

# **TRAINING LEADER'S GUIDE**

**JUST A CALL AWAY** Series

## **Attitude is Everything**

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## **FOREWARD**

This program is designed as a half-day training session on how our attitude affects everything we do over the telephone.

Just as the organizations that use this program are wide and varied, so are the desired outcomes of the participants attending. As a result, we have tried to make *Attitude is Everything* as generic and flexible as possible.

This manual will provide you with some background notes, along with practical activities and suggested running times. Feel free to add to or adapt the structure of this training session to suit your needs.

You do not need to complete all exercises provided unless they suit the specific requirements of your organization. Of course, the agenda is only a guide. The time spent on each activity is entirely dependent on the objectives of the trainer/facilitator and the progression rate of participants.

## **PREPARATION**

In order to maximize the benefits of this training session, we recommend that the trainers/facilitators familiarize themselves with the topic at hand. You should be comfortable with the material in both the manual and the video.

You have been supplied with master copies of overhead transparencies and participant handouts. Make sure that sufficient copies of each have been prepared prior to the training session.

In the training room, you will need the following:

- Overhead projector
- Monitor and VCR player
- Whiteboard with markers and eraser
- Note paper and pens or pencils for participants

## SYNOPSIS

### JUST A CALL AWAY – Attitude is Everything

Jackson Smith's wife has just gone into labor with the couple's first child, and like most new fathers, he is desperate to be there. The only problem is he's stuck in another state and has missed his plane home. With the next flight not being until the following morning, Jackson calls another airline to see if they can help out.

This is where he meets Billy. Billy seems like a nice guy, but with only six minutes to go until the end of his shift, the last thing he wants is to have to deal with a customer who wants heaven and earth moved.

Through Billy we discover how our attitudes can profoundly affect the lives of other people. After a few false starts, Billy eventually gets it right, and Jackson makes it to the hospital on time. Jackson even names his little girl after him!

### ICON KEY



Read or Paraphrase



Overhead



Ask and Discuss



Handout



Video

## **COURSE STRUCTURE AND RUNNING TIME**

This course has been designed to run as a half-day training session. If you do all of the course work within the allocated running time, your training session should run for approximately 4 hours.

<b>COURSEWORK</b>	<b>RUNNING TIME</b>
Welcome	15 minutes
Objectives and Agenda	10 minutes
Introduction	25 minutes
The Video and Discussion	40 minutes
Activity 1 – The Difference Between Hearing and Listening	25 minutes
Activity 2 – True or False?	20 minutes
Activity 3 – Impact of a Bad Attitude	15 minutes
Break	20 minutes
Activity 4 – Positive Versus Negative	20 minutes
Summary and Debrief	50 minutes

## WELCOME

**Time:** 15 minutes

### Trainer's Instructions:

- Welcome all participants to the *Attitude is Everything* training session.
- Introduce yourself and tell the group something about your training background.
- Explain how the training session is to be structured, how long it will run, when the video will be shown, when breaks will be taken, what refreshments are available, and where the phone and restrooms are.

## OBJECTIVES AND AGENDA

**Time:** 10 minutes

### Trainer's Instructions:

- Discuss the objectives and agenda of this training course with the group.



After completing the training session on *Attitude is Everything*, you will understand the following:



- The importance of listening
- How to use active listening gestures
- How our attitudes affect the lives of others
- Customers can hear body language over the phone
- The importance of going the extra mile
- Why we should strive to create advocates
- The importance of showing empathy
- Customers should be treated as you would be treated

## INTRODUCTION

**Time:** 25 minutes

### **Trainer's Instructions:**

- Using your own research and the brief notes provided below, give participants a brief overview of how important attitudes are.
- Invite questions and discussion from the group as you go.



By accepting your job as a telephone operator, you've essentially entered into an agreement with your employer to provide a service in exchange for a reward—usually monetary. However, there is a big difference between providing a service and providing an excellent service—and that difference is “your attitude.”

Most organizations clearly define the requirements and the practical tasks for performing your job. You know what to say when you answer the call. You know the procedures to follow to serve the customer's needs. However, without “the right attitude,” somehow all the right procedures amount to very little.

### ATTITUDE

“The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. ATTITUDE, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important that the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company . . . a church . . . a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past . . . we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you.

WE ARE IN CHARGE OF OUR ATTITUDES.”



Communication is not simply a one-way process where someone sends a message and the other people absorb it like a sponge.

The words you say are only one component of the communication process because you can hear body language over the phone. Sit up straight. Give the customer your full attention, and smile.



- **You can hear body language over the phone**
- **Sit up straight**
- **Give the customer your full attention**
- **Smile**

Voice tone and inflections account for 45% of your message. A high, unsteady voice can sound childlike. Too deep a voice can sound threatening, and a monotone voice sounds bored.



- **Voice tone and inflections account for 45% of your message**
- **Too deep — threatening**
- **Too high — childlike**
- **Monotone — bored**

Your voice should project confidence, be well modulated, clear and easy to understand.



