

De-escalation Workshop

LRA Front Line Staff

Outcomes

- To increase staff confidence
- To provide a safe environment to discuss concerns
- To share best practice
- To establish consistent approach towards responding to incidents
- To provide useful tips to defuse aggression
- To know how to, and be confident in using the personal safety devices



Types of Behaviour

- Anti-social behaviour covers a variety of behaviours and crimes:
- Disorderly conduct which can include threatening, abusive or insulting words which is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress. This term makes it a crime to be drunk in public, to “disturb the peace” or to loiter in certain areas.
- *Can someone give an example of this type of behaviour and how they responded?*

Types of Behaviour

- Threatening behaviour. Includes abusive or insulting words or behaviour, with the intent to cause that person to believe that there is an immediate threat to them, including violence.
- Criminal Damage. Actual damage to property including threats to cause criminal damage.
- *Can someone give an example of these types of behaviour and how they responded?*

Types of Behaviour

- Harassment. This is when someone behaves in a way which offends you or makes you feel distressed or intimidated. This is also a form of discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 and may include inappropriate behaviour based on sexual orientation, age, disability, race, religion or belief.
- *Can someone give an example of this type of behaviour and how they responded?*

So what can we do?

- De-escalation is obviously what we want to achieve to prevent situations escalating and indeed where possible, turn the situation around to a more positive encounter.



It may seem obvious but....

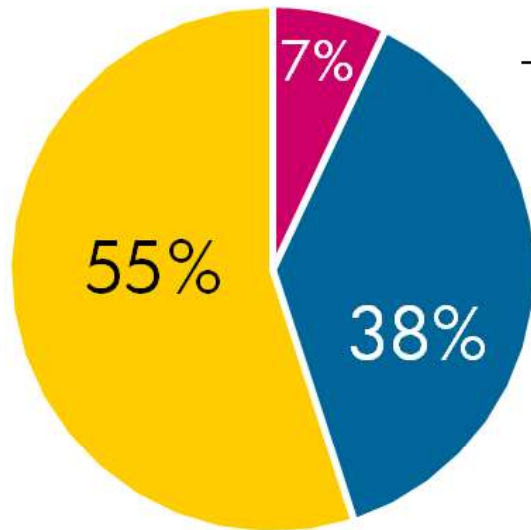
- Try to remain calm, this will help you feel grounded.
- Try to empathise with the other person
- Think about the language you use – we all know that telling someone to ‘calm down’ is likely to have the opposite effect!
- Use good listening techniques
- Keep good eye contact – without being confrontational and staring of course.

Situational Awareness POP

- Be aware of your surrounding, think about what is going on:
- **P**eople: is someone concerning or threatening you? Are they nervous or agitated?
- **O**bject: this relates to any potential item that could be used to cause harm – remember to check your work spaces
- **P**lace: the environment of location you are in, is it well lit, is a phone/radio accessible, is a safe area nearby?

Non verbal behaviour to help you

- Be aware of your own body language – police officers use an open stance to show they are non-threatening – open palms, arms by your side etc.
- Respect their personal space but also keep your own personal space protected – move slowly away if you need to. —



Dr. Albert Mehrabian's 7-38-55% Rule

Elements of Personal Communication

- 7% spoken words
- 38% voice, tone
- 55% body language

De-escalating someone's anger

- Ask constructive questions – this can also help diffuse anger if they feel you are genuinely trying to help.
- Validate the person's feelings – saying things such as “I understand your frustration so let me get me some details so we can try to resolve this” will help.
- You are allowed to express concern however if someone is becoming aggressively angry – “I wont be able to help you if you continue to shout at me” is a totally acceptable thing to say.

Useful phrases

- “I am happy to work with you to resolve this situation but your behaviour is now making me feel uncomfortable”
- “While you have a right to voice your concerns you do not have a right to be abusive towards our staff”
- “I understand you are frustrated but if you continue to speak to me in this way, I won’t be able to help you”

Conversations around library charges

- “I couldn’t get to the library because my child was ill and I couldn’t leave the house.”
- Staff response: That’s understandable but you don’t have to leave the house to renew books or DVD’s. You can also renew online or through a library account. This charge will need to be paid on this occasion but to help you with this in the future we can provide you with our telephone number and show you how to set up an account on line so you can use this with a pin number to manage your account from home.

Continued – library charges

- “I was away on holiday when the book became overdue so I couldn’t renew it by phone”
- Staff response: Unfortunately the charge has been accruing whilst you have been away but to prevent this happening again you could renew the book before you go away or negotiate a return date with a member of library staff. You can also renew your books online using our online service and our easy to use app – I will be happy to show you how to set this up.

