

Managing Your Own Emotions

To Vent Or Not To Vent About Angry Customers

Venting / Not Venting — That Is The Question

Dealing with hostile customers is frustrating. For many people, this frustration builds and builds, like a pressure cooker, until it bursts. Some people believe it is important not to let the pressure build, but to “vent” it out, by talking to co-workers, or other sympathetic people. We call the process of talking out our frustration, venting.

You are probably familiar with it, and already use it. **But venting doesn't work for everyone.** Some people have learned to let go of their frustration by talking it out. They let the steam out, and then things are OK, and they move on to the next situation they must deal with. For them, venting works.

For others, focusing on their frustration doesn't make it go away but intensifies the frustration. By paying more attention to it, they make the frustration and stress bigger.

You need to figure out which type of person you are. If you find that you vent, only to return to the situation later, you may benefit by not venting. In other words, if you vent, then leave the issue, then vent a few hours later, then return to the issue and so on, the venting is probably not working for you.

If venting doesn't work for you, you can try a distraction technique. If focusing on the problem person makes you angrier and angrier you need to do things that will get your mind off the situation or person. If you are at home after a bad day, rather than sitting around thinking about it, or talking on and on about it, do something different. Watch a movie, play a computer game, exercise, or do whatever will allow you to stop thinking about the unpleasant event.

For some people not venting is better. ■For some distracting and moving on works well.

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