

Dealing with difficult clients

Most clients will be easy going and easily led by a sex worker when they feel that they are getting the services that they paid for. But, no matter how much effort you put into some bookings, nothing is going to satisfy some clients.

This fact sheet provides some tips on how to deal with difficult clients and difficult situations which may arise. These include redirecting clients, clients who don't want to wear condoms, drunken clients, rough or annoying clients, clients who fall in love and clients who sexually harass you.

Redirecting clients

If you are able to redirect a client so that they do not feel offended or the erotic mood is not ruined, it should not make too much of an impact on the booking. Suggesting something else, without saying anything negative about what they are doing, can do this. For example, if a client puts his hand on your crutch from the moment you hit the bed but you are sore from the last few clients, you could tell them you really enjoy your breasts being played with. Then you can position yourself with that part of your body out of their reach without it looking obvious.

Clients who do not want to wear condoms

Most of the time it is easy to keep the condom on the clients. However, sometimes clients do not understand the risks or they don't care enough about their bodies to keep the condom on. Some feel sex is not as enjoyable or that their most precious asset won't work when covered by latex. Whatever the reason, sometimes men feel it is their right to break or take off the condoms.

Look for the following warning signs that clients may be reluctant to co-operate:

- if a client asks you if he has to wear a condom

- if he offers to pay more if you don't make him wear it
- if he uses body language which shows he is turned off or repulsed by the condom
- if he says he has difficulty keeping it up wearing one of those things.

Watch for these and other signs that the client may try to break or take off the condom. Trust your instincts. If you suspect the client might try to give you trouble, you can try different strategies through the booking to help yourself stay safe. These include:

- keeping your eyes open and making sure there is enough light to see the condom clearly
- leading the client into positions where you can see the condom and tell him you like to watch eg squat on him.
- if in doggy or missionary positions, feel around behind their balls as this can help them cum faster. While you're there, feel for the condom by checking the base to feel if the condom is still in place and the shaft for breakage.

These can be done in an erotic way so as not to make the client defensive. You can put in a bit of teasing or the impression of personal satisfaction (we know this can be difficult) when you are checking the condom is still there and in one piece. When the booking is nearly finished, talk to him about how enjoyable it was even with the condom. This might make it a bit easier the next time you see him or for the next sex worker he sees.

Drunken clients

Many times, clients arrive with issues that are outside of your control. Drunken clients tend to be argumentative and aggressive, especially when they may not be able to cum or have an erection. Another consequence of alcohol seems to be an ability to lie and not feel any guilt or responsibility at the time.

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Getting yourself out once you are in a booking with a drunken client can be done in many different ways. Most workers have dealt with this at some stage in the game, and everyone has their own way of getting out of it. If you have a chance, ask around and see what other workers have done to minimise this issue. You could try using the following phrases:

- “Honey, why not ring me in the morning and I can come back and we can finish the job?” (most drunk clients don’t remember who they rang by the morning anyway)
- “Why not call me before you go out next time and we can really enjoy ourselves?”

If the client gets lost in thought trying to work out what you are talking about, take the opportunity to get out while you can.

If you have co-workers or security staff, you can ask them to assist. If you are a sole operator and have no security in place, prevention is better than cure.

Rough or annoying clients

Every worker is different and therefore what may be acceptable for some may be painful or uncomfortable for others. Some clients don’t quite know what is acceptable and what isn’t. Some will push the boundaries to see what you will and won’t put up with. If a client has gone past your limits, you need to be able to bring them back without causing too many issues such as him losing his momentum (or hard on). The limits that you set for your workroom are your choices. Common ones include no biting, kissing, hickies or other marks being left on your body.

Client expectations

For some clients, nothing you do will be good enough. This could be due to the fact that they could be just a total pain or that their expectations of you were too high. These expectations could be anything from what you look like to the way they would feel when it is all over and anything in between.

It’s hard not to feel hurt and/or defensive when someone insults you or your work. At the time, the best thing to do is try to get out safely. If you start retaliating or getting angry with them, they could turn on you. If you have the luxury of support staff, they can assist you.

