

Chapter 1: The principles of conflict management to the role

Conflict: conflict is often defined as serious difference between two or more opinions, principles or interests.

Conflict management: is the practise of recognising and dealing with such conflicts in a rational, balanced and effective way.

It is a fact that while working in the private security industry, you will come across conflict as you carry out your role. As a security staff member, you will often have to enforce rules and regulations, and sometimes we have to control the behaviour of others. Unfortunately, this will occasionally result in conflict.

It is important, therefore, that all security operatives understand how conflict arises, how to recognise it and most importantly, how to deal with it.

Situations that can lead to conflict

When working across different sites or venues, there are a number of situations that can lead to conflict, for example:

- Misunderstandings
- poor communication
- lack of planning
- unrealistic/ unfair expectations
- attitudes
- frustration and stress
- substance and alcohol abuse

Policies and procedures relating to workplace violence

It is vital that both employees and employers understand the importance of the policies, guidance and procedures in place to help keep everyone safe at work. Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 places a legal responsibility on employers to 'ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all his employees'.

This means that employers are required by law to do everything they reasonably can to help minimise or remove any risk to their employees, including violence towards their staff.

Employers must provide:

- Policy statements
- risk assessments
- procedures detailing what to do in conflict situations
- procedures for checking and reviewing safety precautions
- appropriate training
- a safe environment
- safe working practises
- support for concerns about abuse and aggression
- support following violent incidents

Employees, including security operatives, also have responsibilities under the legislation. Section 7 of the Act says that an employee must: 'take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself and of others who may be affected by his act or emissions at work'.

Employees must:

- Familiarise themselves with their organisations policies and procedures
- set and promote for both staff and customers as to what behaviour is and is not acceptable
- follow those policies and procedures
- be aware of what might trigger a risk situation
- be prepared to gather, share and discuss information on risk situations
- attend appropriate training

- use risk assessment systems
- plan, with others, what to do in risk situations
- correctly report violent incidents in the workplace

It is best practise to report all incidents of violence in the workplace, whether it be a threat or verbal abuse.

Appropriate reporting helps to pick up trends or particular triggers for aggression in the workplace, which will allow employers to ensure that their policies and procedures are up to date and effective.

When incidents of actual violence occur, proper records may also be required for insurance and/ or investigative purposes. How such incidents should be reported will be detailed in the organisations policies and procedures relating to the workplace.

They will also help to set expectations for both staff and customers as to what behaviour is and is not acceptable and help reduce risk of litigation and harm to self and others.

Using communication management

The effective use of communication skills can greatly reduce the chances of conflict arising in the first place and can help you deal with difficult situations when they occur.

As a security operative, you will need to make use of positive and constructive communication skills to enhance relations with the members of the public that you come into contact with every day. How you conduct yourself and how you communicate and interact with others will have a direct bearing on how others see you, both as an individual and your profession. Your interpersonal skills will need to be continuously developed so that they can be harnessed when necessary.

Communication skills are all to do with the effectiveness with which we communicate meaning, guidance and intention to others, and how we can influence behaviour.

As a security operative, each time that you deal with a customer or a member of the public it is called an encounter. You need to be aware of the appropriate attitudes to adopt when dealing with various types of people and should take care in how you speak to them in different situations.

Each encounter will demand an should achieve a reasonable response an should reach a conclusion at a satisfactory to all parties concerned. While we must accept that not all encounters will end happily, the correct and conscious use of effective communication skills should mean that incidents of conflict and aggression towards you I kept to a minimum. Always remember that the way we respond will in many cases trigger an equal response from the customer. The following tools will help you to gain an appropriate response from the customer or at least not inflamed the situation further.

Stages of escalation

It is vital that as a security operative, you are able to recognise when a situation is escalating to a stage where more assertive or even invasive or physical response is required.

Incidents off aggression and violence do not just happen unexpectedly without warning.

Frustration leads to- the customer possibly appearing confused and questioning why they are not receiving the response they wanted from you. For example, if a venue operates no trainer policy but the customer is wearing trainers that cost £250; the cost of the footwear means that the customer does not feel they are trainers.

Anger leads to-the customer passing the stage of frustration and becoming angry with you for not complying with their wishes. When angry, customers tend to raise their voices and will often become more visibly tense. They may also start to use more vulgar or abusive language.

Aggression leads to- the use of insults that are more personal to you the customer may try to invade your personal space, use finger pointing or other forms of physical signals to try and intimidate you.

Violence leads to-the customer attempting to or actually physically assaulting you.

Different people have different physical and vocal indicators that suggest the emotions that they are currently feeling. Always want her body language and maintain your personal space to reduce the

potential for physical contact.

Attitude and behaviour cycle

People cannot see your attitude or know what you are thinking, but they can see your behaviour. Your attitude or what you are thinking is often reflected in your behaviour, for example, your body language. Bad behaviour is seen by others, he will form an initial impression of you based on what they see in your behaviour.