- **Project confidence**
- **Be well modulated**
- **Clear and easy to understand**

We must develop good listening skills.



**The following is a list of “dos” and “don’ts” for good listening:**

- Don’t stereotype the speaker because of age, sex, economic class, mannerisms, race, religion, or sexual preference.
- Don’t express boredom, embarrassment, or be threatened by what the speaker is saying.
- Don’t constantly drift off into a remote association with what the speaker is saying.
- Look for feelings as well as facts.
- Don’t read too much into what is being said, ignoring plain facts and clear words.
- Don’t constantly rehearse witty and profound responses before the speaker is finished speaking.
- Don’t react automatically, unthinkingly, and predictably over sensitive issues.
- Don’t jump in with a quick fix when you think you understand what the speaker is saying. Always allow them to finish.



Active listening gestures are verbal responses such as: “Uh huh,” “Right,” “OK,” “I see,” and “That’s great.”



**“Uh huh”**  
**“Right”**  
**“OK”**  
**“I see”**  
**“That’s great”**



When you listen – be sure to hear. Put yourself in the customer’s shoes, and show empathy and compassion for their problem. Strive to understand the customer’s emotions.

And most importantly, go the extra mile. Take responsibility for the customer’s satisfaction. Think of it as a personal challenge, leaving no stone unturned.

Remember the “Ladder of Loyalty,” where you want to turn someone from your target market into an advocate for your organization.



**ADVOCATES**  
**Clients**  
**Customers**  
**Prospects**  
**Target Market**

**LADDER OF LOYALTY**

And finally, treat customers as you would be treated yourself. Be friendly, honest, respectful, and courteous.



**Friendly**  
**Honest**  
**Respectful**  
**Courteous**

## THE VIDEO AND DISCUSSION

**Time:**           **Video 15 minutes**  
                      **Discussion 25 minutes**

### Trainer's Instructions:



- Play the video *Attitude is Everything*
- Lead a short discussion around the video



- Do you think Billy enjoys his job?
- Do you think Jackson feels Tango Airlines really cares about its customers?
- Is understanding the customer's emotions enough these days?
- Does Billy have any idea how his attitude impacts the lives of others?
- Do you think Jackson will become an advocate for Tango Airlines once Billy has solved his problem?

## **ACTIVITY 1: THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HEARING AND LISTENING**

**Time:** 25 minutes

### **Trainer's Instructions:**

- Divide participants into groups of six to eight and ask them to come up with what they think the difference between hearing and listening is. Also ask them to list some active listening gestures.
- Go through the responses on the whiteboard and discuss.

### **Possible suggestions:**



- Listening involves absorbing the words that are being said.
- Hearing involves the extra step of understanding.
- Hearing involves showing empathy and caring.
- Listening is more detached than hearing.
- Active listening gestures include: yes, right, OK, I see, certainly, etc.

## ACTIVITY 2: TRUE OR FALSE?

**Time:** 20 minutes

### Trainer's Instructions:

- Ask participants to complete the True or False? handout.
- Go through the handout and discuss the answers. Address any questions the group may have.

### True or False? Facilitator's Copy



Statement	True/False
Our attitudes are conveyed by the tone of our voice and the inflections we use.	True
The difference between good and great service is your attitude.	True
A good attitude is all about knowing the correct procedures and policies of your company.	False
You can hear body language over the phone.	True

A lot of customers are more valuable than a few advocates.	False
Showing sympathy for a customer's situation is more important than showing empathy.	False
You should always go the extra mile to solve a customer's problem – even if it isn't in your job description.	True
Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it.	True
Personal customer attention is too time consuming and expensive these days.	False
If we have a positive, upbeat attitude, our customers will like and trust us.	True

## **ACTIVITY 3: IMPACT OF A BAD ATTITUDE**

**Time:** 15 minutes

### **Trainer's Instructions:**

- Divide participants into the same groups of six to eight and ask them what they think the result of having a bad attitude is on both customers and the organization.
- Go through the responses on the whiteboard and discuss.

### **Possible suggestions:**



- Customer will go elsewhere.
- Sales and profits will be negatively affected.
- Customers will tell their friends and family about the bad experience.
- A bad attitude has an adverse effect on the organization's reputation.
- It may have personal consequences for a customer.
- The customer is dissatisfied.

## ACTIVITY 4: POSITIVE VERSUS NEGATIVE

**Time:** 20 minutes

### Trainer's Instructions:

- Divide participants into the same groups of six to eight and ask them to collectively complete the Positive Versus Negative handout.
- Go through the responses on the whiteboard and discuss.



