“How to Handle Irate Customers in an Omni-channel Environment”

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A Customer Might Be...

1. In the phone queue
2. While simultaneously starting a Live Chat with one of your Agents
3. As they send a Tweet to your company, and
4. Post to your company's Facebook page, all at the same time!

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Why is Omni-channel Important?

Here are some statistics from the www.providesupport.com/blog:

52% of **18–34**-year old consumers have used social media to ask a customer service question (compared to **31%** of consumers overall and **13%** of age **55+** consumers). *(2016 State of Global Customer Service Report)*

90% of people surveyed have used social in some way to communicate directly with a brand, while **34,5%** of customers turn to social media over any other channel. *(Sprout Social)*

Over four in five (**81%**) Millennials would use social media to interact with a brand's customer service, vs. **63%** of Gen Xers and **44%** of Boomers. *(Desk.com)*

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Omni-channel Customer Care

"Like doing customer service on-stage"

Nygel Weishar, Director, Non-Voice Media Strategy, CIBC

How does an omni-channel Agent's response impact other people viewing their conversation online?

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Should You Stay In-Channel Or Call The Customer?

Decision strategy:

1. Is private customer information involved?
2. Has the customer been verified?
3. Can your Agent resolve the issue using the current channel? (Or, is it better to resolve via a phone call?)

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No Matter What Channel Is Used...

Your Agent still needs to defuse the customer's anger!

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Defusing Customer Anger

“Raise your right hand…”

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Defusing Customer Anger

1. Apologize for how the customer is feeling
2. Use your first name to personalize the conversation
3. Take ownership ("I" rather than "we" will solve it for you)

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Defusing Customer Anger

4. **Acknowledge your customer's current emotional state:**
   - **Show empathy: "I'm sorry to hear that…"**
   - **Offer to help: "I want to help you with that…"**

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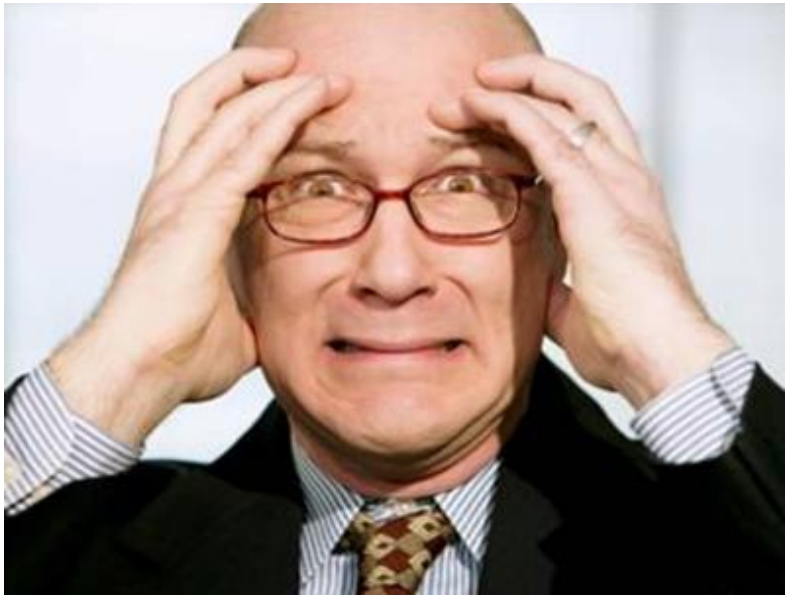
Avoid "Trigger" Words & Phrases



5. Avoid "trigger" words:
   - "Our policy is..."
   - "You should have..."
   - "No one else has ever had that problem"

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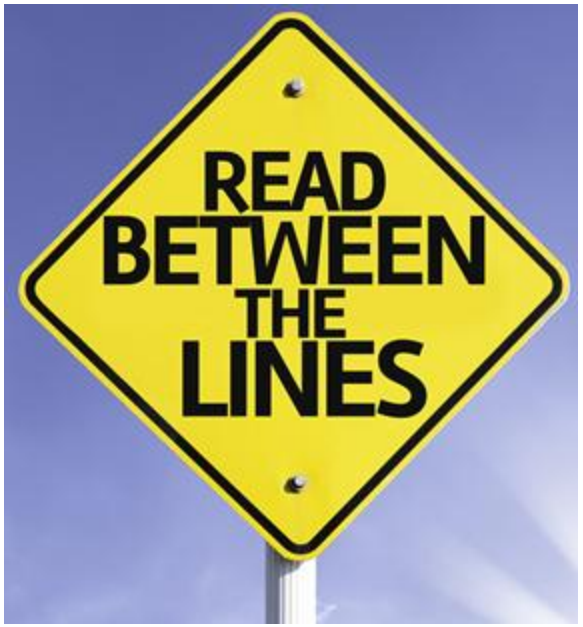
Defusing Customer Anger

6. Train your Agents to "read between the lines" of a customer's response by focusing on emotional words
7. Use a customer service writing style



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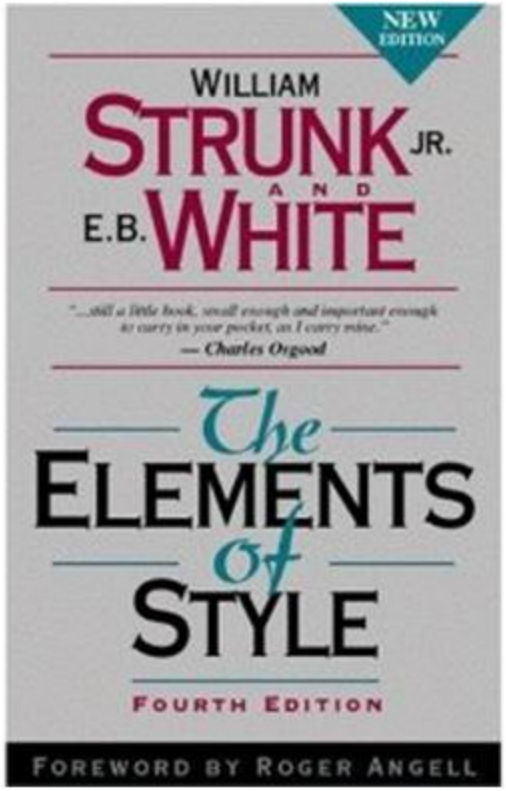
Develop Your Own Style Guide



- **Decide on a standard – per platform - for contractions, slang, abbreviations, etc.**
- **Do <u>calibration sessions</u> to ensure consistency between Agents' writing styles**

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Style Guide... By Platform

- **Twitter: "Write tight“, short, concise, use contractions & abbreviations. Get to the point**

- **SMS text: short, concise, direct**

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Style Guide... By Platform

- **Facebook: longer messages, friendly, warm tone**

- **Email: longer messages, bulleted or numbered lists, can include attachments such as brochures, checklists, more formal business-like writing style**

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Sharing Best Practices

What does your contact centre do to help Agents handle irate omni-channel interactions?

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“Close The Loop”

- **Always loop back to social media to show issue was resolved**
- ***For example, "Jacob, thank you for alerting us to that issue. I am glad we were able to help you during our subsequent phone conversation."***

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One Final Thought...

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