**3 DIFFICULT CUSTOMER SERVICE SCENARIO EXAMPLES AND SOLUTIONS**

These are some of the most common situations that can happen, plus how to fix them. Are you ready to become amazing at customer service?

**CUSTOMER SERVICE SCENARIO 1: ANGRY CUSTOMER**

An angry customer is something just about every seasoned business owner has witnessed. Since most small businesses don’t typically have dedicated customer service reps, the person needing to know these [customer management](https://broadly.com/review-management/) skills should also participate in the role-playing scenarios we’ll cover later.

So, you’ve got an angry customer—perhaps you’re communicating over the phone or through your [website live chat](https://broadly.com/web-chat/). In any case, the best thing to remember when you have an angry customer negatively addressing you is one simple acronym: HEARD. The HEARD technique goes like this:

**H: Hear –** Let your customer know they are being heard. Be patient, and don’t cut them off.

**E: Empathize –** Having empathy in business pays off in all relationships—practice understanding and compassion when listening to your customer’s grievances.

**A: Apologize –** Even if you were not at fault, after empathizing with the customer, you should be able to sincerely apologize. Nobody likes being inconvenienced; you should understand that. It’s like [replying to a negative review](https://broadly.com/blog/how-to-respond-to-negative-reviews/) IRL. (Pro tip: there are [reputation management tools](https://broadly.com/reputation-management/) to help with angry customers online.)

**R: Resolve –** Come to some sort of common ground with the customer. Ask how you can help. Find a way to make things right—whether this means you give them a discount on future purchases or a free product.

**D: Diagnose.** After the issue has been resolved and both parties are amicable, get to the bottom of the issue. Who or what *really* caused this to happen? This way, both you and the customer benefit from new information that can help it from happening again.

Ensuring that everyone who deals with customers on a daily basis follows this checklist can greatly improve your reputation. The last thing you’d want is an angry customer taking to Twitter to rant about their horrible experience with your business—resolve the problem before that can ever happen.

### ****CUSTOMER SERVICE SCENARIO 2: UNABLE TO ANSWER A CUSTOMER’S QUESTION****

This is never a good feeling, and it most often happens to new employees. If this happens, even if you don’t know the answer, you should try to find it. You can usually use [problem-solving skills](https://broadly.com/blog/customer-service-skills-employee-needs/) to answer the question. If you truly don’t know the answer, inform the customer that this is the first time it’s come up, then proceed to ask for the time needed to find the answer. Many times, a good default is to report the question to a higher level of management or simply ask. Remind new employees of these tactics during onboarding, and hopefully, you won’t run into this problem too often.

### ****CUSTOMER SERVICE SCENARIO 3: CRISIS MODE****

A crisis can strike any company at any time. You often don’t see them coming; that’s why crises can be so damaging. However, if you and your staff are equipped to handle a crisis when it comes your way, you will be much better off. What kind of crises are we talking about? Well, one example in today’s digital age is security breaches. Scammers are becoming trickier with their techniques, making it very hard to even know you’re giving away sensitive information to a thief.

Thus, it’s best to train everyone on proper crisis management, especially when it comes to [speaking with customers](https://broadly.com/customer-feedback/). The people who have invested in you will be upset. You want to keep their business, so, you…

* **Apologize**. Even if a crisis is not directly your fault, apologize. Whatever did happen caused harm to your customers, and you should want to genuinely apologize for that.
* **Communicate**. Keep everyone updated. Whether that means issuing press releases, posting on Facebook, or sending emails to your list, keep your customers in the loop on the steps you’re making to amend the crisis and ensure it never happens again. It is important to keep the communication open if you want to win back your customers’ trust.

Crises are never simple, cut-and-dry experiences, but they can be handled well if you stay honest and stick to these tips.

**CUSTOMER SERVICE ROLE PLAY SCENARIOS**

If you really want to excel at customer service, we recommend role-playing a few common customer service scenarios with your team. Basic role-play means one person will act as the customer and the other will act as the employee handling the situation. It can be fun if you’ve got some creative staff members!

Below are some examples of customer service role-play scenarios, just fill them in with scenarios that can or have happened at your business to make them relevant to your team.

* A customer has come to speak to a member of staff to make a complaint. They are threatening to get you to shut down. Your objective is to resolve the issue with minimum reputation and financial damage to the company. What do you do? (Inspired by [this example](https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/careers-new/information-for-students/apps/assessment-centres-1/role-play-exercises-1/example-role-play-scenarios))
* Someone slipped and hurt his or her self in your place of business. What is the wrong thing to do in this situation? The right thing?
* A begrudged former employee is bad-mouthing your company online with all kinds of [negative fake reviews](https://broadly.com/blog/how-to-remove-google-reviews/) and untrue stories. How do you get him or her to stop without elevating the issue further?
* Your employee accidentally deleted your entire database, including personal customer information. Customers are not happy and refuse to give you their information again. What’s your first move?
* Someone wants a refund but it’s unwarranted. They’re trying to bully you into giving them their money back for no real cause. What do you say to him/her?
* A thief broke into your office last night and stole most of the electronics. What’s the first thing you do? The second?
* Two employees are having a disagreement. There are customers all around and curse words are being said. As the manager, how do you resolve the issue without scaring off customers?

<https://broadly.com/blog/customer-service-roleplay-scenarios/>