

Managing Your Own Emotions

How can "identifying triggers" help with self-control with difficult customers

When a customer hits your "hot buttons" (we all have them), and it happens out of the blue, that's the toughest situation for staying in control of one's own emotions, and if you lose control of your own reactions, you lose control of the interaction, and also say the wrong things.

Identifying your own emotional triggers can help you react a bit more slowly, and let your conscious, thinking brain reflect before action.

[From If It Wasn't For The Customer I'd Really Like This Job:](#)

Identifying your triggers

Each of us has a set of triggers. You know, those things that just drive us nuts. The interesting thing about your triggers is they are likely to be different from mine, or from your colleagues. And, your triggers are likely to be different with different sets of people. For example, something your spouse does at home may not bother you if a customer does it, or vice versa.

A first step to improve your self-control is to identify the triggering behavior that gets to you. You may find that just by virtue of identifying them, you will get a bit better at avoiding the triggering process.

To help you along, we've listed some common triggers.

Use them stimulate your thinking about your own "hot buttons".

Tone of Voice

- whining
- yelling
- patronizing
- Sarcastic

Specific Words

- certain swear words

Actions

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- pounding on desk or counter
- waving arms around
- pointing
- waving finger in face
- putting hand on arm
- ripping up paper
- throwing things
- slamming doors

Content of Comments

- sexist
 - racist
 - suggestions you are incompetent lazy
 - stupid
-
- uncaring
 - suggestions other employees are:
 - incompetent
 - lazy
 - uncaring
 - accusations that you are racist or biased
 - suggestion you don't like the customer
 - guilt or blaming attack (It's your fault if...)
 - threats (I'll get you fired, or, I have friends)

Unique solution ID: #1017

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Last update: 2014-02-05 17:07