CITY OF KAMLOOPS

CRIME PREVENTION

BC Association of Healthcare Auxiliaries

# Protecting to your home

- **Dealing with difficult people**
- **Putting your space in order**
- **Calling the Police**

Sandro Piroddi
City of Kamloops/RCMP
Crime Prevention

# Dealing Difficult People



- Irate customer
- Shoplifters
- Robber
- Loiterer

Staff members sometimes must deal with difficult or irate customers. Such customers may become aggressive, leaving you feeling threatened and vulnerable.



Whatever the situation your safety is Paramount

# The Irate Customer

- Stop what you are doing and give the customer your full attention.
- Stay calm, respectful, warm and friendly - You must stay in control of your emotions, so the situation does not escalate.
- Introduce yourself or your title - Telling a customer your name and getting theirs at the beginning of a conversation is an excellent way to establish a cordial bond
- Use a firm, but respectful voice.

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- Listen, take time and pay close attention to what the problem is. Give feedback with a nod or any nonverbal communication. Paraphrase what the customer states to make sure you recognize what their issues are.
- Ask open ended questions like *“What would you like to see done?”* or *“How can I help you*?”
- Try to produce solutions together.
- If possible, see if you can move the situation to a controlled environment. This can make you, your staff or the customer feel safe.

# Train staff on the **L.E.S.T.E.R** Solution with dealing with a difficult situation

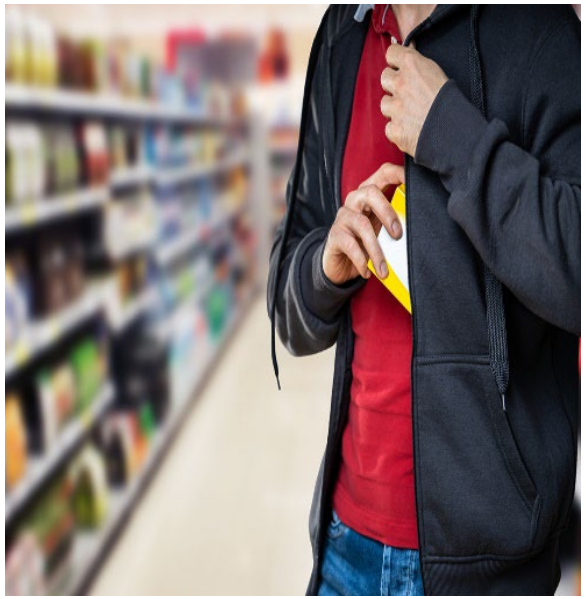
**LISTEN** – Stop and focus on the issue. Don't talk, just try to understand and indicate your sincere effort to the customer.
**ECHO** – Feedback the customer's key issue(s)
**SYMPATHIZE** – Even if you don't agree you can sympathize.
**THANK** – for the feedback, opportunity to address an issue or consider a different perspective.
**EVALUATE** – Work on a solution with the customer.
**RESPOND** – Do something positive about the issue.

# Personal Safety

- If the situation escalates tell your supervisor, and or another staff member to help you out.
- Keep your distance from the customer and have a barrier between you and them.
- If the customer personally insults you, tell them to stop. If they do not stop, ask them to leave the store or call the police if they refuse.

# Shoplifters

- Greet every single person who comes into your store. This lets them know that you're aware of their presence, and it makes them less likely to commit a crime.



- If you suspect they are suspicious, offer exceptional customer service like offering to hold their items at the front, offering suggestions on similar products and following them around.

- Have a signal to let other staff members know that a certain customer is suspicious

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# Recognize the Behavior's of a Shoplifter

- Avoids eye contact
- Spends more time looking at employees and exit routes rather than browsing the merchandise
- Wears bulky clothing
- Walks in and out of the store repeatedly without buying anything
- Shoplifters often work in pairs



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# Robbery

- If an armed robbery does take place, stay calm. **Safety** to staff and public comes first.
- Cooperate with the robber. Do not resist or do anything that would put employees or customers at risk.
- Avoid surprises. Robbers are generally nervous, so anything quick or surprising movements could put you and others in harm's way.
- Call the police immediately after the incident. Provide time of the robber's departure, give them a physical description, weapon used and direction of travel.
- Preserve the evidence. Keep clear of the crime scene and avoid touching anything that the robber(s) may have touched.

