use phrases such as, "I understand that must be upsetting," or "I don't blame you for being upset; I would feel the same way."
- Ask pertinent questions in a caring, concerned manner, and actively listen to the answers.
- Suggest one or more alternatives that would address the customer's concerns.
- Solve the problem quickly and efficiently, or find someone who can.

Just as important as what you should do, there are four things you should not do:

- Don't directly challenge someone who has a complaint and is angry. Even if that customer is wrong, don't attempt to prove it. Your goal is to solve the problem, not to enter into a debate on the merits of the complaint.
- Don't let the conversation wander or get off the topic. Solve the crisis at hand without looking for, and finding, additional problems.
- Don't participate in fault-finding. Shifting blame doesn't help anyone.
- Don't let your personal feelings get in the way. Stay cool and use courtesy and tact to resolve the situation.