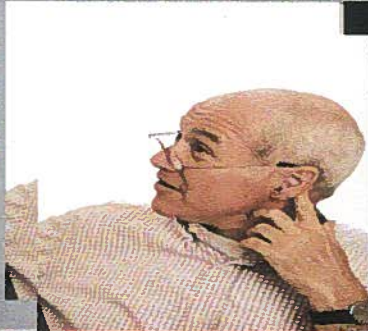


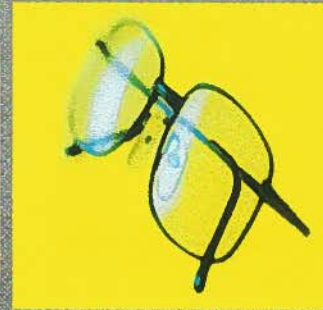
Customer Service Practices with Older Adults



Topic 1
Hearing loss



Topic 2
Cognitive challenges



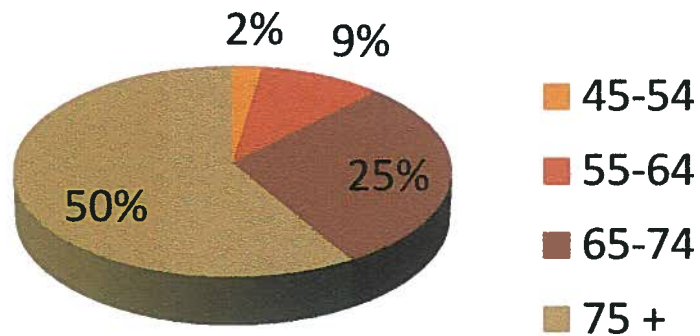
Topic 3
Visual deficits



Topic 4
Summary

Hearing Loss

HEARING LOSS



Many people lose their hearing gradually as they age. It is an invisible disability.

An older adult with a hearing loss may be viewed as confused, or cognitively impaired.

Hearing loss



COMMON HEARING ISSUES

“I can hear but just can’t understand.”

Can’t hear high pitched sounds

It takes a little longer to process information; individual is concentrating what was heard.

Speech sounds mumbled or wording are jumbled together

CUSTOMER SERVICE PRACTICES

Shouting does not necessarily help; amplification does not mean clarity. Enunciate and emphasize consonant sounds which are spoken more softly than vowels

Consonants are **higher pitched** such as: Th, F, S, H, T, SH; **lower the pitch** of your voice. This is the 1st loss of ability in hearing clearly.

Trying to understand within the context of the conversation; missing words and hearing sounds like Sue, too, shoe, true, blue

Consonants act as a breaking point; enunciate and speak clearly.

Cognitive Deficits



COMMON COGNITIVE ISSUES

Focuses or fixates on one part of the conversation

Displays a defensive or assertive demeanor

May appear confused, and responses do not seem to make sense

Changes direction of discussion frequently

Searches for a word or understanding

CUSTOMER SERVICE PRACTICES

Support and reassure the customer; acknowledge when in agreement

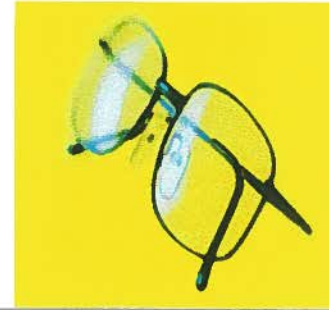
Tone of voice is important even if you are frustrated

Repetition is important; reinforce a new idea by rephrasing language

Redirect and discuss one direct statement at a time

Suggest a missing word(s) for clarity

Visual Acuity



COMMON VISION ISSUES

Older adults are dealing with contrast sensitivity

Increase font size

Some colors together are not distinctive

CUSTOMER SERVICE PRACTICES

Website and billing statement; easier to read on a white background with contrasting font

Information listed on the website is in a small font (services offered)

Yellow and white; blues and greens; dark blue and black

Visual Acuity

CONTRAST SENSITIVITY



CUSTOMER SERVICE PRACTICES

With age, the lens of the eye hardens. The lens becomes thicker and yellows

The result for an older adult is that the colors on a document become muddy looking.

Summary

WORKING WITH OLDER ADULTS



AGING TSUNAMI

Between 2000 and 2010, the Austin MSA had a 53 percent jump in the 65 and older population, making it the second-fastest growing population of age 65 and older adults in the nation, according to information compiled by Austin Demographer Ryan Robinson.

Robinson's numbers project the population of 65 and older residents will jump to about 700,000 by 2040.

Preparing for the growth in the senior population makes sense.



The End

Questions or comments?