The attitude will then be reflected in their behaviour towards you, which in turn will affect what you think of them and how you decide to deal with them.

The behaviour of cycle is a model that can work in a positive or negative cycle. It is important that the initial impression that we portrays to the customers is positive as this will reduce the likelihood of conflicts occur in.

When initially daily with someone, do you need to approach the encounter with a positive attitude, demonstrating positive behaviour. This should give the other person a good opinion of you and this should mean that they have positively behaved towards you in return.

It is important, therefore, that as a security operative, you always try to show that you have a positive attitude to a situation by displaying positive behaviour towards the other person.

Should you accidentally display a negative attitude or behaviour to the customer, the likelihood of a conflict situation arising will increase. The cycle may become negative and there could be potential for escalation. The cycle can be broken at the 'my behaviour' stage - you may not be feeling happy but you can make the choice to give the impression to others that you are.

Don't allow yourself to get angry- once you lose your temper you can no longer negotiate with the customer or manage the situation positively

Manage the abuse- when someone is told they cannot have what they want they will usually respond with the first potential insult that they can think of this will usually be about you, personally, and may include what they consider to be a trigger for you, based on your physical attributes or gender, for example, four eyes for someone who wears glasses.

Maintain a positive attitude- to effectively manage conflict, you must like, or at least not hate your work role. Conflict situations are usually relatively brief and there are many more pleasant customers than are unpleasant.

Be assertive- if the behaviour of a customer is unacceptable, then the customer must be told an appropriate action must be taken, for example by refusing entry or asking someone to leave. One must be in no doubt that the decision has been made there is no further opportunity to negotiate. However, always remember that there is a big difference between assertive and aggressive behaviour.

Chapter 2: Recognising, Assessing and reducing risk in conflict situations

Potential risks

As a security operative, you'll often get a gut feeling with an encounter is about to turn nasty, but you also need to take note of the persons words and body language in an attempt to predict any aggressive action they might take; Protecting against any potential risk to yourself and/ or others, such as staff, customers and bystanders.

Signs which may indicate an increase in aggressive attitude include extended eye contact, more threatening facial expressions, erased voice, a changing body starts, enlarged movement of the hands, moving closer and obvious fidgeting as the person prepares to fight.

To recognise these signs of escalation, then you can prepare yourself both physically and mentally for any imminent attack. it will also give you time to summon the assistance of either other security staff or the police, as well as time to consider your options regarding the use of force.

Assessing the risks

It is not always possible to prevent conflict from happening in the works that could play, and some situations will have to be approached unmanaged carefully.

There will be times where you are confronted with situations that are unique and cannot be specifically catered for in any generic risk assessment or assessment of a particular type of incident. Occasionally, there are conflict situations where people are hurt because they do not have a way of properly and effectively assessing the risks of their and then, and as a result do not respond appropriately.

To ensure that your safety comes first, you are encouraged to use what is called a dynamic risk assessment. Dynamic risk assessments should be used as you deal with any potential difficult or dangerous situations and will help you choose the correct response in any given situation.

They are called dynamic risk assessments because they are ongoing. When conducting a dynamic *risk assessment*, you should continually monitor, review and recognise conflict to eliminate or reduce the risk. You should always take action and react appropriately to the situation at hand.

Dynamic risk assessment

Before you start to deal with the situation you need to use TACT:

T - think safety first, do not rush in, think about your personal safety first.

A - Assess the situation, what are the possible threats involved?

C - Consider your options, consider what help you may need, and possible action you could take.

T - Take action, select the safest and most appropriate action and take it decisively.

Assessing specific aspects of the threat

The SEW model is a simple, yet effective way to assess specific threats in relation to the situation where the incident is taking place, the person or people involved and any potential weapons.

As the situation escalates, you might become worried, upset, frightened or even threatened. As mentioned earlier, however, it is vital that you do not do anything that could escalate or worsen the situation. You must attempt to control your own emotions and show the correct behaviour towards the other person. You certainly do not want to do anything that might make the other person feel threatened or frightened, as this may trigger them into doing something bad against you.

S – Subjects; who are you dealing with? Age, height, size, drink 4 slash drugs, emotional state, previous history.

E - environment; where is the situation taking place? Remote/ secluded area, stairs, roads, furniture, escape routes.

W - weapons; Is there anything nearby that could be used to hurt you? Knives, bricks, bottles, would, syringes, tools, furniture.

If, while working as a security operative, you think that you're about to be attacked, particular attention should be paid to the customers:

- Head
- Eyes
- Lips
- facial expressions and colour
- breathing
- shoulders
- hands
- arms
- feet
- language
- tone of voice
- gesture
- spacing

ideally, we should try to prevent customers from becoming frustrated in the first place. Using pre planned, effective, proactive delivery service strategies will help with this.

If customers do become frustrated, you should try to politely explain the situation to them in an attempt to calm them down. If this fails, however, and they get angry, then you need to use your communication and conflict management skills to try to calm them down, and then attempt to resolve the actual problem.

