

Empathy Quick Ref Guide



The Empathy Framework for Corporate Flight Attendants

The 5-Step Empathy Model

1. Pause

Take one breath before responding. Avoid jumping to assumptions.

2. Observe

Read tone, body language, pace of speech, tension levels.

3. Listen Actively

Allow the guest to speak fully. Use small verbal nods.

4. Acknowledge

“I understand how that must feel.”

“I can see why this is important to you.”

5. Respond Appropriately

Offer solutions, reassurance or quiet support depending on the situation.

Empathy Phrases to Use

- “I completely understand and I am here to assist.”
- “Thank you for letting me know, I appreciate it.”
- “I can see why that would matter while travelling.”
- “Let me take care of that immediately for you.”

Empathy Phrases to Avoid

- “Calm down.”
- “It’s not a big deal.”
- “You’re overreacting.”
- “You should have told me earlier.”

Key Reminders

- UHNW clients rarely verbalise stress directly.
- Subtle signs matter more than spoken words.
- Professional empathy is calm, measured and efficient.

Empathy Quick Ref Guide



Reading UHNW Passenger Cues

Signs of Stress

- Sharp, short responses
- Rapid changes in preferences
- Reduced eye contact
- Restless movement

Signs of Discomfort

- Adjusting seating repeatedly
- Touching neck, face or temple
- Yawning excessively
- Shoulders raised or tense

Signs of Irritation

- Heavy exhalations
- Looking at the watch repeatedly
- Raising eyebrows or pinching the nose bridge

How to Respond

Passenger Cue

- Impatient tone
- Silence / withdrawn
- Irritation
- Anxiety

Respond

- Deliver concise, solution focused replies
- Offer discreet check ins, give space if needed
- Apologise briefly, correct the issue promptly
- Offer reassurance, explain steps clearly

You Have 10 seconds

- Breathe once
- Release your shoulders
- Relax your jaw
- Mentally say: “Respond, not react.”

When You Have 1 Minute

- Identify what the passenger is actually feeling
- Reframe your internal tone
- Choose one empathy phrase
- Deliver help confidently and without fuss

When You Have 5 Minutes

- Step into the galley
- Reset emotionally
- Re-centre your service plan
- Return calm, composed and grounded