

Communicating With Customers

What Is "Going To Computer Mode" With Respect To Angry Customers

Going to computer mode is an advanced technique to help defuse customer anger and manipulation, and is part of the verbal self defence techniques we teach in our seminars and books. The purpose of the technique is to create an opportunity to talk with the customer by getting him or her to think, rather than respond automatically with rants or in other ways that prevent you from helping. Here's a brief explanation.

Computer mode is another means of responding in a way that shows you are listening, but doesn't result in your taking the bait. It is also unexpected by the attacker so it tends to disrupt the attack chain.

Using the previous example:

"You don't give a damn about me. You have this cushy job .. what a soft life, and you have some nerve telling me I can't [whatever the person wants to do]."

You can respond as follows:

That's interesting. Some people do think that there are people who have easy jobs.

Then you stop. Period. Dead stop. Don't explain. Don't defend.

Again, this response confuses people, since it is:

? unexpected

? neutral (neither a defense or counterattack)

? shows you aren't taking the bait

Because it is unexpected and confusing, it is likely to force the attacking person to stop and think.

The general form for Computer Mode is:

That's interesting (or some other neutral statement). Some people do think [feel] that [rephrase the attack in a bland neutral way].

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