If they become more aggressive despite your efforts, then you will do more assertive and use one or more of the inhibitors to prevent them from turning to violence.

If all of this fails however, and the customer does turn to using violence against you, then you will have to use either evasive or self-defence techniques to prevent yourself from harm.

If you cannot take control of an affected resolve a conflict situation and customer becomes increasingly angry, aggressive and possibly violent towards you, then you need to watch that person carefully.

Factors and triggers

There are many factors that can either trigger or inhibit a range of responses in yourself and others

Factors may include:

- Actions- refusing entry or requesting someone leaves a premise
- behaviours- being rude to or about a person, ignoring someone who wants your attention
- situations- peer pressure
- emotions- anger, fear of losing

As previously stated, if you or someone you are dealing with becomes emotional, then situations become more difficult to deal with as you/ they are not thinking rationally as you/they normally would be.

If you start to feel frustrated, upset or angry, then you're less able to make appropriate decisions. Particularly as your brain and body starts automatically move towards the fight or flight mode, in response to what you may see as a threat, then you may be triggered interacting in a worse way, possibly using aggression to deal with the situation.

Trigger is an action towards you that can cause you to completely lose your temper and cause you to resort to aggression or even violence.

It is important that you are aware of this as a security operative and do not allow yourself to be triggered by the other person, therefore not using unnecessary aggression yourself.

It is equally as important that you do not accidentally trigger the person you are dealing with, causing them to lose their temper and react with violence.

We must also bear in mind that people are often easy to trigger if they are under the influence of alcohol or some types of drugs, or if they are emotional for other reasons.

Common triggers

People can be triggered into using aggression and violence for many reasons, including:

- A difference in perception- being asked for ID when they are 26 years old.
- Conflicting goals- being told to wait as the venue is full.
- Differences in personal values- is swearing acceptable in a normal conversation?
- Misunderstandings- expressions can cause very different responses from people from different areas or age groups, for example, the expression 'it's sick'. is that good or bad?
- Poor communication- bumbling so the customer cannot hear you, ignoring someone, using language that you believe they will understand, refusing to make eye contact with someone who wants her attention.

Inhibitors

If, drawing a conflict situation, you are unable to calm the other person down, you may need to use an inhibitor to stop them from being triggered into reacting aggressively or violently towards you,

An inhibitor is something that prevents someone from acting in an unnecessary, unreasonable or negative way because they are in an emotional state. and habits are essentially the opposite of a trigger.

It is often said that when people are under the influence of drink or drugs, that they 'lose their inhibitors'. this means that they may try to do something that they wouldn't normally do if they were thinking rationally and calmly.

If you give an emotional, angry or aggressive person an inhibitor, it may cause them to think about the consequences of their actions and prevent them from doing something that they may later regret.

Examples of inhibitors include:

- personal values-these are developed based on beliefs of our families, friends and experiences. For example, would it ever be acceptable to hit a female?
- Self control-most people, when they take the time to think about it, do not want to be involved in a conflict situation with a security operative or another customer. The security operatives should try to appeal their self control. 'do you really want your family to see you fighting?'
- Fear of loss or damage- people do not generally want to run the risk of damaging their clothes or losing personal items during a violent incident. 'Do you want to ruin your clothes or break your phone by fighting?'
- Fear of retaliation- there is always a chance that if you fight with someone, you may come off second best. 'I don't want anyone to get hurt here, so...'
- social consequences- many people will worry about the risks to their personal reputations and their lifestyles. 'Have you considered what your friends are going to think about this?'
- Legal consequences- people do not normally relish the idea of being arrested and going to court over something bad they have done? Nor do they like the idea of being fined or imprisoned. A job maybe row not having a criminal conviction, and even the thought of being caught on CCTV or body worn cameras is sufficient to inhibit some people. 'this is all on CCTV, so...'

The timely and appropriate use of inhibitors can greatly reduce the chances of someone being triggered to use aggression or violence towards you.

By the same token, you also need to consider the consequences of your own actions in heated comment frightening or threatening situations, so that you do not do something that will get you into trouble or that you will later regret.

Triggers

Negative actions resulting in someone feeling:

- Insulted
- Threatened
- Angry
- that they've lost face
- ignored
- peer pressured
- patronised
- ridiculed or not taken seriously
- blocked in, physically or emotionally confused
- rejected
- disrespected
- embarrassed
- let down or hard done by

Inhibitors

Positive actions include:

- Receiving good customer service
- feeling like someone cared about their problem

- getting what they wanted
- being treated fairly
- being treated with respect

Responses to conflict situations

There are many responses that can come from being involved in a conflict situation, for example:

- A raised voice
- finger pointing
- reddening of the face
- tensing of shoulders
- invading personal space
- fight or flight

Alcohol, drugs and medical conditions can also trigger different responses to conflict situations.

