What is Verbal Judo?

**Verbal:**
Of, relating to, or associated with words: a detailed verbal description.

**Judo:**
A sport and method of physical training similar to wrestling, developed in Japan in the late 19th century and using principles of balance and leverage adapted from jujitsu.
Making a Positive Initial Contact

Verbal & Non-Verbal Cues
(smiling, nodding, eye contact, upbeat, enthused and respectful telephone voice, etc)

Greeting
(standard, and welcoming including your name and an offer to assist)

Stature
(straight posture, professional appearance)
Active Listening Techniques

Listen from the beginning and to the entire dialogue
(when entering office or initially answering the telephone)

Pick up non-verbal cues indicating stress, rising temper, defensiveness while listening
(folding of arms, pacing, raising voice, etc)
Developing Professionalism

Use existing processes, systems to eliminate perceived bias
(treat everyone the same)

Share information typed, e-mailed or shared via a printed document
(relied on process and removes attention from you as a person)

Develop guards for your verbal triggers
(understand your breaking point and guard against it)
Knowing When Words Fail

Become aware of the stages of escalation of a problem

- **Misunderstanding** (I don’t know what you mean or How does the online process work?)
- **Denial** (Yes I did submit my application yesterday – at 11:59 pm)
- **Anger** (This is ridiculous, I can’t believe this!)
Knowing When Words Fail

What to do when they stop listening to you (misunderstanding, denial and anger over ride reasonable solutions and further conversation)

- Articulating your forced responses (“I’m really sorry that you have missed the deadline, the position closed on...which means...you have a couple of options...”)
Addressing Difficult People

• **Ask** the person what exactly he/she is upset about, in order to show that you are interested in communicating rather than in arguing. The burden of responsibility is now back on them.

• **Agree** with or acknowledge one of their reasonable points verses generalizations (ex: it took days to get my voice mailed returned verse you all Never return telephone calls)
Addressing Difficult People

• Discuss without a defensive tone (resist the urge to participate in an argument, being silent while someone is ranting is a good way to not be pulled into an argument)
Dealing with Difficult People

- **Remove** the person from your environment (Please take a seat in the front office or we’ll need to reschedule your appointment)

- **Confront** the person about his/her behavior directly (Ask “Are you raising your voice in order to intimidate me?” or “Will speaking harshly to me resolve this situation?”)
Dealing with Difficult People

• **Release it** (the Buddha example – “If someone offers you a ‘gift’ and you decline it who is left with it?)

• **Change it** - use behavioral conditioning (ignore or confront negative behavior and reward positive behavior)
**The Bottom Line**

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<th><strong>ABUSE</strong></th>
<th><strong>VIOLENCE</strong></th>
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| • Is unacceptable behavior no matter the circumstances  
  - Verbal and/or physical abuse **is NOT tolerated** and irate customers should be forwarded to management immediately  
  - If possible brief management of the call before transferring the call | • Is unacceptable no matter the circumstances  
  - Identify safeguards (power in numbers, stand next to one another when addressing upset individuals,  
  - Identify and practice safety procedures and escape routes |
QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

THANK YOU!