

# When Customers Behave Badly: Ways to Respond

## Reasons why customers may behave badly

They feel angry, upset, or frustrated due to **personal circumstances**

They have strong emotions about a policy with which **they don't agree**

They receive **poor quality customer service**

They feel they are **not being listened to/heard by employees**

They are more reactive because of **what's happening in the world**

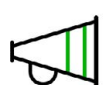
They are having a **bad day**

Customers' expectations of the service they will receive have increased; **more than 65%** of all customers say they **expect higher-quality service** than they did 3-5 years ago. While **10% say** that **companies are meeting their customer service expectations**, this also means that when a customer is unhappy, you're more likely to hear about it.



[zendesk.com/blog/customer-service-statistics/](https://zendesk.com/blog/customer-service-statistics/)  
[comm100.com/blog/top-customer-service-expectations-that-brands-arent-meeting/](https://comm100.com/blog/top-customer-service-expectations-that-brands-arent-meeting/)

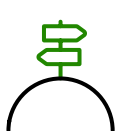
## How to help prevent an altercation



**Communicate** business policies frequently and consistently



**Use social media** and digital newsletters to keep customers informed



**Post easy-to-read signage** about policies at entrance(s)

## Ways to handle a conflict with a customer



- **Rely on managers.** Your managers are better equipped than your employees to address customer conflicts; have a manager handle the latter whenever possible.
- **Listen closely.** Give the customer your focused, undistracted attention. Listen carefully to understand his or her concerns.
- **Demonstrate your understanding.** Restate the customers' concern to show that you are paying attention. Show empathy and convey that you understand their emotions.
- **Attempt to deescalate.** Maintain your calm while you explain the company policies, and offer customer the opportunity to comply with them.
- **Stay in control.** If customer won't comply, remain calm – even if you must ask him or her to leave.

While communicating your business policies widely can help reduce the risk of customer conflict, some altercations are unavoidable. Training your staff to handle customer disagreements can help reduce any stress your employees may experience. And, training improves your chances of being able to salvage the relationship with the distressed customer.