Negative Attitude	Positive Attitude
Complaining customers are an inconvenience.	Complaining customers are an opportunity to get back on track.
It's management's responsibility to solve customers' problems.	Everyone is responsible for solving customers' problems.
Discourage complaints.	Encourage complaints.
Attend to problems as they arise.	Fix problems before they arise.
Shut the customer up.	Hear the customer out.
It's not my fault.	Take responsibility.
No complaints means everything is OK.	We should be concerned if we are not receiving customer feedback.

## SUMMARY AND DEBRIEF

**Time:** 50 minutes

### Trainer's Instructions:



- Play the video again.
- Go through some of the training points highlighted in the video using the overheads.
- Ask for and answer any questions that participants may have.



- Let participants know if and when any follow-up training is to be conducted.

- Give participants a copy of the Summary Sheet handout.



- End your session by reading the Attitude poem that was read at the beginning of the training session. You may also provide each participant with a copy of the Attitude poem handout.

**PARTICIPANT HANDOUT**  
**MASTERS**



**The following is a list of “do’s” and “don’ts” for good listening:**

- Don’t stereotype the speaker because of age, sex, economic class, mannerisms, race, religion, or sexual preference.
- Don’t express boredom, embarrassment, or be threatened by what the speaker is saying.
- Don’t constantly drift off into a remote association with what the speaker is saying.
- Look for feelings as well as facts.
- Don’t read too much into what is being said, ignoring plain facts and clear words.
- Don’t constantly rehearse witty and profound responses before the speaker is finished speaking.
- Don’t react automatically, unthinkingly, and predictably over sensitive issues.
- Don’t jump in with a quick fix when you think you understand what the speaker is saying. Always allow them to finish.



## TRUE OR FALSE?

Decide whether the following statements are true or false.

Statement	True/False
Our attitudes are conveyed by the tone of our voice and the inflections we use.	
The difference between good and great service is your attitude.	
A good attitude is all about knowing the correct procedures and policies of your company.	
You can hear body language over the phone.	
A lot of customers are more valuable than a few advocates.	
Showing sympathy for a customer's situation is more important than showing empathy.	
You should always go the extra mile to solve a customer's problem – even if it isn't in your job description.	
Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it.	
Personal customer attention is too time consuming and expensive these days.	
If we have a positive, upbeat attitude, our customers will like and trust us.	



## POSITIVE VERSUS NEGATIVE

The following handout gives you the negative attitude towards the customer. Fill in the positive attitude.

Negative Attitude	Positive Attitude
Complaining customers are an inconvenience.	
It's management's responsibility to solve customers' problems.	
Discourage complaints.	
Attend to problems as they arise.	
Shut the customer up.	
It's not my fault.	
No complaints means everything is OK.	



## SUMMARY SHEET

The difference between good service and great service is ATTITUDE.

The words you say are only one component of the communication process because you can hear body language over the phone. Sit up straight, give the customer your full attention, and smile.

Voice tone and inflections account for 45% of your message. A high, unsteady voice can sound childlike. Too deep a voice can sound threatening, and a monotone voice sounds bored.

Your voice should project confidence, be well modulated, clear and easy to understand.

Listen to the customer's problem. Don't interrupt and listen actively. Active listening gestures are "Uh huh," "Right," "OK," "I see," and "That's great."

When you listen – be sure to hear. Put yourself in the customer's shoes and show empathy and compassion for their problem. Strive to understand the customer's emotions.

And most importantly, go the extra mile. Take responsibility for the customer's satisfaction. Think of it as a personal challenge, leaving no stone unturned.

Remember the "Ladder of Loyalty," where you want to turn someone from your target market into an advocate for your organization.

And finally, treat customers as you would be treated yourself. Be friendly, honest, respectful, and courteous.



## ATTITUDE

“The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. ATTITUDE, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company . . . a church . . . a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past . . . we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% about what happens to me and 90% about how I react to it. And so it is with you. WE ARE IN CHARGE OF OUR ATTITUDES.”

**anon**

**NOTES:**

**OVERHEAD  
MASTERS**



# **OBJECTIVES AND AGENDA**

**After completing this training course, you will understand:**

- **The importance of listening**
- **How to use active listening gestures**
- **How our attitudes affect the lives of others**
- **Customers can hear body language over the phone**
- **The importance of going the extra mile**
- **Why we should strive to create advocates**
- **The importance of showing empathy**
- **Customers should be treated as you would be treated**



- **You can HEAR body language over the phone**
- **Sit up STRAIGHT**
- **Give the customer your FULL attention**
- **SMILE**



**Voice tone and inflections  
account for 45% of your  
message.**

- **Too deep — threatening**
- **Too high — childlike**
- **Monotone — bored**



- **Project CONFIDENCE**
- **Be well MODULATED**
- **CLEAR**
- **EASY to understand**



**“Uh huh”**

**“Right”**

**“OK”**

**“I see”**

**“That’s great”**



**ADVOCATES**

**Clients**

**Customers**

**Prospects**

**Target Market**

**LADDER OF LOYALTY**



- Friendly
- Honest
- Respectful
- Courteous

**NOTES:**