

## **Stepping Into a Difficult Customer's Shoes**

For: Customer Service

Duration: 15 minutes

Purpose: This activity helps employees better think about what a difficult customer may be going through, effectively being more understanding and patient.

Supplies: Paper and pens for everyone

### **Instructions:**

1. With this exercise, break your team up into smaller groups of 3 or 4. Then have each group spend five minutes coming up with a rude, demanding, or vague statement a customer could say based off of their own experiences. Then have someone in the team fold the paper over and hand it to the team to their left.
2. For the second round, give teams 5-10 minutes to develop both a backstory and response to the fictitious customer.
3. The idea here is to explain why the customer may have become difficult—for example, maybe the difficult customer had a bad day or a subpar experience.
4. Have groups share the message, the created backstory, and their appropriate customer service response.

### **Debrief:**

- Customers are not usually deliberately rude, demanding or vague. Usually they will have had a bad experience in the past that has caused them to be this way, or they could just be having a bad day. It's important to remember that when you're confronted by one of these customers, there will have been a chain of events for each and every one of them which caused them to act the way they are acting. Knowing this will help you remain objective and solution-focused when these customers come to you for help.