From shop workers to waiters to surgery receptionists, public-facing staff say they have experienced a surge in abusive treatment since the Covid pandemic began.

The number of shop workers who faced abusive customers has risen 25% since February this year according to the latest Institute of Customer Service (ICS) data.

The British Medical Association revealed in May 2022 that criminal violence in GP surgeries had almost doubled in five years.

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"People are kind of on edge. It's been hard for a lot of people. It looks like the pandemic has triggered some more longstanding, zero-sum psychological environments, where the competition moves from being productive to destructive."

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Car park analogy

"Positive-sum environment"

If there are lots of car parking spaces to go round you might be annoyed (but not angry) if someone takes one you find.

"Zero-sum environment"

On the flip side if you're stressed and there aren't any spaces left you're more likely to be angry if someone takes on you find.

"Build strong relationships"

We will treat each other with respect and be open and honest with each other.

Our relationships will be:

- Polite, friendly and mutually respectful

- Understanding of differences

- Honest, positive and helpful

- Between people and not "positions"

"Be transparent and accountable"

We will be open and transparent and work together to develop our understanding.

We will:

- Be fair in our approach and help people understand our decisions

- Share how we're performing, including when things go wrong

- Ask each other how we can develop and improve

- Learn from our mistakes and resolve differences by listening to each other

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What are your thoughts?

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