As a security operative, you need to understand the importance of showing a positive and helpful attitude towards the person you are dealing with, ensuring that you don't accidentally give them the wrong impression of how you feel towards them or about your intentions towards them.

During an encounter with someone in the workplace, you need to ensure that we give off the right signals.

Fight or Flight

It is important that you understand what happens to self and others when confronted either by conflict or by frightening or threatening situations, only then can you plan what is best way for you to react, and how to treat others when conflict arises.

If someone you were dating with becomes angry and starts to threaten you, you will automatically start to use emotional side of your brain more than the rational side.

It is a natural human response to fear a threat or potential threat to your well being and safety.

If, as humans, we did not get frightened in such situations, our brains and bodies might not be prepared to react quickly enough or in the proper way if we did actually need to protect ourselves.

When you become frightened, your body automatically enters what is called fight or flight mode. This is because of the basic natural animal instinct that we all have, which helps us to survive potentially dangerous situations. When in vital flight mode, various different things will automatically happen to your body to try to make you better prepared to deal with the threat, both physically and mentally.

The hormone adrenaline will be released into your system to increase your physical ability to fight or runaway. This adrenaline rush increases your heart rate, pumping extra blood and oxygen to the muscles you may need to use.

Your eyes will widen to take in as much of the situation as possible, although sometimes you will send your attention directly onto the threat itself, causing what is often called 'tunnel vision'.

Your sense of hearing intensifies, again to try to allow you to take in as much information about the threat as possible.

Once the situation ends, whether that is why you having halted or fought off the threat, or whether you have been able to getaway from it, then your brain and body begins to calm down again, in an attempt to get back to normal. your body will slowly return to its natural relaxed state and as you calm down, your brain will return to thinking with the rational side again.

If your brain and body does not return to their natural conditions as they should then you could go into state known as shock. This usually only happens after a particularly threatening or frightening situation.

Stages in de-escalation

In all conflict situations, you need to correctly assess the other persons emotional state and remain aware of anything that prevent them from or trigger them to become less or more upset or angry.

You need to listen carefully to what the other person is really saying and use your own positive communication to try and calm them down and to convince them that you will try to resolve the situation. The problem must be fully understood before you can move on, try to resolve it and deescalate the situation.

Bring me a key person informed on what you are doing and explaining how and why you doing it will help to resolve the problem.

Security operatives should use de-escalation techniques, such as:

- using a dynamic risk assessment to assess the emotional state of the customer
- identifying trigger factors and using inhibitors to try to counteract the trigger
- trying to reduce the customers anxiety by reassuring them
- speaking calmly and actively listening to the customer
- empathising and checking understanding
- problem solving and resolving the issue if possible
- explaining what, when and how this problem could be resolved, providing other options
- keeping the customer, colleagues and management informed of the situation and any outcomes

Maintaining personal space

Distance you are from someone you would do it can have a profound hearing the impact on the situation. Certain situations can be helped by either increasing or decreasing the distance between yourself and the other person.

There are three types of space we need to consider.

Normal space: answer space our face is given to the normal distance there would be between you and someone you are talking to in normal, relaxed circumstances. Imagine someone approaching you to ask you a question at work, or the distance you might be from someone standing next to you that you're having a drink with in a pub. This normal or safe distance usually anything between 0.5m and 1.2m.

To ensure that you are using the safe or normal distance when dealing with someone in the workplace, tried to make sure that you are far enough away from them to be able to see their whole body, including their feet. This will mean that you are close enough to them to have a reasonable one to one conversation, but you are far enough away to be able to see any changes in their body language, which will give you enough time to react if the situation escalates.

Personal space: is where you are anything up to approximately 0.5m away from someone. You would usually only ever get this close to another person if they were your partner, family or very close friend. To enter the personal space of somebody you don't know may well be seen as intimidating, at the very least could make the other person feel uncomfortable.

Stranger space: is anything from 1.2m up to 3m, which is not usually close enough to have a proper one to one conversation with someone stop it is however, the ideal space we're trying to talk to a group of people.

Managing the space between you and the person or people you are trying to deal with will help to improve communication and improve your personal safety.

Showing non-aggression

You also need to be aware of how you come across to the people you are dealing with. It is clear that you must be careful about the words you use, but you must also be mindful of the tone you use when speaking to them.

You can make a much more positive impression on someone if you show a non-aggressive stance through what you say, how you say it and what you look like to then.

If you look aggressive, it is more likely that someone will act aggressively towards you.

On the other hand, if you appear professional and helpful, you're far more likely to get a better response from the person or people you are dealing with.

Exit routes

During any encounter or situation, all parties turn need to please consider that they are safe they can then walk away if they wish to at any stage.

As security operative is important for you to feel, particularly in conflict situations, that you always have enough room to be able to walk away to summon help or evade attack, should this be necessary. The people you deal with need to feel same way.

