

# HOW TO TAKE CARE OF AN UPSET CLIENT

## Listen, Empathize, Ask, Resolve

By Keith Lee – Customer Services Expert

Train your team to use the L.E.A.R. principle to take care of an upset customer

### Here is the L.E.A.R. principle

**L is for Listen.** Listen and don't interrupt. There are many reasons we don't interrupt. We don't interrupt because, number one, it's rude. Another reason is that when you're upset, you, I, and everyone else practices what we're going to say... and we all practice it the same way, from the beginning. So, if you interrupt, they're going to lose their place and you're going to have to listen to the whole thing all over again— from the beginning.

Then, of course, we listen to the client because we respect the client and know they are in fact, the boss.

**E is for Empathize.** Empathize means to put ourselves in their shoes. My favorite is, "I'm sure glad you told me so I can help you."

**A is for Ask.** Ask, "What can I do to Make-You-Happy?" Most of the time you don't actually have to say the words, "What can I do to Make-You-Happy?" It's often obvious what you should do. But sometimes you will want to actually use the words, "What can I do to Make-You-Happy?"

The main idea though, is portraying the attitude of "What can I do to Make-You-Happy?"

**R is for Resolve.** Give your team members guidelines of what they can and can't do right then and there to make the client happy. If what the client wants is reasonable, and it is within their guidelines, your team member needs to make the client happy. Train them to take care of the client right then and there.

I know, without an angry person in front of me, it's easy to explain how to implement the L.E.A.R. principle. It's a lot more difficult to implement it calmly and rationally when someone is screaming at you. You need to train your team members to understand that the client is upset at the situation and not with them.

Train your team members to take a deep breath, and tell themselves, "It is not me. It's the situation." Train them to talk to themselves and make sure they are the person who stays calm and collected. Train them that there is never an excuse for getting angry or short.

If the client is abusive, your team member needs to be trained to say, "Sir, I'm sure I can help you."

What if what the client asks for is beyond your guidelines or completely unreasonable? In this case, you simply say to the client, "I'm going to have to get a manager to see if we can do that." Or, "Let me see if my manager can take care of that for you." Or, "We don't have a manager here that can approve that right now, but if I can

get your phone number, I'll have someone get back to you tomorrow morning, or whenever it is most convenient for you.”



Thousands of businesses around the world use Keith's customer service secrets as the foundation of their exceptional customer service. Keith is the author of two acclaimed customer service books, ***Out-Nordstrom Nordstrom, Creating the World's Best Customer Service*** and his newest book, ***The Happy Customer Handbook, 59 Secrets to Creating Happy Customers Who Come Back Time and Time Again and Enthusiastically Tell Others About You.*** To get a FREE copy of The Happy Customer Handbook go to <http://TheHappyCustomerHandbook.com>.