



# The Journey of a Complaint



Presented By: **Dianne Adamson**



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# The Golden Circle

## WHAT

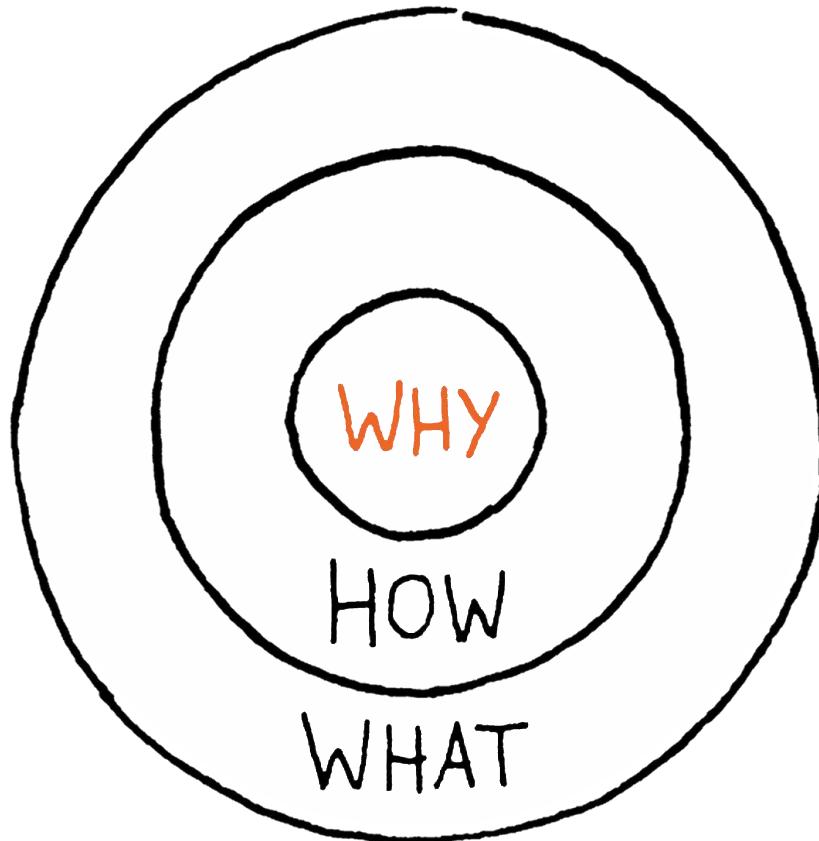
Every organization on the planet knows WHAT they do. These are products they sell or the services

## HOW

Some organizations know HOW they do it. These are the things that make them special or set them apart from their competition.