You need to ensure that as well as using suitable spacing between yourself and those you are dealing with, that you are displaying the correct behaviour said that you do not appear aggressive. You must ensure that you are aware of the possibility that the other person may wish to walk away from the situation.

Do not physically block any person into a corner or a small space, as this may make them feel trapped. People who feel trapped tend to feel frightened, which may accidentally escalate the situation, or worse still, trigger them, causing him to lash out at you.

During an encounter, make sure that both you and the other person always have an A's easy exit/ escape route, for example, by leaving the room or by just being able to walk away from the situation.

Using exit strategies

There will be a case where, despite your best efforts, you are unable to calm down or resolve a situation. You may also feel yourself being triggered by the customer. If an encounter with someone is getting more and more heated and you feel that you cannot improve or prevent the situation from worsening, then you may feel it is appropriate to use an exit strategy to get yourself away from the customer.

At exit strategy is a pre-planned reason or excuse given to someone to get you away from the situation, without looking as though you were running away. It gives you the chance to get away from any immediate danger, to think about the best way forward, and school for support if it is required.

Examples of exit strategies you could use include:

- saying you will ask someone else if they know of a solution
- saying that you need to go and get a supervisor or manager
- placing your hand onto your earpiece and indicating that you need to leave to attend to another matter

Using an exit strategy can give you valuable space and time to decide how best to deal with the next stage of the situation. Depending on the strategy used, you may return yourself all request that colleague deals with the situation. teamwork should never be seen as a sign of weakness

Chapter 3: Problem-solving techniques

Empathy

It is often said that two of the most valuable skills required to resolve problems are empathy and assertiveness. Appearing to be on the same side of the customer, but still not providing them with what they actually want, resolves many issues. Most people do not want to argue with someone they like.

Empathy is:

- The ability to share someone else's feelings or experiences
- imagining being in that person situation

Empathy is not the same as sympathy.

If a person you are dealing with is feeling frustrated or angry about something that is happening to them, imagine being in that persons situation and let them know you understand why they feel this way. People can become even more emotional if they think that no one else understands their situation.

Letting people know that you appreciate what is happening to them and that they are upset about it will go a long way towards helping you to rapport with them, which will help to calm the situation so you can deal with it more effectively.

If they are actually in the wrong, you can still calm things down by being empathetic towards them, even if you do not agree with them yourself.

Problem solving techniques during conflict

It has already been established that the best way to deal with conflict is to try to prevent it from happening in the first place. Unfortunately, that is not always possible, so you will need to plan how you will deal with the potential conflict situations.

Managing customer's expectations

Part of providing good customer service is being able to understand and then manage customers' expectations.

When members of the public, be their customers or work colleagues, visited premise or site where you are working, they will already have preconceived ideas of what to expect. They will already have a rough idea of what services, goods, facilities attainment will be provided invited, and will also have expectations and ideas of how they should be treated while they're there, for example by members of staff, including security team.

Problems-maker, however, when someone you are dealing with his misguided or unrealistic expectations. If they disagree with one of the rules or regulations on the site and object to a security operative attempting to change their behaviour, then this is where conflict can raise its ugly head.

You can diffuse conflict by using the PART model:

P - predict where and how conflict might occur: as a security operative, you need to be aware of subjects and incidents that likely to bring out frustration, anger and even aggression in others. You can do this by learning about the venue or the services being provided, as well as the types of people that you will likely to be dealing with.

A - Avoid those subjects and incidents where possible: this can be done by using proactive service delivery strategies column managing customer expectations and making sure that you always give a good impression and come across as positive to that have to do with you with.

R - Reduce the chances of situations escalating where conflict does arise: if peoples frustrations lead to conflict, you need to be able to recognise this early on and use techniques to try to stop the situation from worsening. You must then try to calm things down so that you can deal with the actual problem. This can be done by staying calm, building a rapport with people, acknowledging that there is a problem, actively listening, showing empathy, winning trust, and explaining things to people properly.

T - Take action by using problem solving strategies: try using one or more of the following problem-solving strategies to deal with the situation.

Focusing on the problem- when people become frustrated or angry, they often say and do things they normally would not as the emotional side of their brain has taken over. Under these circumstances, you will need to try and keep yourself calm, and not react negatively to the negative behaviour being shown towards you. It can be difficult, but you need to try to look beyond the swearing and abuse to try and find out what the real problem is that you can deal with it one full stops the other person realises understand their problem and that you are willing to deal with it, they will often calm down.

Building a rapport - join the very early stages of an encounter, you need to build a rapport with the person you are dealing with. By being positive and helpful, and communicating well, you should be able to quickly form a healthy working relationship with them, building trust and confidence at the same time. If they like you, they are more likely to believe that you are both willing and able to help them or deal with the situation fairly and appropriately. With long term problems, agreeing formal solutions and putting them on the same form of written agreement or set of protocols will often help. That agreement will need to be monitored regularly to ensure that it remains relevant and useful, or updated and adjusted as necessary.

