

Handling Conflicts with Clients and Others

While most people are pleasant to work with, there may be times a conflict occurs, especially with a client. It is important to be aware of situations that may trigger a conflict and try to avoid them whenever reasonably possible as well as know how to handle a conflict should one occur.

Triggering Events

L...ong wait times
I...ncorrect or incomplete information
M...iscommunication
E...rror on part of the staff
S...peaking abruptly, hastily or rudely

(Remember LIMES can make things go sour.)

Handling Conflicts

C...almly listen
A...ddress the problem
R...esolve to fix the problem
E...nsure the person you will follow-through on the resolution to the problem
S...eek help if needed

(Remember CARES lets a person know we value their business.)

While most problems can be talked out, it is important you keep yourself in a safe position should a person become violent. Some ways to do this are to keep a partition such as a counter between you and the other person or keep a door open should you need to escape quickly or so someone else can hear you if you need help. Should you feel you have a potentially physical conflict, use the speakerphone or verbally call out for Dr. Armstrong (need someone with a "strong arm") to help. This can help serve as a non-threatening, discreet way of seeking assistance for a potentially violent situation. If you believe the situation requires law enforcement, call 911.

The important thing is to help the person if you can, but to keep yourself safe at the same time should the situation become aggressive. Report any threatening behavior of a client, co-worker, or third party to management immediately.