


## Do Your Callers Think You Care?

Making Customer Service Training A Priority

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## Outline & Expectations

- Plan for the class (lecture, engaging discussion)
- Questions – ask throughout
- Electronics expectations



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## Customer Service Challenges

- What are your biggest challenges in this area?
  - How long have you had them?
- Any successes in overcoming them?



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### Who Are Your Customers?

- Callers
- First responders
- Partner agencies
- Other PSAPs
- Co-workers

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### Identifying Problem Areas

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### What Is In The Way?

- Forgot purpose/calling
  - Only "want" the important callers
  - Poor self-care (no energy reserve)
- Ego
  - Proving competence/being right
  - Judging vs. serving
- Catching people's "stuff"
- Poor training/role models
  - "Eating our young" is not a CS model

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### Lack Proficiency

- Never made to practice CS skills
- Entitled to "not" practice
  - Complacent
  - No refresher or QA
- Over using & under using strengths
- "Just who I am"
  - Excuses
  - Keeping the technically proficient (value problem)

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## Tools For Better Customer Service

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### Define In Your PSAP

- What does CS look like here?
  - Poor, good & exceptional
  - Expectations & specific behaviors
- What is the "why" of our CS?
  - Make the "why" drive the "how"
- Culture management
  - Calling out the bad/reinforcing good
  - Positive/self-care environment
  - CS Checklist

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## Prioritize Soft Skill Proficiency

- Examples of soft skills
- Basis for all human interaction
- Greatest liability reduction tool
  - Creates balanced employees
  - Fixes problems inside the building
- Enhances reputation/image

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## Barriers To Overlearning

- Not a cultural value to over train & generally undervalued
- Assumption the hard skills are enough
- Easier to dismiss as "known"
  - We are smart, intelligent adults
  - We "practice all day long" Do you?
- Belief: number/type of classes = competence
- More seniority usually less openness to really learn & practice
- No training accountability program

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## Training Accountability

- New training
  - Identify the "why and what"
  - Goals clearly laid out
  - Expectations during and after
- After training
  - Revisit goals, solidify and formalize
  - List the skills learned (pic 1 or 2 to start with)
  - Expectations for practice
  - Behaviorally based measures/timeline
  - Feedback & assessment process
  - How will they add value to the org. (teach others or become a coach)

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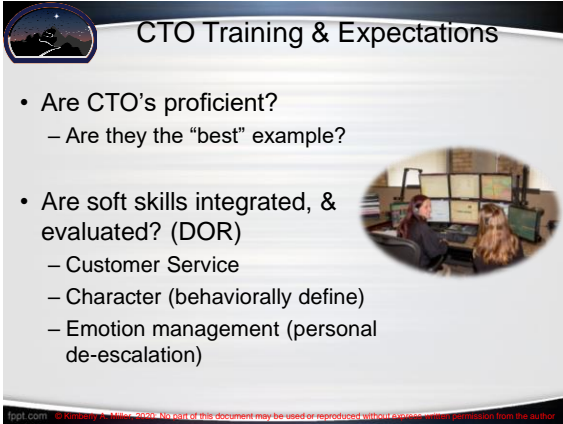
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### CTO Training & Expectations

- Are CTO's proficient?
  - Are they the "best" example?
- Are soft skills integrated, & evaluated? (DOR)
  - Customer Service
  - Character (behaviorally define)
  - Emotion management (personal de-escalation)



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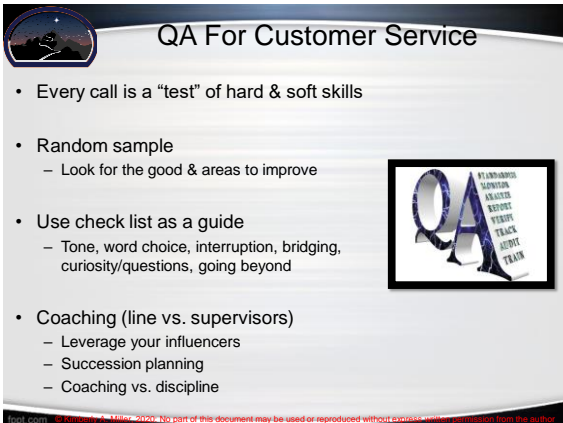
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### QA For Customer Service

- Every call is a "test" of hard & soft skills
- Random sample
  - Look for the good & areas to improve
- Use check list as a guide
  - Tone, word choice, interruption, bridging, curiosity/questions, going beyond
- Coaching (line vs. supervisors)
  - Leverage your influencers
  - Succession planning
  - Coaching vs. discipline



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# Reminders & Training Areas

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## You Have To Be The Logical One

- People make emotional decisions
  - They are calling b/c they don't know what to do and are likely not thinking clearly
  - Don't expect them to "act right"
- Avoid emotional contamination
  - Boundary setting
  - De-escalate yourself (practice in advance)
  - How full is your bucket? (Energy reserve)
  - Be intentional of your tone
- A good experience now may plant a seed for later



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## De-Escalation

- Are you water or gas?
- Practice remaining calm under pressure
  - Grounding (Has your life changed any?)
  - Deep breath
  - I am safe
  - Don't "catch" their emotion
  - Have a good story
- Yes, your response matters
- Are you on "this" call or one from the past?



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## De-Escalating Callers: Phrases

- Reassure
  - I've got you/I am here
  - Lets work together on this
  - Use their name
  - I will stay with you until \_\_\_\_
- Validate
  - That sounds scary
  - You seem \_\_\_\_
  - That is helpful, thanks
- Get Them Involved/Busy
  - Can you help me/Do me a favor? Do you know how to?
  - What do you see/hear around you?
  - What is the next mile marker?



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## Things To Avoid

- Abrupt “no” we can’t help with that
  - Take an educational focus
  - Here is what I can offer
  - Let me look up that number for you
  - Let me stay on the phone until \_\_\_ arrives
- Hang up and call \_\_\_\_\_
- Don’t lie (I’ve got to take other calls)
- “Calm down”
  - I need you to talk slower
  - Help me help your child



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## Additional Things To Avoid

- Don’t start with the command & control voice
- Avoid unnecessary interruption
- Beware of tunnel vision
  - Be flexible where you can
  - Other ways to phrase things
  - It does not always need to be your way
- Be aware of personal bias
  - You might be wrong
  - Ask through questions
  - Balance gut and data



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## Advanced Skills Are The Basics Mastered ~Bruce Lee

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It's easy to join our mailing list!

Just send your email address by text message:

Text  
**DR MILLER**  
to **22828** to get started.

Message and data rates may apply.

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