

# How to Talk to Customers

*Communications Skills, Empathy, Handling Difficult Customers, and Chat Handling Fundamentals*

**Myra Golden**  
**Customer Experience Designer**





Mona Shaw



**Anger must be acknowledged**

**Show genuine concern**

**The issue isn't the issue**

# What we'll cover today

De-escalation

Empathy

Telephone Skills

Chat Fundamentals

# 3 Truths and a Lie

- I have run a half-marathon
- I'm an introvert
- I drive a Mini Cooper
- I love Nutter Butters



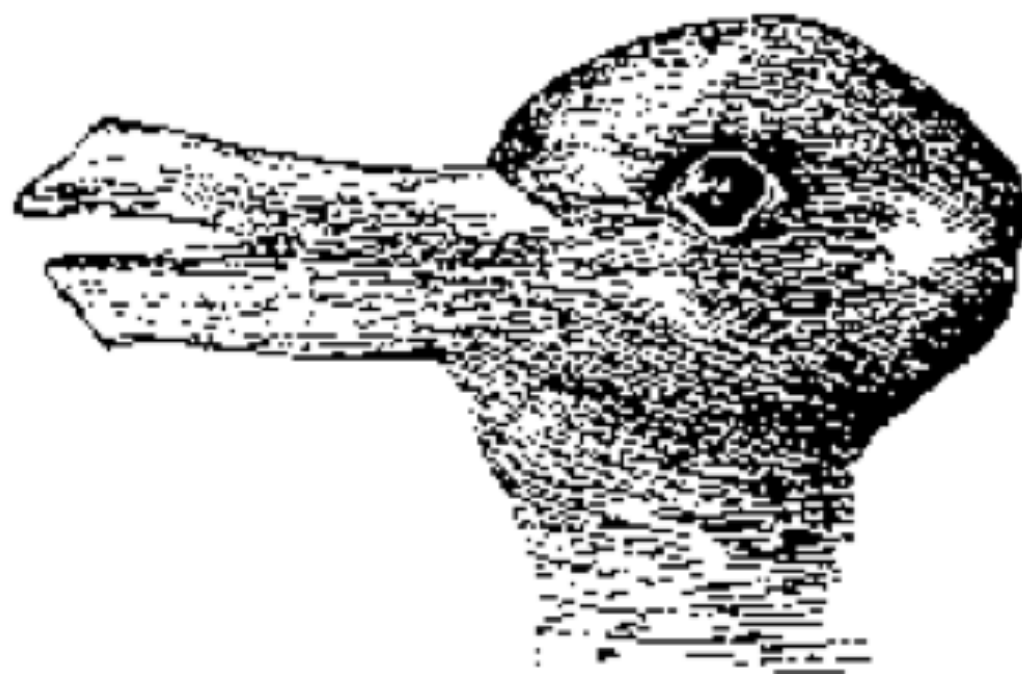
**Empathy**

Assumptions often block some of  
us from feeling and conveying  
empathy









Avoid any tendency to make assumptions about what your customer wants by listening with the intent to understand. —>

Listen with the intent to  
understand

(not to be understood)



# Bonus: Empathic Listening

*Not in workbook*

- Tone
- Emphasis
- Flow

# Adopt & Apply

*In space at the top of page 1 (above Empathy)*

# Telephone Soft Skills p5

- How to open a call
- Speak in complete sentences
- Yield to customers
- End with a fond farewell

De-escalation

The issue is not the issue



# The issue is not the issue

How the issue is handled becomes the issue

# De-escalation Strategy

Recognize

Reframe

Resolve

**Recognize**







# Limit Responses to Simple Reassurances

- *"Um hmm..."*
- *"I see."*



Listen with the intent to  
understand.

