

# De-Escalation Techniques for Customer Service Professionals

GoSkills online course syllabus

Tuesday, September 9, 2025

## Skill level

Beginner

## Lessons

16

## Pre-requisites

None

## Instructors

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## Introduction

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### 1 De-escalating difficult customers

Dealing with difficult customers can be one of the most dreaded components of working in any kind of customer service role. After completing this course, you'll be able to de-escalate difficult customers, help customers feel valued, help customers want to use your products and services repeatedly, increase your confidence in any difficult situation, and apply tools to lean into difficult situations.

## Preparing for Difficult Customers

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### 2 Evaluate your company culture

If you focus on policy or compliance, dealing with difficult customers will be common and escalate frequently. After this lesson, you'll be able to evaluate your customer service culture and apply strategies to focus on resolution instead of compliance.

### 3 Cultivate a desire to help

Before entering into conversations with difficult customers, it's important to cultivate a genuine desire to help the customer. After this lesson, you'll be able to apply strategies to cultivate a desire to help the customer, and you'll be able to identify and apply strategies to effectively communicate this desire to the customer.

### 4 Focus on the customer need

When preparing to deal with difficult customers, take the time to recognize and understand the customer's need to use your product or service. After this lesson, you'll be able to ask yourself key questions to begin identifying why your products/services may be important to them.

### 5 Mistakes to avoid

Certain phrases and practices can cause customers to escalate quickly. After this lesson, you'll be able to identify mistakes to avoid when it comes to preparing for difficult customers.

## Engaging with Difficult Customers

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### 6 Focus and eliminate distraction

Giving your customers your full attention is an important part of successfully dealing with difficult customers. After this lesson, you'll be able to completely focus on the customer, eliminate any distractions, listen, and take notes to capture problems and emotion.

## 7 Respond with authentic connection

When dealing with difficult customers, it's important to respond like you would in a face-to-face interaction. After this lesson, you'll be able to effectively show empathy, match the emotion of the customer, and let them know you fully heard them.

## 8 Be curious

Even if you do not share the same interest as your customer in the product/service you're offering, your customer has passion around the product or service...match the intensity! After this lesson, you'll be able to ask questions to understand your customer's passion about your product/service.

## 9 Be confident

Although it can be tempting to use hold or transfer calls with difficult customers, it's important to take ownership in those moments. After this lesson, you'll be able to clearly communicate to your customers that you want them to engage and enjoy the product/service, and you are the right person to be talking to.

## 10 Demonstrate value

Express value in the customer through action and intensity, not status. After this lesson, you'll be able to demonstrate how your product/service will add value to your customer's life.

## 11 Uncover the root cause

Understanding the root cause of the call and what expectations were not met is critical when it comes to dealing with difficult customers and preventing similar issues from arising in the future. After this lesson, you'll be able to apply strategies to identify the root cause, their unmet expectations, and why the customer is interacting with your company.

# Resolving Problems with Difficult Customers

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## 12 Solve the current need

Minimizing customer effort is critical when it comes to effectively resolving problems with difficult customers. After this lesson, you'll be able to apply strategies to solve immediate needs efficiently with as little customer effort as possible.

## 13 Navigate unsatisfactory outcomes

There will be times when you cannot give the customer what they want. After this lesson, you'll be able to analyze problems that don't clear resolutions, and you'll be able to leverage creativity to gracefully navigate these situations.

## 14 Maximize customer retention

When resolving problems with difficult customers, it's important to circle back to why the customer uses your product/service. After this lesson, you'll be able to give difficult customers clear and actionable next steps to engage with your company again.

## 15 Create actionable insights

Do not settle for supporting poor products or services, but instead use data and emotion to solve problems upstream on behalf of customers. After this lesson, you'll be able to watch for trends and create targeted, actionable insights to improve the product and service you are offering.

# Conclusion

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## 16 Make it personal

Thank you for watching this course! Now that you've completed this course, you're ready to effectively prepare for, engage with, and resolve problems with difficult customers.

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