# Dealing With Loiters

- Loiterers are typically hanging around for a reason that might include:
- Social contact
- Criminal intent
- Access to attractants, such as:
  - Electrical power
  - Water
  - Shelter/Warmth
  - Toilet
  - Privacy/Concealment

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# Loiterers

- Loiters behavior is unpredictable.
- Do not deal with loiters alone
- Only approach if you feel comfortable
- Keep at least an arm's length distance from the person and if they move aggressively in your direction keep a counter, shopping cart or some other large item between yourselves.
- Caution should be always exercised but remember that empathy and respect are cornerstones of all positive social interactions.
- Use your best judgement to evaluate the likely motivation and adjust your responses accordingly.

# Loiterers

- Wherever possible, minimize attractants through strategic site assessment i.e., CPTED

- ***Remember staff and public safety comes first***

# Training

- It is very important that staff/volunteers get trained on your store's polices and procedures.
- Frequent refresher training allows learners to review those concepts they tend to forget, as well as learn updated information.



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# Putting your space in order

- When it comes to shoplifting and retail loss prevention, good store layout is just as important as the growing array of tools, technology and electronic article surveillance available.
- Your space should be clearly defined to what is public and what is private.



# Increase Visibility

- Check out counter should be near the front of the store and have a view of the entire store.
- Shelving or display racks should not create any blind spots.
- High shelving units should be located against walls to prevent blind spots.
- High value items should be locked and near the front counter or where staff is always present.
- Keep store front windows as open and uncovered as possible.

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# Signage

- Strategically placed signs should display the rules of your store.















# Video Surveillance

*A CCTV system is a good tool to prevent thefts*

- Cameras should be placed to capture all entrances, exits cash counters, high value items and blind spots.
- Surveillance monitors should be placed at a location where it  can be viewed in real time by staff, such as the main counter, staff room etc.
- A monitor showing people as they enter the premises shows that they are being watched



# Fitting Room Theft

- Locking the fitting room doors.
- Having a fitting room attendant.
- Limiting the number of items.
- Using short doors or curtain.
- Simply removing the fitting rooms.
- Display signage of fitting room polices.

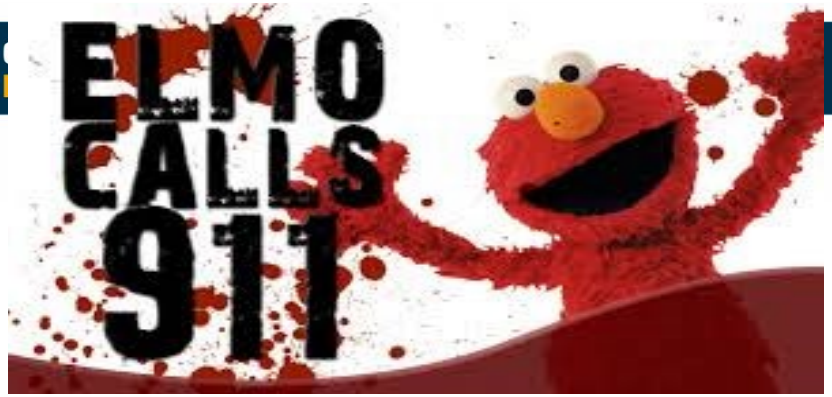


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# When & how to Call Police






- Call 911 during emergencies. An emergency is when lives are in danger, a crime is in progress, or the police are needed immediately.

## Examples

- A person in distress that may cause harm to you or themselves.
- Robbery
- Theft in progress

# Non-emergency (250-828-3000 )

- Is for a crime that has been committed but there are no suspects at the scene and no immediate danger to people or property (e.g., vehicle or property break-in discovered after-the-fact, a fraud).
- An on-going or chronic criminal activity where suspects are not currently at scene (e.g., vandalism, drug deals).
- A break and enter or theft that has occurred

# Community Services or Bylaws

- Nosie complaints
- Graffiti
- Unsightly property
- Garbage
- Loitering
- Camp set ups

# Conclusion

- Yours, your staff and customers safety is of the upmost importance.
- Have staff trained on **The L.E.S.T.E.R Solution.**
- Have all staff trained and continually refresh training on policies and procedures of your store.
- Find ways to layout your store so it’s not inviting for thieves.
- If customers do not follow your store rules call the police.

## Stay Safe & Secure