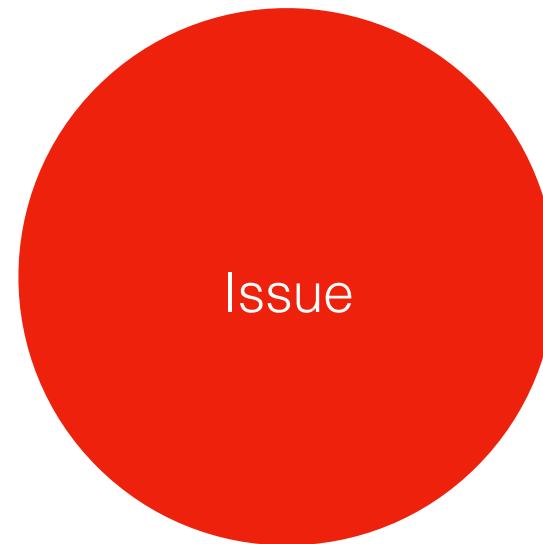
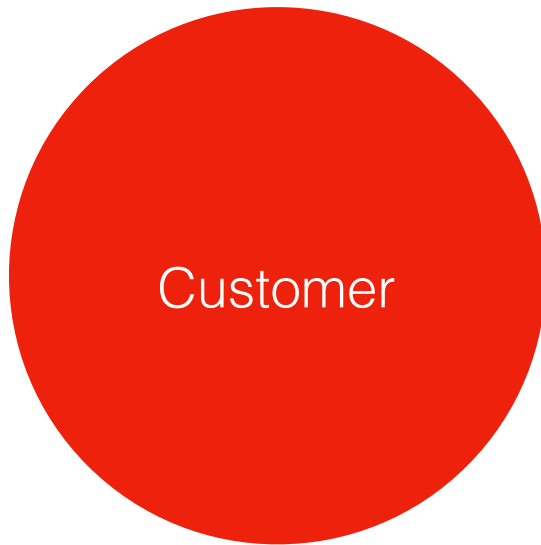
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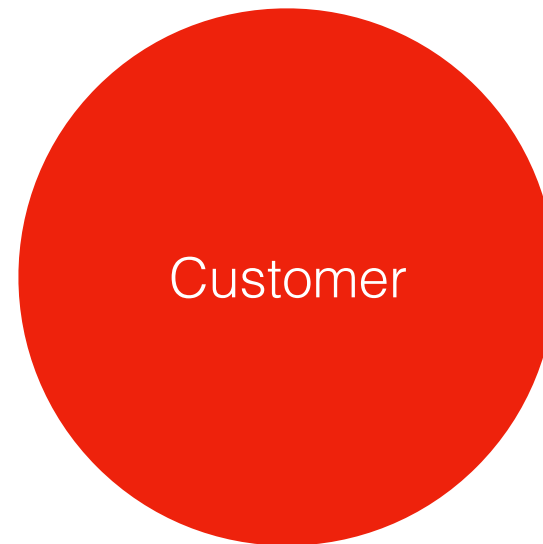
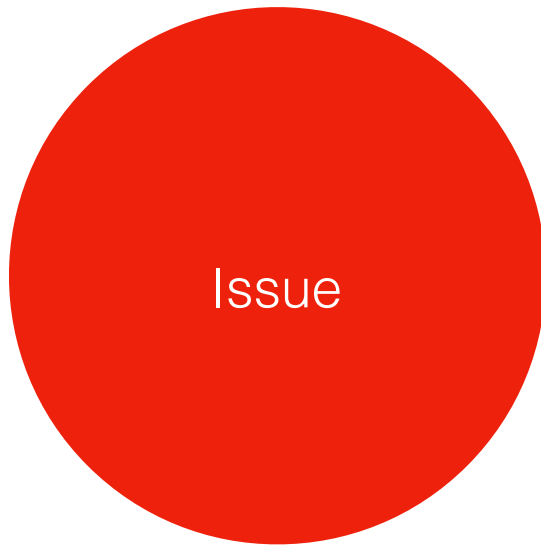
Use Partnering Language



Customer

First Federal  
Lakewood





# Partnering Language

- *“I realize this has been frustrating for you.”*
- *“I can see your point on that.”*
- *“We want to get to the bottom of this as much as you do.”*
- *“I understand and will do my best to take care of this for you.”*
- *“I’m sorry this has been your experience.”*

How QVC recognized my  
emotion

**Info:** Welcome to QVC's live chat service. This is 'Kathi P'. How may I help you?

**Myra Golden:** Hi Kathi. Can you tell me the status of my return of the Canon HV30 camcorder?

**Kathi P:** Thanks for waiting.

**Kathi P:** I'll be glad to check for you.

**Kathi P:** Thank you for waiting while I check on this for you.

**Kathi P:** Thanks for waiting.

**Kathi P:** I appreciate your patience.

**Kathi P:** Ms Golden, I'm so sorry the Canon Vixia HV30 MiniDV HD Camcorder hasn't been processed as of yet. I know you're anxious to have this completed. The return processing time can take up to 17 days from the date an order is returned to QVC. I hope your item is processed soon.

**Myra Golden:** Thank you.

**Kathi P:** You're certainly welcome, my pleasure! Have a wonderful day and please don't hesitate to contact us anytime, we're always glad to help.