Active listening- the use of active listening skills will definitely improve relations between yourself and the customer if a person approaches you with a query or a complaint, you should allow them to finish what they're saying before advising them, avoiding rushing or interrupting them. Always let the customer tell you what their views are. Active listening involves:

- listening carefully to your customer tells you
- showing that you are listening by making eye contact and using suitable body language
- asking more questions, if necessary, to gather further information
- summarising what customers have told you, to check that you have fully understood
- giving customers the opportunity to let you know if you have not got it quite right

Explaining- people can become frustrated very easily if they feel that something is not going their way. They may not understand one of the rules or the reasons for it and may not want to accept a decision you have made. Quite often, by politely and simply explaining the rule, stating who made it and the reasons for it, the heat can be taken off a conflict situation.

Aiming for a win-win

When faced with dealing with complaints or disputes, you need to concentrate more on resolving the actual problem than on just winning the argument for the sake of it.

Ideally, you need to aim for getting a win-win result- this is where both sides of the dispute are reasonably satisfied with the outcome. This may require some compromise from both sides, or it can simply be a matter of you dealing with the situation professionally politely and pleasantly.

I want for you could be being able to enforce a rule or policy without upsetting the other person and being able to feel that you have done a good job.

A win for them, whether decision goes their way or not, could be that they walk away feeling that they have been listened to, have had the situation explained properly to them and that they have been dealt with appropriately.

You should aim for a win win in all encounters with customers or members of the public.

Even the simplest words or actions can be considered a gift by the other person, for example:

- offering them a seat while you deal with the problem
- offering them a drink
- fully explaining the rules and reasons
- explaining the formal complaints procedure
- offering to take their details to pass onto the management
- offering some part of it to a supervisor
- advising them of an alternative venue or site
- offering them a chance to come back later or on another day
- offering to call him a taxi
- offering to call a friend or relative to help them

If the previously discussed problem solving techniques are used with the customer, then many cases will result in a win win situation.

Chapter 4: Communication to de-escalate conflict situations

Using communication during conflict situations

Communication can be defined as 'the imparting or exchange of information, ideas or feelings between human beings by speech, body language, gestures, behaviour, writing or other means.'

Security operatives will, by virtue of what you do, come into contact and communicate with the wide range of people on a daily basis. This is important, therefore, they develop your communication skills they can be as effective as possible when dealing with those people.

When you communicate with people, you not only give out verbal messages, but nonverbal messages as well, giving other signals about your attitude and personality. These nonverbal signals or body language are often given out subconsciously without us even realising that we're doing it.

It is estimated that less than 1/10 of any message you send comes from the actual verbal or spoken words you use. The rest comes from the nonverbal signs given off when trying to convey that message, it makes sense, then, that as a professional security operative, you're careful to only give off signals that you mean to and that you can accurately interpret the signals given off by the person you were dealing with at the time.

Barriers to communication

Hopefully, if you think carefully about what you are doing, you should be able to make yourself understood by others most of the time.

Unfortunately, however, communication can sometimes become difficult or even breakdown entirely.

Anything that gets in the way of a successful communication is described as a barrier

Physical barriers to communication- physical buyers or blocks of communication are usually fairly easy to recognise and deal with. They include things like:

Discomfort- people are less likely to appreciate or understand what you are saying to them if they are uncomfortable. If they are to heart, too cold, in pain, hungry or tired, or even frightened, they would probably be thinking more about that than what you were saying to them.

Possible solutions may include:

- moving to them to somewhere more comfortable
- calling for medical assistance
- showing non aggression
- giving reassurance
- giving sufficient personal space

Noise- noise such as loud music, heavy traffic or people shouting can all make it more difficult for someone to hear what you were saying, and for you to hear them comment therefore hindering communication.

Possible solutions may include:

- Moving them to somewhere quieter
- moving closer to them when speaking
- speaking slightly louder and clearer
- being prepared to repeat yourself

Shock- if, following a particularly stressful or traumatic incident colour someone is suffering from shock, then their mind and body will be trying to recover from that, making your message less important to them.

Possible solutions may include:

- Moving them to somewhere more comfortable
- calling for medical assistance
- showing non aggression
- giving reassurance
- being prepared to repeat yourself

Language- English is not everyone's first language; It could be a person second or even third language, which will make communicating with them slower and more difficult. If the person you are trying to speak to cannot understand English at all, thank you medication can become almost impossible.

Possible solutions may include:

- Speaking slowly and clearly

- using hand signals to support your words
- passing your message through an interpreter
- being prepared to repeat yourself

Accents and jargon - some people can find it people with particularly strong general accents and read.

The accidental use of work or regional jargon that someone is not used to may also cause problems during a conversation.

Possible solutions may include:

- speaking slowly and clearly
- using short, simple words
- explaining jargon in words they can understand
- being prepared to repeat yourself

Drink and/ or drugs- people who have consumed too much alcohol can be very difficult to deal with, as their perceptions are distorted and they may appear to be overly aggressive.

