

Listening, Empathizing, and Apologizing

Listening SKILLS



Listen with the goal of making sure you understand the person's issue before moving onto the solution.

A way to determine if you understand the person correctly is with the use of reflective statements.

When a person has discussed a series of details (facts) with you, make sure to summarize the information.

Facts: "You're saying..."

Example: "You're saying you need help with enrolling a student?"

When a person has shared their opinion or thoughts you may respond with a reflective statement.

Opinion/Thought: "You think...because"

Example: "You think it is too late to apply to a magnet school because your neighbor told you the deadline has passed."

It is okay to be corrected by the customer for the sake of clarification. Once the customer is satisfied that you understand their problem you may offer a solution.

Actively EMPATHIZE



Actively empathizing means acknowledging and affirming another person's emotional state. A great way to do that is by reflecting back the emotion they are feeling and the cause of their problem.

Feeling: "You feel...because"

Example: "You feel worried because you don't think you will make the registration deadline?"

It is okay to be corrected by the customer for the sake of clarification. Once the customer is satisfied that you understand their problem you may offer a solution.

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Apologize GRACEFULLY

One of the things you may have to do before you can address a customer's problem is offer an apology.

An effective apology involves the following:

1. Recognizing the affront to the person with an acknowledging, "I apologize" or "I'm sorry"
2. Reflecting back to the person the act or situation that caused the person to be offended
3. Making reparations by offering a solution

Apology:

"I apologize" + [reflect back the offense] + [solution]

Example: "I apologize that no one has returned your call. May I put you on hold while I check with that department on the status of your issue?"

