



Verbal De-Escalation

Ohio Code Enforcement Officials Association
August 15, 2019



THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN RESOURCES

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OBJECTIVES



- 1. Identify best practices for citizen encounters**
- 2. Explore L.E.A.P.S. Method**
- 3. Apply verbal de-escalation skills**

Code Enforcement Encounter Steps

1. Use a universal greeting
2. Identify yourself and the department
3. Share the reason for the stop
4. Share the justification of the stop
5. Ask for identification/Request cooperation
6. Clarify
7. Decide to leave or stay
8. Search/Seize (acquire proof)
9. Close the encounter





Escalating Phrases

- ‘You wouldn’t understand.’
- ‘Because those are the rules.’
- ‘It’s none of your business.’
- “What do you want me to do about it?’

De-escalating Phrases

- ‘I hope I can explain this...’
- Explain the rules in a friendly tone.
- Explain why the information is private.
- With a concerned tone, offer an apology ‘I don’t have any further recommendations.’



Escalating Phrases

- 'Calm down!'
- 'I'm not going to say this again.'
- 'Why don't you be reasonable?'
- 'What is your problem?'

De-escalating Phrases

- 'I understand that this is frustrating, here's what I can do to help.'
- 'As an important matter, I can send you information or we can write the issues down together.'
- 'Let me see if I understand your position,' then paraphrase their own words
- 'I'm sorry. I don't have any further recommendations. I wish I did and I'd like to help, but I can't.'

L.E.A.P.S. Method

5 Basic tools to generate voluntary compliance

Listen

- Actively illustrating you are listening using eye contact, head nodding and short phrases.

Empathize

- Understanding; being aware of and sensitive to the feelings, thoughts and experiences of the citizen or customer.

Ask

- Asking questions to gain more information. Fact-finding, asking for specific data or resolution.

Paraphrase

- Putting complaints/responses in your own words and playing it back for the citizen with dialed back tone and emotion.

Summarize

- Making a concise statement of your actions and the actions of the citizen. Executing the conclusion of the matter.



Ideas
Suggestions
Questions

Related Training Courses:

- Navigating Difficult Conversations
- Communicating with Tact & Diplomacy
- Dealing with Difficult People
- Conflict Resolution
- Rising Above Anger
- Implicit Bias
- Emotional Intelligence
- 6 Critical Elements of Customer Service



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