So, one who has recently taken drugs may not appear to know what's going on around them and may be very difficult to communicate with.

Possible solutions may include:

- Being assertive
- showing non aggression
- speaking clearly and calmly
- giving reassurance
- being prepared to repeat yourself

Psychological barriers to communication-typical psychological barriers or blocks to communication in the workplace can be more difficult to recognise and it may include things like:

Mental illness- there are many types of mental illnesses or disability, many of which are often not easily recognisable from the outset. These issues may result in a person appearing nervous, frightened, paranoid or confused.

Possible solutions may include:

- keeping your hands open and in view
- giving them plenty of space
- try not to startle them
- showing non aggression
- reassuring them
- speaking calmly and politely
- being prepared to repeat yourself

It is important that all security operative use their communication skills effectively, particularly when dealing with conflict situations. Security operatives need to understand what helps were improved communication in the workplace and how to reduce or with any barriers that making communication difficult or possible will stop

Culture- people from different parts of the world may have different ways of looking at things than you do they may not understand why you are saying something or may simply refuse to accept it

Possible solutions may include:

- Respecting other peoples values
- showing non aggression
- being assertive
- calmly and politely explaining the rules

Fear or dislike of authority-if someone has had a bad experience with security operatives in the past, they may be unnecessarily frightened of them or just automatically dislike them, which could mean that they have a bad attitude towards you from the start.

Possible solutions may include:

- Showing nonaggression
- being assertive
- reassuring them
- calmly and politely explaining the rules

Attitudes and beliefs- someone with a generally poor attitude to life and other people may also be difficult to deal with, as they may think that anything you say is unreasonable. A person with different beliefs may also totally disagree with what you have to say, purely because their own very strong beliefs.

Possible solutions may include:

- showing non aggression
- calmly and politely explaining the rules
- being assertive
- respecting other people's beliefs

Overcoming communication barriers- positive verbal and non verbal communication needs to be used to overcome barriers, for example speaking clearly, adopting an aggressive stance and explaining what you were doing will all help you to overcome barriers. How you express yourself, for example how you use eye contact another body language, can create the right impression about you.

You should maintain your space, do not stand too close or straight on to the other person, as this may make them feel intimidated. You should not crowd them into a small place or a corner either, as this may make them feel blocked in with no way to leave if they want to. If possible, move them to a quieter and well-lit area.

Types of behaviour

You need to ensure that you project the right image towards people when dealing with them.

You do not want to appear nervous or shy cover as this may make you appear to be weak. This type of behaviour is known as being passive; it is negative behaviour and will not help the situation.

Passive behaviour includes:

- Being hesitant
- overly seeking approval
- always agreeing with others
- using a broken speech pattern
- self-deprecation or self-criticism
- Overly quiet speech
- discomfort in groups
- a lack of eye contact

You do not want to come across as being too strong or opinionated either, as this may make you seem aggressive. This again is unhelpful negative behaviour they will probably hindered situation.

Aggressive behaviour includes:

- having a threatening tone or position
- using angry gestures
- using angry words
- concerns of violence
- staring and/ or uncomfortable eye contact

Ideally, you'll want to user behaviour to show that you are confident, capable, helpful and friendly, without coming on too strong. This is known as being assertive, which is very positive type of behaviour to show, and which should receive a positive reaction from others.

Assertive behaviour includes:

- Being firm but fair
- remaining calm
- normal positioning
- relaxed body language
- polite/ rational speech
- listening
- acknowledging

You show others what type of person you are by careful use of your appearance, demeanour, speech, posture, gestures, facial expressions, movement, positioning and eye contact. Whenever you are dealing with someone, but particularly in conflict situations, you need to make a conscious effort to outwardly display positive behaviour towards them.

It is said that in the first 10 seconds of meeting or seeing someone that you will form an impression of what they are like, and that they will form an opinion of you at the same time. This happens even before word to exchange, so it follows that your parents comment demeanour and clothes are important factors used in how others perceive you and how you perceive them.

As a security operative, it should always be conscious of your own self image and how it can be used to influence those around you.

Addressing unacceptable behaviour

Part of the role of a security operative is to enforce rules and regulations and to deal with unacceptable behaviour.

Examples of typical situations that security operative may have to do with include:

Pub- drunkenness and swearing

Nightclub- offering unwanted attention

Building site- trespassing

Shopping centre- loitering and drinking

Commercial site- parking illegally/ dangerously

Retail shop- shoplifting

The approach

As you answer situation, you need to ensure they have carried out an appropriate dynamic risk assessment to ensure that you were able to deal with it safely. These assessments need to be continued throughout the encounter, to ensure that you were able to adapt to any changes or escalation and to assure that you remain safe throughout.

As you approach the situation called human need to be conscious of your own body language, so that you can adopt the most appropriate behaviour to deal with the parties involved.

