

**Practice # 7: A customer who appears to be drunk enters the office. How do staff deal with a customer's unacceptable behavior?**

An older man, DG, walks into The WorkSource. The man is unsteady on his feet and his eyes are unfocused. He ignores the Greeter and tries to approach an Employment Counselor at the EC's desk, but is intercepted by the Greeter.

**We need someone to play the following parts:**

**Greeter**

**Drunken Guy - Otis**

**Supervisor – Ms. Knowall**

**Practice # 7 – How to deal with a customer's bad behavior**

**Greeter:** Hi, welcome to The Worksource! How may we help you today?

**Otis:** Hello there. They haven't run you off yet?

**Greeter:** No Sir, not yet. How are you today?

**Otis:** Fine and dandy! (Man continues walking trying to pass the greeter)

**Greeter:** Sir, how can I help you?

**Otis:** (Shouting and gathering the attention of customers) Well, Yeah...Ol Joe told me to go to Fannymae.com because my wife and I are trying to buy a house. I really don't know much about computers and I need someone to help me to find a house.

*The Greeter smells the strong odor of alcohol and escorts the man to a vacant office. A team member oversees what is happening and calls the supervisor to assist the Greeter.*

**Greeter:** Okay come with me. Someone will be with you in just a minute.

*In the office the Greeter pulls out a chair for the drunk customer and the Supervisor walks in.*

**Supervisor:** Hello. I'm Ms. Knowall. What is your name? (As she approaches she smells the alcohol on the mans breath)

**Otis:** Otis. How are you today, Mamm?

**Supervisor:** I'm fine. Otis have you been drinking?

**Otis:** (Shouting at the supervisor) Well, I ain't drunk. I had one beer.

**Supervisor:** Otis, you're going to have to come back when you haven't been drinking. We're here from 8 to 5. Let me walk you out and I'll help you when you come back.

*(Supervisor escorts customer to the door and he leaves the office).*

### **Discussion Questions:**

#### **1. What are we trying to teach you in this scenario?**

- When a customer is unruly we want to get that customer away from other customers and staff to minimize disruption to the office.
- If we are going to ask a customer to leave, it is better to do it out of public view. We do not want to embarrass the customer but want to be clear that he must leave.
- Staff should call a supervisor or take the customer to a supervisor when the customer is not behaving acceptably. Staff should not waste valuable work time trying to reason with customers who are impaired or belligerent.
- If one staff member sees another staff member trying to deal with an unruly customer she should get a member of management to handle the situation.
- Managers or supervisors must respond immediately to a request from staff to help with a customer whose behavior is causing a problem.
- Supervisors or managers should walk the customer to the door to assure that he leaves as requested.

#### **2. Would you handle the situation differently if the customer was using the computer to look for a house, smelled of alcohol but was quiet and not disturbing others?**

- This situation is less clear. If no one is waiting for the computer, the customer is quiet and not disturbing others, and the man's breath smells of alcohol only when he speaks, you may simply leave the man alone.

#### **3. Do you always have to call a supervisor?**

- No. If a staff member handles the situation immediately and effectively a supervisor is not needed. No staff member should hesitate to call a supervisor if she is unsure of how to handle a disruptive customer or if the situation is taking time that should be spent helping other customers.

### **Discussion Points:**

**What other disruptive behavior do you see in the office? How do you handle those situations?**

- Crying baby
- Child running around in the office as the mother and or father is in an interview with staff
- Cell phone ring tones or cell phone conversations
- Loud and/or angry customer