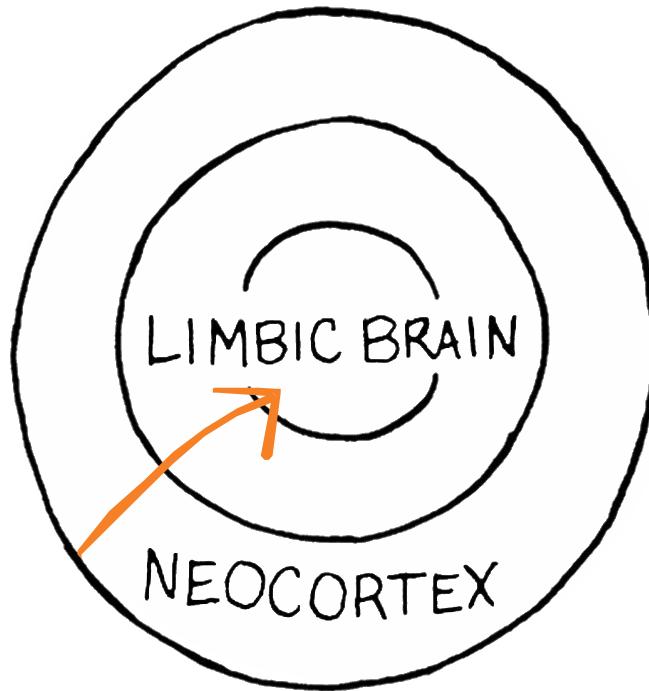
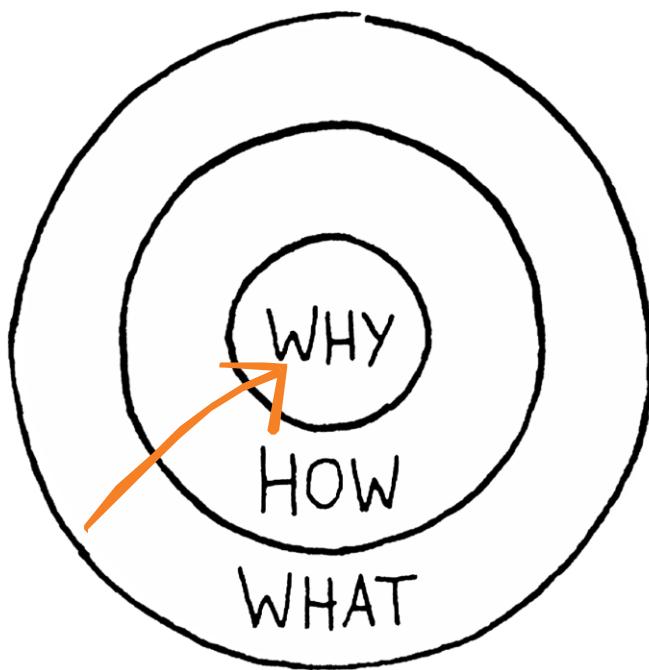
## WHY

Very few organizations know WHY they do what they do. WHY is not about making money. That's a result. WHY is a purpose, cause or belief. It's the very reason your organization exists.





# The Golden Circle + Human Brain



**Culture is not intangible:**

**Leaders design it**

**Staff build it**

**Customers feel it**

**The culture of an organisation  
is formed by the values and  
beliefs of the people who work  
there and is expressed through  
language and behaviour.**

## **Engagement:**

**Engagement refers to the degree of positive emotion a person attaches to the organisation, their job and their colleagues. "When a person is engaged, they are attracted to, inspired by, committed to, and even fascinated by their work or their input to the work relationship"**

**says David Rock**



- Interview
- Orientation
- Embedding the values
- Giving feedback – both positive and corrective
- Calling poor behaviour
- Meetings
- Team Building process
- Debriefing grief
- The Top Five
- Holding each other accountable
- Taking opportunities to be inspirational

# Understanding Complaints

- Managing complaints is the responsibility of everyone working in healthcare
- It is part of communicating effectively with patients, clients and relatives in providing quality healthcare or services

## What is a complaint?

- An expression of dissatisfaction with the service provided
- A concern that provides feedback regarding some aspect of the service that identifies issues requiring a response
- Complaints **do not include** requests for service or information or explanations

## Why do people complain:

- Quality of service is not always provided
- Care or service may be inconsistent, depending who is 'on'
- Simple unintended human error
- Consumers are better informed and have high expectations of health providers
- Consumers are baby boomers who are comfortable speaking up

## Why do people complain:

- To prevent an incident from occurring
- An attempt to resolve an issue has failed
- To learn the truth about an occasion of care
- I've been offended
- To receive an apology

# What do people want?

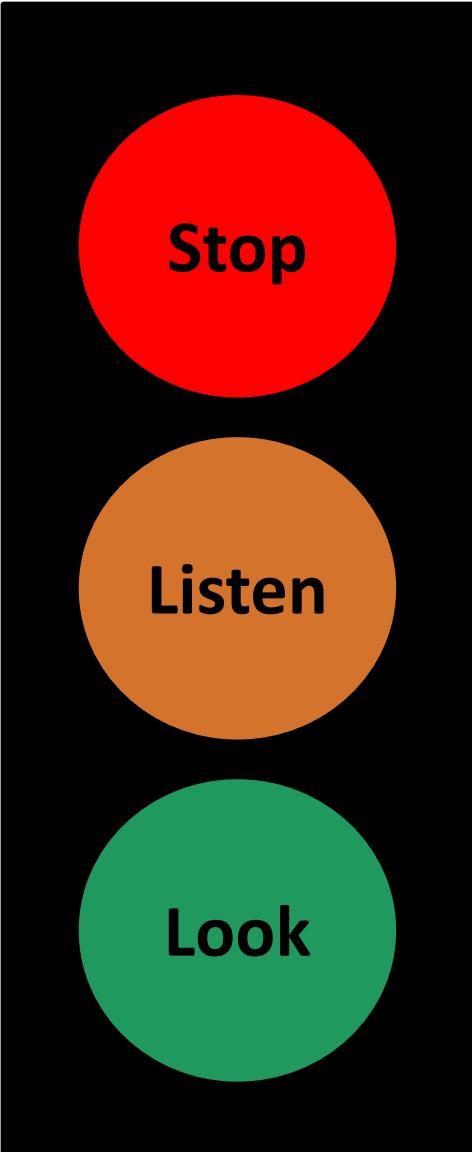
- To be treated with dignity and respect
- That the complaint is taken seriously
- To be heard and understood
- Given support and assistance if required
- Have their concerns dealt with effectively
- To be informed of the process, progress, findings and outcome
- Have appropriate action taken as a result of their complaint

# The Complaint Management Process

- RECEIVE the complaint
- ASSESS the complaint
- INVESTIGATE the complaint or REPORT the complaint to the appropriate person
- RESOLVE the complaint

# Key Actions in Receiving the Complaint

- Actively listen
- Empathise, and acknowledge their viewpoint
- Express regret that they have had this experience
- Assure them steps will be taken to investigate and who will follow up



**Stop**

**Listen**

**Look**

## **Stop before you speak**

Allow the person to “vent” and do not react defensively

## **Listen for understanding**

Actively listen to the complainant  
Empathise, understand and acknowledge their viewpoint

## **Look for solutions**

Express regret that they have had a poor experience, consider options for action to resolve the issue

