

Check-backs and complaint handling go hand in hand. Intercepting a problem before a customer tells you, or TripAdvisor, not only prevents negative word-of-mouth but can increase revenue through loyalty and positive PR.

Not only are team members often unaware of what they can offer by way of compensation or resolution, moreover, they haven't been taught to notice unhappy customers or what that might look like.

Intercepting complaints is a great confidence boost for team members as it is often received with both surprise and relief from grateful customers.

Produce

Read out this first paragraph at the top of this sheet. From your Silent Customer feedback, read out all the positive comments associated with the relevant questions in previous reviews. Do not mention the comments where a team member has lost a point. We focus on learning from positive behaviours.

Tell them: Checks backs are only worthwhile if teams understand that less than 50% of customers will actually 'tell' them if they are unhappy. This is because most customers avoid confrontation. Only if a team member lingers for long enough to hear whether the tone of voice, eye contact and body language of the customer is sincere, will they know for sure if they are happy or if there is a problem. A check back does not always need to be verbal, it can be done with a glance.

Explore

Ask them what they think 'intercepting complaints' means and ask for some scenarios as to how this may present itself. Try not to jump in before someone has spoken up. It may feel like an uncomfortable silence to you, but they will be processing your question.

Ask them what a customer's body language may look like if they are unhappy with their food. Ask them how they might be able to tell if a customer says they are happy with their meal, when they are actually not. Ask them what gentle, probing questions could be asked to establish the problem and what tone of voice and body language they should they be displaying. Ask what appropriate resolutions they could offer the customer as well as those that could add injury to insult. Ask how a customer might react if they make excuses or disagree with their complaint.

Practise

- **Observe customer behaviours – do they look unhappy?**
- **Ask them an open question and wait for their response – do they sound unhappy?**
- **Suggest if can see the problem – it's usually obvious what the problem is without asking further, if not – probe gently.**
- **Offer an appropriate resolution – e.g. don't offer a free coffee if the mains were the problem. Replace or discount.**

Ask some of the more confident / experienced team members how they might go about each stage of the interception process. Use the methods under 'Explore' to generate suggestions. Depending on their engagement skills you may decide whether a more senior team member could further probe the customer and resolve the issue.

At the end of the shift ask the team if they had any unhappy customers and, if so, to share their experiences. Make sure you thank them and tell them what a great job they did. We are always more willing to go the extra mile when we feel like our efforts are appreciated.



SILENT CUSTOMER P.E.P TALK TOOL KIT INTERCEPTING COMPLAINTS

Date:

List the names of the participants and anyone who successfully intercepts a complaint.

Ensure those who intercept complaints and resolve them, are rewarded with something tangible such as a voucher.

Participants:

Notes/Comments: