



CUSTOMER CARE TRAINING

Training Overview





What is Customer Care?

Assignment Overview



Help visitors who may be looking for a particular cat, especially if they are interested in adopting.



Help answer questions about the café, point out activities if needed (books, games, card making station)



Watch interactions with cats and intervene when/if appropriate



Alert staff to any concerns when out in the café



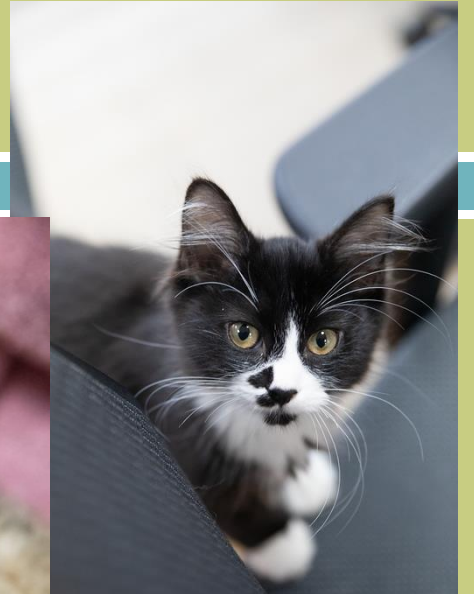
Assist staff with adoptions if needed

Basic Body Language

Understanding adult cat and kitten body cues and behavior

Relaxed, Comfortable and at Ease

- Loose, soft body
- Blinky eyes, oval pupils
- Approach without hesitation
- Napping comfortably in the open
- Choosing to interact with the environment
- Eating well
- Not hiding



Fearful and Unsure

- Tense, clenched
- Tail and legs pulled into body
- Ears down
- Pupils dilated
- Stress signals
 - Lip licking
 - Overgrooming
- Hiding
- Not eating well
- Not engaging with environment



Over arousal

- Coat rippling
- Tail twitching
- Pupils constrict
- Can move from low energy to high quickly
- Rough play/ nipping during touch
- Use paws to direct touch or play, often with claws out
- “Annoying” other cats
- Can’t move from play to relaxed easily



How to Respond to Offered Body Language

What should we do when we see these things?

Fearful cats and kittens

- **Must have a safe place to hide**
- **Use food motivators to gain trust**
 - Churu
 - Smelly wet food
- **Do not force interaction**
- **Allow them to choose**
 - Only touch when they offer the opportunity
 - Let them hide
- **Consistent hiding- should likely return to HSHV for care and treatment**



High energy, high arousal cats and kittens

- Need a variety of play opportunities
- Never pet while in a high arousal state
- Redirect with toys
- Reward with treats
- Give them a game to play
 - Battery operated toys can be perfect!
- Only pet when calm, and only pet face and cheeks



Are They Fighting or Playing?

How to know if you're seeing normal behavior, or reactive aggression

Play vs reactivity/ discomfort

- **Play:**
 - Reciprocal- both cats engaged
 - One or both cats are allowed to take a break and may reengage
 - If one cat leaves, the other allows them to leave
 - Hissing, growling and physical play are ok if it's reciprocal!
- **Reactivity/ discomfort**
 - Hissing, growling, with chase and one or both cats engaging with claws/ teeth
 - One cat hissing or growling when another cat comes near without loosening
 - On guard, alert to the other cat's movement, may affect sleeping and/or eating for that cat



Helping Our Guests

How to help guests interact safely and respectfully with our cats and kittens

Helping our guests engage safely with our cats

- Keep a close eye on body language
- Always have an alternative
 - Picking up/ carrying cats or kittens can be scary for them!
 - Have toys and treats handy!
 - Direct them to another cat who may be more comfortable with an interaction
- Having toys available and ready for your customers will enhance their interactions and the safety of your cats!
- Make sure they are aware of the card making station, especially if there are less cats at the café, they are sleeping, or not engaging at the moment





Common Challenges-Working With Families



Common Challenges



Voice Level

Youth may exhibit voice levels that may be uncomfortable for others or animals.



Animal Handling

Handling concerns may arise with young people that require immediate staff intervention.



Activity Level

A young person's activity level may exceed what is safe.



When to Intervene

- Staff should intervene immediately when a person or animal's safety and well being is at risk.
- When the comfort level of others may be impacted, including the animals.

Some strategies discussed will need to be bypassed in a situation that involves safety. Good customer service should always be a part of every interaction.

Staff should primarily handle these types of situations, not volunteers.





Approaching Young People



Assume Good Intentions

Children want to do well and though they make mistakes, they are likely not intentional.

Connection before Correction

Connect with a child before correcting a behavior.

Approach at Eye Level

Talking with children at eye level can help children to feel comfortable, especially with someone unknown.

Smile and use a friendly, gentle voice

Maintain eye contact and ensure the child knows you are there to help.



Communicating with Young Children

Be clear and concise

Young children are not always able to read between the lines so be clear in what you are asking.

Build confidence and keep it positive

Add statements that help to build their confidence! Keep the focus on what they should do and not what they shouldn't do.

Loop things back to animal care

Share why you are asking them to do something.

Praise children often!

Compliment children who are showing desired behaviors. Include compliments for those you may have talked with.



Strategies to Intervene



Redirect Children

Find a different kitten for them to play with, a different area for them to move over to or something else to engage them.



Give a Child a Job

Have a child help you find a kitten, put toys back or feed a cat to help engage them in a positive behavior.



Offer Activities

When attention spans are short, provide lots of other activities such as coloring books, games, making toys for the kittens, puzzles, etc.



Involving Families

- Adult Caregiver
 - Share expectations and resources when they enter the cafe.
 - Include them in conversations you are having with their children - they may need to learn, too!
 - Ask them for assistance, as needed.



Let's Practice!



Scenario 1

A customer enters the cafe with four small children under the age of 5. What might you review with them as they check in?

Scenario 2

A six year old boy is constantly running through the cafe and has almost stepped on a kitten a few times. The parents are on their phones and not intervening.



What's Next?

After Training Today...

- Your account in VIC will be updated
- Check the schedule and sign up for shifts
- Remember staff are there to help, so ask questions when needed
- Have Fun!
- Thank you for helping to make sure our visitors have a great time at the café