Asking someone to leave the building

- We all know this can be difficult but there are some useful tips.
- Let them know the repercussions of their behaviour – one warning, “if you continue to do... you will be asked to leave the library.”
- Don't raise your voice or change your body language, keep the upper hand and remain calm – remember to have a colleague with you wherever possible.
- If necessary escort the customer out, walking towards the exit works as they will automatically follow you, remain by the door until they leave.
- You can activate the lone working device so that the situation is monitored and further action raised if required.

Staff Examples

- Does anyone have any examples of when they have asked customers to leave and how they managed the situation.
- Good or Bad!! We wont judge 😊



Useful phrases

- “You are making the experience unpleasant for the rest of our customers”
- “Please can I ask you to be mindful of other customers when using the service”
- “If you don’t remove yourself from this situation voluntarily I’ll have to call the police”

What tools do we already have?

- Policies and procedures in place such as the LRA Banning Policy, Responding to Incidents Flowchart, Lone Working Policy and Risk Assessments. Fees and waived charges guidance on Q Wood shared area.
- Shop watch radios – make sure you know how to use them. They should be maintained, charged and available for immediate use
- Safe places – you should all be aware of where your safe place is, basically somewhere you can lock yourself in until the threat goes away or help arrives.

Personal Safety Devices

- We are now going to watch a short video on the personal safety devices.

<https://youtu.be/8ClqBftFrsM>

- Remember you can retrain any time on the devices if you are unsure how to use them.

[Sign in \(relianceprotect.com\)](https://relianceprotect.com)

Remember...

- You don't have to be lone working to use the device. If you are in a multi staffed building you can still sign in and wear the device and activate if needed.
- If you raise an alarm someone will be listening and monitoring the situation and will call emergency services when necessary.
- If you need to talk to the receiving centre you can break silence but this will **only** happen if you ask for it by saying break silence.
- It is imperative that all devices are charged and ready to use everyday. Any issues with devices should be reported to a manager immediately.
- There is at least one personal safety device available in every LRA site.

Remember continued...

- When the device is activated they will check your location.
- You can provide updates by talking if you are safe to do so, for example in a safe space.
- At the beginning of the day you should check in to the device so that they have your name and exact location. But don't worry, the GPS is there as a back up.
- Remember if in doubt push the big button in the centre of the back of the device.

Personal Safety Device Feedback

Working alone can be challenging sometimes.

So, when dealing with customers with challenging behaviour, it's important to stay calm and be patient.

Also helpful, is having a Personal Safety device to call someone that can listen and provide help if necessary.

My experience when I recently activated the Personal Safety device was amazing.

I felt supported, despite that person not being there. Just by talking to someone - it helped to de-escalate the situation straight away.

What other tools do we have?

- Checking in for lone working
- PCSO's, community wardens and 101
- Emergency services - call 999

- **Always go with your instinct and call 999 without hesitation if you feel under threat.**

How do we record incidents?

- KCC HS157 online reporting. Include details such as threats made and specific language
- Local incident logs – add dates, names details of incidents – any premises/security issues should be taken up with TFM and local manager
- CCTV if in place. Staff should know how to archive and how to retrieve footage.

Now its your turn...

- A customer comes to the staff pod because the RFID has referred them to a member of staff. They have £15 charges on their account and you explain what the charges are. They immediately become angry and refuse to pay the charges but want to renew their books and take out some more.
- How do you defuse the situation?

Scenario 2

- A group of teenagers are becoming loud, swearing and talking about inappropriate subjects, they are also moving chairs around in the reference section. You calmly ask them to stop moving the chairs and to be mindful of their language for the other customers some of whom are children. They laugh and refuse to alter their behaviour, in fact their behaviour worsens.
- What techniques and resources would you use to deal with this situation?

Scenario 3

- Someone falls asleep on the bench seats near the children's library, a member of the public reports this to you as they are snoring loudly and there is a bottle of alcohol at their side. You wake them up and calmly explain that alcohol is not allowed and that they were disturbing other customers. They become aggressive, shouting and leaning into your personal space, they use offensive language and threaten physical violence.
- What do you do?

Remember....

- Always ask a colleague to support you where possible, if there is a CSO or ASM on site ask them first.
- Keep local records up to date and accurate
- Call 999 if in any doubt
- You will never 'get into trouble' for taking action against inappropriate, threatening or aggressive behaviour

Finally.....

- You all do an amazing job and most (!) of our customers are so appreciative of your friendly approach and hard work so remember the lives you have a positive impact on every day.