**Info:** Your chat transcript will be sent to [myra@myragolden.com](mailto:myra@myragolden.com) at the end of



# Interactive Learning Opportunity (p3)

*The person in your group who most recently graduated from high school will lead this discussion.*

# Recognition Discussion

- *What were some good **recognition** statements you have heard?*
- *What **statements of recognition** did you come up with for routine challenging conversations?*

# Adopt and Apply

*Use the space at the top of page 3*

**Reframe**



# Reframing Statements

- *"We have a situation that has come about from a past issue. I want to now focus on what we can do to fix this for you."*
- *"We want to get to the bottom of this as much as you do."*
- *"I certainly understand your concern. Let's take a look and see what's going on."*
- *"I will do my best to take care of this for you."*

# 3 Steps to Reframing

*"Here's what  
we know."*

*"Here's what  
we've done."*

*"Here's what's  
next."*

# Interactive Learning Opportunity (p5)

*The person who last ate pasta will lead this discussion.*

# Adopt and Apply

*Anywhere in your handbook where you have free space*





**Resolve**

Resolving is either resolution  
or an explanation

# Applying the 3 Steps

p6

# Applying the 3 Steps (p5)

1. Get into groups of 3
2. Designate Employee, Customer, Observer
3. **Customer** to come up with realistic and routine problem
4. Customer and Employee role-play - **Employee uses each of 3 steps**
5. Observer to use page 6 to take notes
6. Then, switch roles so that everyone plays customer, employee, and observer

Adopt and Apply

Start  
Stop  
Continue

in box on top of page 6

# Part Two



4 Easy Steps for Designing the Very Best Chat  
Experience



One of my best chat experiences  
was with Bank of America

Recall the best experience  
you've had over chat.

Precisely what made it such a good experience.

What is one of the worst chat  
experiences you've had?

What factors made it bad for you?

# 4 Biggest Mistakes in Chat

1. Failing to create rapport
2. Not really reading the chat
3. Making the customer work too hard
4. Not expressing empathy for a problem



How you can deliver the best possible chat experience  
**in 4 Easy Steps**



# Establish Rapport

Step 1



Now connected to Adrian from Amazon.com.

My Kindle will no longer charge. The charger that came with the Kindle Fire failed and we have since bought 2 other chargers that will not charge the device.

Thank you for contacting Kindle support, my name is Adrian. I'm sorry to hear that your Kindle Fire is not charging, I'll be more than glad to help you find a solution for this situation. Before we start, how are you

doing really well Adrian. How nice of you to ask. I'm sorry you have to work on the holiday. :(

I'm really glad to hear you're doing really well!

Working on a holiday is not that big of a deal, I have health and the opportunity to help others, so everything is good :)

I love your attitude Adrian!

Thanks! :)

Could you please tell me for how long have you been experiencing this problem with your Kindle?

About 2-3 months. When it first happened, we bought a new charger. Then a third.

Does the LED light turn on when you plug it into charge?

It does not.

If you move the cable around in an attempt to get the light to turn on, does it work?

I have tried that many times and yet it still does not work.

By any chance does the device have any charge left?

It does not.

By any chance, have you tried charging it with your computer?

I have not tried that. We can try it right now.

I plugged it into my computer right now, but the red LED light is not on.

Please give it a few moments, the LED takes a while to turn on while connected to a low power source like the USB port of a computer

My.

No light yet?

Nothing.

Well Myra, it looks like the device needs to be replaced. Has your Kindle ever been dropped, has any pressure been applied to the Kindle, or have any liquids come into contact with the device?

I have been very careful to expose this to liquids and it has not been dropped or had pressure applied.

I'll check real quick on the warranty status of your Kindle Fire, and see what options are available for it. I'll be right back

Thank you.



***Rapport: "Before we  
start,  
how are you doing  
today, Myra?"***

# Creating Rapport Over Chat

- Use lots of personal pronouns
- Make an offer to assist
- Give an immediate enthusiastic response to customer's request
- Use positive “update” statements while you're looking into the account





# Use lots of personal pronouns

I, We, Us, You, Your

*"Thank you for contacting First  
Federal Lakewood. How may **I**  
help **you** today?"*

# Give an immediate enthusiastic response

- The faster the response, the greater the satisfaction (AT&T)
- Shortcuts help with this



# Give update statements

- *"Please allow me just a moment to look into this for you."*
- *"Still checking, Lynn."*
- *"Thanks for your patience, Tony, while I look into this."*



