

WORKING WITH CUSTOMERS AND STAFF DURING COVID



Whether you work on the frontlines and interact with customers or are supervising staff, working during the time of COVID provides its own unique challenges and changes. Here are three useful tools as you think about your approach and response.

REACTING VS RESPONDING

Provide clear expectations for everyone

- Create guidelines and make sure staff know how they are expected to respond

Assume best intentions first

- For example, operating from “Maybe they just forgot” vs “why are they being difficult”

Remember that it’s not about you

- Try to separate an escalated customers response from an attack on you personally (even when they try to make it personal)

SHARED LANGUAGE

Identify common, consistent language

- Staff should be trained in responding similarly and consistently

Reinforce signs/written language

- “You may have missed the sign at the door...”

Reframe as caring about the community

- “We care about you and all of our customers safety”

DE-ESCALATION

Focus on both your internal and external responses

- Are you in a position to respond calmly?

Use positive self talk to stay cool and level throughout a heated interaction

- “I can handle this”, “I don’t like this but I’ll get through it”

Avoid matching the escalated energy of a customer

- Focus on cooling down the situation and keeping your voice calm and posture open

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