## Before you speak:

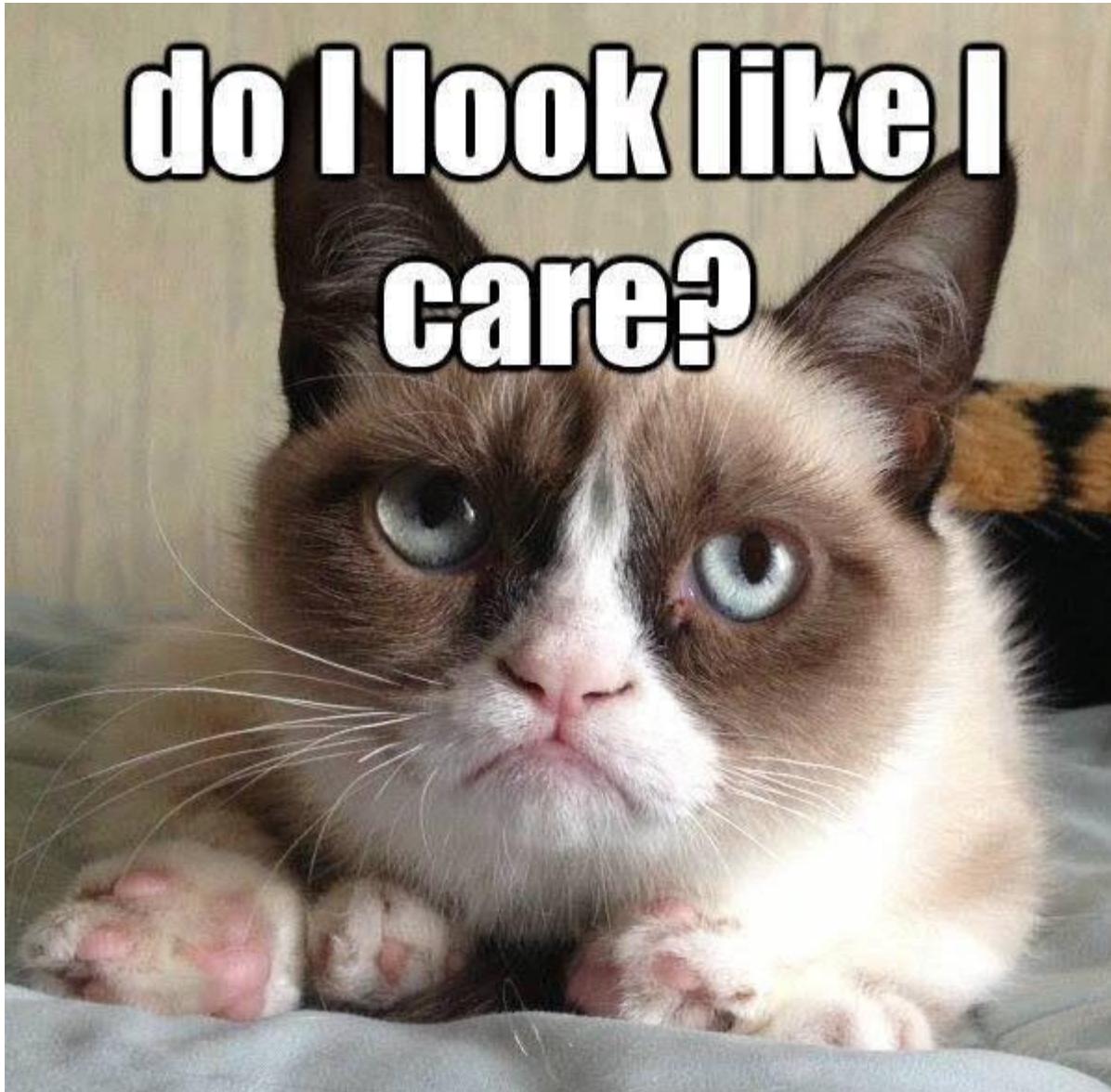
- Let the person be angry – don't interrupt as they tell their story
- Keep your volume down and pitch low
- Speak calmly
- Reinforce their right to complain, to be heard and to receive a response
- Be open, non judgmental and empathetic

## What would this look like / sound like?

- “I understand how frustrating that must be”
- “I see what you mean”
- Ask open questions as you get more details – who, what, when, where, how
- Take notes if appropriate
- Accept what is being said without attempting to justify another’s actions



