

De-escalation Tips

FOR LIVE CALLS WITH CLIENTS/CUSTOMERS

1. GIVE TIME TO VENT



Do not interrupt, even to help.

People need to empty the tank before they can hear you. The pause after they finish is their brain working. Give them time to fully explain.

2. SET THE TONE/TEMP



Never match their volume.

Go quieter and calmer than feels natural, especially if they came in hot. Your tone sets the temperature of the call, not your words.

3. NAME THE FEELING



"It sounds like this has been a real headache."

Naming what someone feels tells them you get it. It also takes the heat off of the feeling.

4. LISTEN & CONFIRM



Aim to hear, "That's right."

Repeat their side back so well that they say "that's right." That is the moment things turn from agreement to understanding. "You're right" means they've tuned you out.

5. ASK 'HOW' NOT WHY



Ask how, not why.

"How can I make this right for you?"

'Why' sounds like blame. 'How' hands them the problem to solve alongside you instead of a wall to push against.

6. WORST GOES FIRST



Say the hard part first.

Name the worst thing they are thinking before they say it.

"You are probably feeling like our price is a little high." Saying it first gets the elephant out of the room.