

# HANDLE ATTITUDES FROM CUSTOMERS – People management

## 1) NAME AND DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL

### People Management – EMPATHY - The Astonished Man Short Passage / Situation

A short reading passage describes how two people meet at a car park and look at a particular event and how they react to it. One of them jumps to conclusions and then changes and acknowledges the other person's perception of the matter.

(Reading Notes with two options / responses to the situation).

## 2) OBJECTIVES OF THE TOOL

This tool aims at encouraging **better listening** to **show empathy** with others:

- Listening to what the other is saying.
- Acknowledging what was said, including stating your understanding of what was said and the feelings associated with what was said.
- Not jumping to conclusions.

## 3) CONNECTION OF THE TOOL WITH THE ENEMY

The tool is linked to Handle Attitudes from Customers. There is a need to develop people management skills and show empathy, where listening is at the centre of the process.

Truly listen to people. Listen with your ears, eyes and heart. Pay attention to others' body language, to their tone of voice, to the hidden emotions behind what they are saying to you, and to the context.



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## 4) RESOURCES & MATERIALS

### The Astonished Man short reading passage / situation

I was walking to the exit of a four-story parking building next to a five-story medical clinic. The day was Friday, the time was 2:15 pm, and the building was crammed with cars. A man, who appeared about 75-years-old, walked in. As he neared me, he stopped, turned towards me and said: "Are they giving something away today? I've never seen it so crowded." He appeared unable to believe that the building was filled to capacity.

"I'll bet it's because many people don't work on Fridays, so it's convenient for them to schedule their appointments on Fridays," I said.

(NOTE: My response did not acknowledge either his perception of the building as crowded or his astonishment that it was crowded. I had given him an explanation, not an acknowledgement.)

"It's not because it's Friday. I usually come here on Fridays and it's never been this crowded," he said.

"It is very crowded today, and I don't know why," I said.

(NOTE: I had now acknowledged his perception that the building was crowded! He probably would have been more satisfied if I had also acknowledged his feeling.)

## 5) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOOL

Follow the following **steps**:

- Divide the participants in groups of four.
- Get one person to read the passage with the two different conclusions while the others are listening.
- Discuss and analyse in groups the two different endings and reaction to the same situation as described in the two different notes.
- Bring the discussion back to the full group and get feedback.

**Time allocation:** 5 min per step (Discussion can go on for as long as necessary).



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## 6) WHAT TO LEARN

-Explain how this short passage and how listening carefully involves **empathy** and how it shows **good people management skills** and knowledge of **handling attitudes from customers**.

1. Listening to what the other is saying.
2. Acknowledging what was said, including stating your understanding of what was said and the feelings associated with what was said.
3. Not jumping to conclusions.

### Discussion

In the situation above the person working in the hospital listened to the astonished man and empathised with his perception that the garage was full. He acknowledged the man by spending time listening to the astonished man's statement and acknowledging his statement by stating his understanding of it.

### Key elements to Empathic acknowledgements:

-Listening to what the other is saying.

-Acknowledging what was said, including stating your understanding of what was said and the feelings associated with what was said.