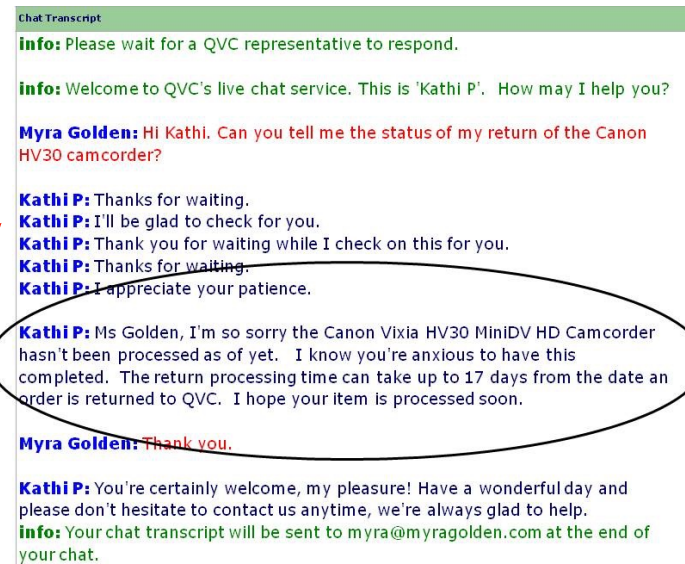
# Save time with successful shortcuts

Step 2



Write your  
shortcuts in a  
casual, friendly and  
natural language

QVC did



Chat Transcript

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**Kathi P:** You're certainly welcome, my pleasure! Have a wonderful day and please don't hesitate to contact us anytime, we're always glad to help.

**info:** Your chat transcript will be sent to myra@myragolden.com at the end of your chat.

# Shortcuts to Start a Chat

- *"Thanks for contacting First Federal Lakewood. How may I assist you, Tori."*
- *"Hello LaTasha, how may I help you?"*
- *"Nice to meet you, Cynthia! How can I help you today?"*
- *And then...*
  - *"I'm happy to help."*
  - *"To get started, may I know the last 4 digits on your debit card? (or whatever verification question you ask)"*

# Shortcuts for Clarification or More Information

- *"Let me see if I have this correct. You want me to..."*
- *"If I understand you correctly..."*
- *"Tell me more about..."*
- *"So you're saying that....correct?"*
- *"This is what I understand you are telling me..."*



# Good Shortcuts for Research Time

- *"Thanks for waiting while I check on this for you."*
- *"Please allow me 2-3 minutes to look into this for you."*
- *"Thanks for your patience while I continue to look into this."*

# Shortcuts and Sentences For When You Don't Know the Answer

- *"That's a good question. Please allow me a few moments to find out for you."*
- *"I'm sorry, I don't have information on that. Will you allow me a few moments to clarify this with my manager?"*

The “Partnering Language”  
phrases on page 2 are fantastic  
for chat.

After you've been  
chatting for 30-90  
days

Brainstorm shortcuts that will be  
helpful





# Reduce customer effort

Step 3

Some interactions are too  
complex for chat

# Reduce customer effort

- Aim for first contact resolution
- Focus less on speed of interaction and more on resolving issues





Make customers feel completely taken care of

Step 4



**Meeting un-expressed needs**



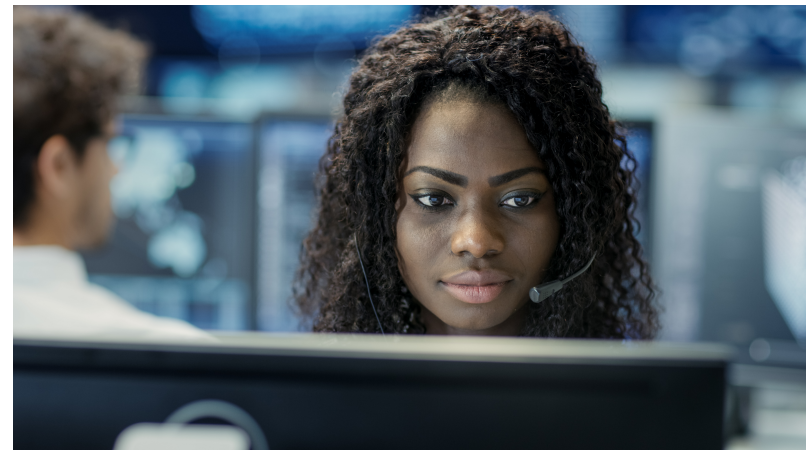


# Making customers feel taken care of

- Convey empathy when appropriate
- Respond to customer within 2 minutes of customer/agent last response
- Check in with customer after 2 minutes if customer is unresponsive

# Quickly and effectively closing a chat session

- *"Everything is all set with your application, Myra. Is there anything else I can assist you with today?"*
- *"Great. You'll be receiving a customer satisfaction survey today and we would appreciate you taking the time to tell us how we did."*
- *"To end this chat, please go ahead and click **end chat**. Have a great day."*



# SMART GOAL-SETTING

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Write the letters S.M.A.R.T. vertically on your index card

# S.M.A.R.T. Goal

- **S**pecific (*The technique I'll try THIS week*)
- **M**easurable (*How can I measure to make this goal?*)
- **A**ttainable (*Situations I will apply this technique*)
- **R**elevant (*How does my goal relate to First Federal Lakewood?*)
- **T**ime-phased (*First action I will take and when I'll take it*)

—Thank you.