

L.A.S.T. Method “Starter” Talking Points & Phrases

If you have taken a moment to “get your mind right” to identify the emotion to be addressed, the best possible outcome of the conversation, and your positive intent in having it, you are already well-positioned for success. However, it can be helpful to have some talking point examples for each phase of our *Listen-Apologize-Solve-Thank* Method. These are not scripts! They illustrate a mindset. We hope you find them helpful.

Listen

If someone brings a service breakdown TO you:

- “Can you tell me more about that? I want to make sure I have the whole picture.”
- “I want to understand what happened so that I can help.”
- “I want to understand what happened so that I can be sure to connect you with the right team member for the next steps.”
- “I can only imagine how sad/frustrated/upset/worried you must feel.”
- “I’m here for you.”
- “I want to help. What else is it important that we know right now?”
- “Can we walk through what happened?”
- “What I hearing you say is . . . does that capture it?”
- “I’m so glad you brought this to me.”
- “Mr. INSERT, I’m glad you called. I’ve moved to a spot where we’ll have no interruptions while we talk. Do you have time to work through what happened?”
- “It sounds like . . . do I have that right?”
- “Would you mind if I took some notes while we talk? It’s important to me that I get everything we talk about right.”

If YOU are initiating the service recovery conversation:

- “Mrs. Jones, I can’t help but notice . . . “
- “I can see that you have been impacted by (INSERT ISSUE) we are having today . . . “
- “Mr. Jones, my name is INSERT and my role at MedVet is INSERT. I can appreciate how difficult it is to wait when you are worried about your pet. Can you tell me a little more about what is going on with you today?”
- “Would you be comfortable talking to me about what happened?”
- “Mr. Jones, my name is INSERT and my role at MedVet is INSERT. I saw your online review and wanted to express my condolence for your loss. Is there a time that would be best for you and me to talk?”

Apologize

- “I’m so sorry that today has not gone as you expected/hoped.”
- “I can appreciate that you were hoping for a different outcome today. I’m so sorry.”
- “I’m sorry that (insert the specific service breakdown the client has referenced). We never want someone to feel this way at our hospital.”
- “I can only imagine how you feel and I want to tell you how sorry I am for . . . “
- “I can only imagine how worried you are about INSERT and I’m sorry that we have had these issues.”
- “I apologize that your experience at MedVet did not feel as caring and supportive as I know our healthcare team aspires for it to be.”
- “I want to apologize to you for INSERT. We aspire to provide exceptional care and service at MedVet and we did not meet our own standard today.”

- “There is nothing I can say that feels like it would be enough to convey how sorry we are for INSERT. Our intent is to support you in times like this and we let you down.”

Solve

If you can offer alternatives/choices:

- “I want to work with you to figure out the best next steps for INSERT PET and you.”
- “There are couple different things that we could do next . . . I’d like to walk you through them and see what sounds right to you.”
- “I want to help. Can we talk about our next steps?”
- “Mrs. Kay, I/we take responsibility for what happened. Are you ready to talk about what happens next? I’d like to . . . “
- “Based on our conversation, I’d like to suggest . . . “
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If you do not have options to offer (or if the client does not gravitate toward an offered option):

- “Based on our conversation, here is what will happen next . . . “
- “Based on all that we have discussed, I will take my notes from our conversation back to the healthcare team so that we can look at how we support clients and patients facing a situation such as yours. Is there anything else that we have not already touched on that is important that we talk about?”
- “I know that we cannot change what happened. What I CAN do is take this back to our team for a closer look so that we can learn from this. It will make a difference.”
- “What in your opinion is the right next step?”

Thank

- “I appreciate you reaching out about this so that we had a chance to talk it over.”
- “I’m glad we had a chance to connect on this. I want to try to make it right.”
- “You and INSERT are important to us and we appreciate the chance to take of you.”
- “Thank you for bringing Fluffy to MedVet.”
- “Thank you for letting us attempt to make things right for you. You have my commitment to work with our team on the steps we discussed to make sure this does not happen again. Here is my contact information – may I check in with you?”
- “Thank you so much for bringing us your concerns. You have my commitment to address them.”
- “Thank you for our conversation today and for your willingness to share your experience with me. It means a lot to me. Here is my contact info – just in case you think of something else that we need to talk about.”
- “I appreciate how scary it can be when our pets are ill and I hope our conversation has helped.”