

Conflict handling training programme launched to counteract abuse and attacks on customer facing staff

1 year ago



Against the backdrop of soaring rates of abuse and attacks on customer facing staff, People 1st International has launched the 'WorldHost Dealing with Conflict' training programme.

This new 1-day face-to-face programme is designed to equip customer-facing staff, including shop workers, waiters, security guards and receptionists, with the strategies to deal with conflict, anger and abuse in the workplace.

Staff will learn how to respond to conflict and recognise the signs of anger as well as receiving a grounding in appropriate language and actions for conflict situations to help minimise incidents of attacks and abuse.

The WorldHost Principles of Customer Service programme has been delivered to more than 300,000 customer-facing staff at businesses across a broad range of sectors. It has also helped to support customer interactions at high profile sporting and cultural events, including the 2012 London Olympics.

Despite a long-track record of working with customer-facing businesses, this is the first time that the programme has specifically designed training for dealing with conflict situations and is prompted by the rising tide of abuse that staff are facing, says Jane Rexworthy, Executive Director of People 1st International.

"It is regrettable that the growing trend of increased customer hostility towards customer-facing staff has meant that the ability to effectively resolve conflicts has become an all but essential skill."

"Reflective of the fact, in our most recent survey of 250 retail and hospitality businesses, the ability to resolve conflict was identified as one of the top in-demand skills by employers, meaning that training to

help employees deal with potential conflict is paramount.

“Enabling staff to differentiate between anger and abuse and apply strategies to minimise the escalation of a customer’s anger is a core part of the ‘WorldHost Dealing with Conflict’ programme. So too the ability to recall key phrases that will deescalate, diffuse or improve the outcomes of conversations that would otherwise end in escalation of conflict.”

The programme, which is available from March has already been piloted by a number of customer-facing businesses, including Change Centre – a community sports venue in Dundee. Centre Manager, Scott Hollinshead had this to say:

“The course is interactive and supports the incorporation of real-life scenarios to practice conflict resolution skills, making it highly relevant and applicable to different settings. With businesses facing a range of challenges including conflict, I can see this course having a strong appeal. The topic really resonated with our team of employees and volunteers.”

Security services provider, Manguard Plus has also piloted the programme. Commercial Manager, Garry Bergin, shared his views:

“In my experience, I have encountered numerous programmes aimed at enhancing customer service and conflict management. However, the WorldHost programme stands out for its comprehensive approach and targeted strategies. It not only equips individuals with the essential skills for effective conflict resolution but also fosters a culture of excellence in customer service.

“Since implementing this programme, we have observed a notable improvement in client interactions and a positive shift in our organisation’s service quality. I highly recommend the WorldHost programme for any entity seeking to elevate their customer service standards and manage conflicts with professionalism and ease.”

The WorldHost ‘Dealing with Conflict’ programme will help prepare employees to manage conflict with customers, visitors and guests by providing simple strategies and universal guidance to manage interventions professionally and effectively with the aim of defusing the situation whilst providing appropriate customer solutions. [Find out more.](#)