**do I look like I  
care?**



## Listen for understanding

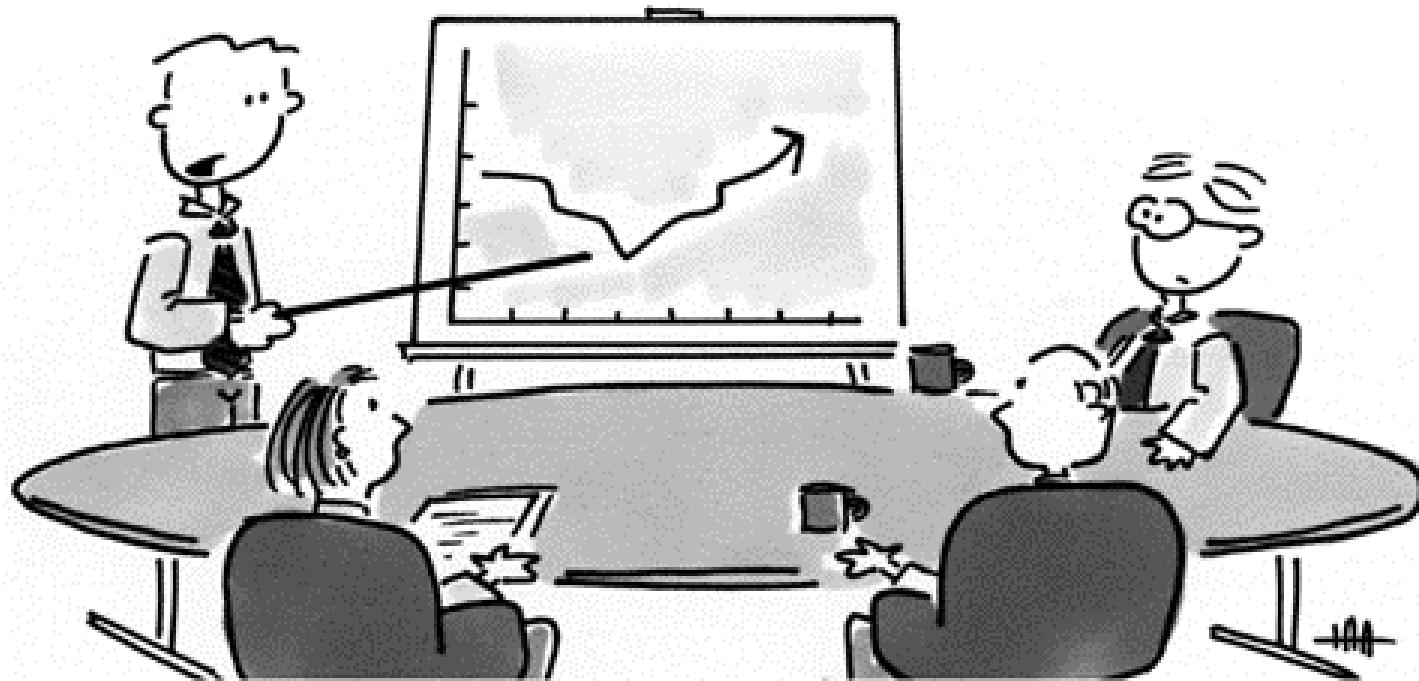
- Take time and pay full attention
- Active listening – nod saying, “ I see”, asking a question to clarify, not interrogate
- Use plain English and don’t use jargon
- Try to appreciate the persons point of view without necessarily adopting it

## Listen for understanding

- Summarise the main points and check if you've got it correct
- Be aware of your own emotions
- Listen to your tone and listen for defensiveness

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"So, as you can see, customer satisfaction is up considerably since phasing out the complaint forms."

## How do you manage serial complainers?

- These people can present a huge challenge to staff
- Trying to stay positive, motivated and engaged can be a struggle especially when they don't really want a resolution but just to repeat how bad things are for them, how bad the system is, how bad the government is, the staff are, the management is!!!!!!



**I came. I saw.**

**I complained.**

## What to do:

- Be respectful
- Don't try to convince them things are not so bad or that they are over-reacting
- Validate their feelings, express sympathy and re-direct the complainer to the task or problem at hand
- Re-direct the complainer to the appropriate person.

- If the serial complainer is disrupting the care and service and undermining the team, the management have the right and responsibility to set boundaries around the behaviour of the complainer and to debrief staff.
- Staff have the responsibility to continue to engage with the complainer and to treat them respectfully.

## Look for Solutions:

- If you can, offer to remedy the situation immediately.
- Gives reasons for what happened and, if appropriate, apologise.
- Explain clearly what can be done and what cannot be done.
- Focus on solving the problem not on whose fault it was or finding blame.

## Look for Solutions:

- Log the complaint to enable the organisation to look for trends
- Report up and follow up if you know it hasn't been addressed
- Make sure you follow up on a promised action
- Provide a name and number for the person you are referring to. "I'll make sure this information gets to the right person"

# Opportunities and Benefits:

- It's feedback
- It's an opportunity to:
  - Do it better
  - To change
  - To grow as a team
  - To build the relationship
  - To build your reputation

# Reference Material

NSW Government Health  
Complaint Management Guidelines  
Publication 20-Dec-2006

Author: Clinical Excellence Commission