Refunds

If a client wants a refund or any sort of reimbursement, you could tell them they have paid for your time, and that your time cannot be returned to you.

If the client voices his concern early enough in a booking to cut the time down (eg. an hour down to a half hour booking), you could cut the booking short and give them a partial refund.

If you feel your safety is in danger, do what you need to get out safely, regardless of any refund you may have to give. An assault leaving bruising can force you into having time off work in turn losing more money than one client’s booking fees.

If your safety is not at risk and you have security or co-workers close at hand, you can call for assistance. If you are working in a licensed Queensland brothel, you may want to know what the management of that establishment may do in this situation. You have every right to ask them as early as the interview and if you are not satisfied that they would support your judgement on when a client needs to be thrown out, it might be worth looking for some where else to work.

Clients who fall in love

It is a good idea not to encourage clients to fall in love with you, especially clients with a disability as they tend to get very attached if they only see the same worker every time. If you are able to make a client understand that this is not real love nor is the booking a part of a relationship, you can make your own mind up whether or not you will continue to see them.

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If it is making you feel uncomfortable or you feel that the client is getting too attached and has unreal perceptions on the purely professional relationship you have with them, you can look at ways of getting them to move on. Possible ways of assisting them to move on include:

- referring them on to a brothel or getting them to contact another worker
- refusing to see them by being booked
- talking to management about not allowing them to choose you. If the management of the agency do not understand your concerns and refuse to assist you, look for somewhere else to work.

If the client does not accept the choices you have made, it might be sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment in the sex industry

Most of us have heard about the classic sexual harassment case where the boss is being lewd, rude and crude to their employee. This is sexual harassment, but the legislation covers more than this.

When some people look at what would be sexual harassment to a sex worker, some say that their job is to attract their clients sexually so they cannot be sexually harassed. This is untrue. As sex workers, you are with your client to provide a service and when the booking is finished, so should the sexual attention.

Sometimes, clients will try to 'save' the worker or they will try to have a personal relationship with them. They could do this by trying to contact the worker at home or continually asking them to go out with them or asking for their personal information (real name, home phone number, where they live, etc.) even after the worker has made it clear that they do not want any of this attention.

These are some examples of sexual harassment against a sex worker. The *Sexual Harassment Act* can be used to make it clear to the client that his actions are not acceptable.

In Queensland, the *Sexual Harassment Act* only applies to legal situations. The Act states that sexual harassment happens if a person:

- subjects another person to an unsolicited act of physical intimacy
- makes an unsolicited demand or request (whether direct or implied) for sexual favours from the other person
- makes a remark with sexual connotations relating to the other person, or
- engages in any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature in relation to the other person.

For it to be sexual harassment, the person must intend to offend, humiliate or intimidate the victim.

In other words, *sexual harassment is any form of unwelcome sexual attention that is offensive, humiliating or intimidating*. This includes:

- touching
- lewd comments and smutty jokes
- asking for sex
- questions about someone's private life
- unnecessary familiarity
- sexual assault
- displays of offensive material.

While these things may be part of a booking the above behaviours become sexual harassment when they are *unwanted*.

Communicating your boundaries to your clients when they attempt to push their way into your personal life can help put them in their place. But unfortunately, some clients just don't listen. This is when you can argue sexual harassment and use the laws to assist you.

If you want to take the matter to the Anti-Discrimination Commission, the first step is to lodge a complaint. The Commission's solicitor will look at the complaint and decide whether it can be accepted.

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If it is accepted, the Commission will contact the person who has placed the complaint to organise a date for them and the person they are complaining about to come into the Commission for a mediation. This is like a round table discussion about the complaint. The only people that need to be present are the people involved in the argument and a mediator (no solicitors).

Through this mediation, future contact, behaviour and compensation can be discussed and an agreement between the two people involved can be reached. If this is not successful, it could lead to court but that is a long way down the track.

Useful contacts

*For information on
sexual harassment:*
Anti-Discrimination
Commission Queensland
1300 130 670 (statewide)

*Information for this fact sheet was taken from Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland resources.
Information in this fact sheet is a guide only and is not a substitute for legal advice.*