You need to be assertive, display positive behaviour and make sure that you do not come across as aggressive from the outset.

Consider the problem solving techniques that you have already learned:

- using a non aggressive stands and body language
- building a rapport
- active listening
- showing empathy
- providing options
- looking for a win win outcome
- delivering a gift, for example, calling a taxi
- follow appropriate organisational policies and procedures

Using discretion

When dealing with many and very types of incidents in the workplace, security operatives will be required to make decisions as to what course of action needs to be taken. Line you have a fairly wide range of powers to help deal with different situations. you have, for example, powers of arrest, the rules of trespass, the right to use force and you can give words of advice to people whose behaviour or actions are against the rules or just unacceptable.

You will be required to exercise a certain amount of discretion in the actions you choose, and there will be a variety of ways you can successfully deal with most incidents. using discretion requires the selection of the best course of action, having recognised and considered all of the alternatives.

Working with colleagues to deescalate conflict situations

Positioning- contact and cover

When working together with another security operative, if you are the main person dealing with the situation, you're referred to as the contact, sometimes called the lead.

Your colleague, the person supporting you, is referred to as the cover, sometimes called the support.

The contact:

- Approaches the situation
- makes initial contact
- deals with problems

The cover:

- Stands nearby
- what is the encounter and others around, and acts as a witness
- can call for extra support (other colleagues/ management/ police)
- can step in to assist or relieve if necessary

How the contact in cover stand in relation to the other person is vital.

The contact needs to be close enough to the person to be able to conduct a one to one conversation, but ought to maintain a sensible, safe distance from them. They must not be too close as to appear intimidating, but they must be far enough away to be able to react if the situation escalates.

The cover needs to be slightly further away, an off to one side. This again will prevent the person you're dealing with from feeling crowded or surrounded and this allows cover Add off space to be able to observe the encounter and anyone else nearby. The cover should, however, be close enough to step in to assist if required.

The contact and cover needs to be able to see each other clearly at all times and the other person needs to be able to see the cover in the background but we left to deal with the contact.

Good contact and cover:

- person can see both contacts and cover
- person does not feel blocked in or intimidated
- contact and cover can see each other
- contact at a sensible distance
- contact showing non aggression
- contact can deal with a person on a one to one basis
- cover slightly further away into the side
- cover can seen council and surrounding area/ people
- cover showing non aggression
- cover is close enough to step in if required

Poor contact and cover:

- person can see both contact and cover, but they are too close together
- person will feel blocked in or intimidated as contact and cover too close to them
- contact and cover cannot see each other
- contact is too close and may appear threatening
- contact appears overly aggressive, poor body language
- contact is too close if person strikes out
- cover is too close and almost next to contact
- cover cannot see surrounding areas/ people as they are too close
- cover stance is slightly aggressive
- cover is also too close if person strikes out

The careful and proper use of contact and cover will allow the contact to deal with the situation effectively, without escalating the problem, but being able to call upon immediate support from the cover if it is needed.

Properly considering positioning and using effective communication skills or vastly increase the chances of security operatives being able to deal with conflict situations successfully and safely.

Switching

When dealing with the situation with a colleague, there may be occasions during the encounter where it may be useful or helpful to switch positions.

This is where the cover takes over as the contact and starts to deal with the person, and the contact drops back to the supporting role as the cover. There is nothing wrong with doing this and this should be done if it will improve or resolve the situation.

You may decide to switch if the:

- person takes a dislike to the contact
- person gets more frustrated or angrier
- contact feels there getting nowhere
- cover feels they may be able to communicate better with the person
- cover feels they may be better placed to resolve the problem

Passing the baton

Another widely used technique for solving conflict situations is called 'passing the baton'.

If you cannot successfully resolve the conflict situation yourself or it continues to escalate, you may need to make the decision to pass the situation onto someone else, giving them the opportunity to try to deal with it. The idea is to hand the situation to another person who was more able or better placed to deal with it.

You may be able to pass the problem onto someone with:

- more seniority (supervisor or manager)
- more experience
- specialist skills or knowledge, for example, medic
- more time

Passing the baton should not be confused with the term 'passing the buck'. you're not handing over the problem because you can't be bothered to deal with it all because you are bored with it. you are simply finding someone who may be able to deal with it better than you are able to at that time.

It may even help to calm the situation down if the person you're having problems with throws at you are taking the situation seriously bypassing the matter on to a higher authority.

The proper debriefing of these types of incidents can help you improve how you deal with similar problems in the future.

You may even be able to reduce the chances of them happening in the first place, or stop them from happening at all. And if they do occur, you should be able to provide and agreed, common positive

response each time, automatically improving your own safety, as well as the safety of customers, colleagues, other members of staff and the public.

All members of the security team, particularly those involved in the original incident, so take part in this process so that they can help to make the changes required to deal with future conflict situations more effective.

It is always important to reflect on post incidents.