



PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH TELEPHONING

Skill to do comes of doing.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

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INTRODUCTION AND OUTCOMES

*Tell and I forget;
Teach me and I remember;
INVOLVE me and I LEARN.*

- Benjamin Franklin

Introduction and Outcomes

Welcome!

Welcome to the *Professional English Telephoning Workshop*. This program is the second in our *Professional English Skills* series of professional development workshops. This course has been designed to focus primarily on developing specific speaking skills and cultural knowledge frequently needed when using the telephone in business contexts.

It is our hope that you enjoy the course and that you are better able to anticipate telephone situations, use common telephone phrases appropriately and feel more confident when using the telephone in English after you have finished this program.

In addition to this workshop, Steve Mullen & Associates also provide the following programs:

- + The *Professional English Correspondence Workshop*
- + The *Professional English Presentations Workshop*
- + Training course writing services
- + English immersion courses in Canada
- + Customer service training courses

For further information, check us out at www.mullen.cz or e-mail us at info@mullen.cz.

Agenda

1. Get to know one another
2. Establish Goals
3. Why Telephone Skills are Important
4. Telephone Language and Etiquette
5. Helpful Telephone Phrases
6. Avoiding Errors
7. Practice, Practice, Practice
8. Closure

To get started, we will do an activity which will help us get to know each other a little better.

At the beginning of such a learning experience, it is very important to create a good level of comfort for all group members. This makes us more likely to contribute our thoughts and ideas throughout the workshop. Our goal should be to become totally involved and to learn from each other as much as possible.

We will begin by learning something about each other. Following this, we will establish some goals and objectives so that we know what to expect from the remainder of our time together.

Getting to Know One Another



Learning Activity: *Can I take a message?*

- Step 1:** Remove the message pad from your Materials Package.
- Step 2:** Whisper the information you get to the participant next to you but do not show the information; it must be passed orally. The information can be stated only once and the recipient of the information is not allowed to speak. As the recipient of the information, you should try to write the message on your message pad. Furthermore, information given in Czech must be communicated in Czech and English information must be passed along in English.
- Step 3:** In your groups, discuss the questions below.

Discussion Questions:

1. Introduce yourselves and your firms. Say what you do and what your firm does.
.....
.....
.....
.....
2. Typically, what kind of telephone work do you do or anticipate doing?
.....
.....
.....
.....
3. With whom do you normally speak English by phone (i.e. English-speaking clients, partners, colleagues or suppliers; or other foreign clients, partners, colleagues or suppliers)?
.....
.....
.....
.....
4. What is it about telephoning you find most difficult? Why?
.....
.....
.....
.....
5. What about the activity you just participated in? Were there any problems in Czech? In English? Was one more difficult? Why was it difficult? How could it have been made easier?
.....
.....
.....
.....

Learning Outcomes

Now that you have had a chance to think about the kind of telephoning you normally do and what could make telephoning easier let's focus on the outcomes we wish to achieve from this workshop. Although this course has some set outcomes (i.e. what we think is important for you to know), it would be useful to know your expectations. Let's work together to establish some things you think you need to know.

In general, there are three different types of learning. We can learn information that we store in our heads; we can learn skills, or hands-on things which we can do; and we can develop new attitudes, or feelings, about something. Knowing something in our heads does not necessarily mean we are able to do it, nor does it mean we are comfortable doing it. Being able to do a task is a learned skill, just as the attitudes or feelings about the information or task are learned.

In this workshop, we hope to help you improve your knowledge, skill and confidence levels.



Learning Activity: *Establishing Outcomes*

Step 1: While in your groups, brainstorm some of the skills, knowledge, or attitudes you would like to acquire to be more effective in telephoning in English. Refer to the patterns in the answers from your group discussion and to the issues identified by other groups.

Step 2: Note your group's outcomes on the worksheet below:

Our Learning Outcomes:

1. Things we would like to know:

2. Skills we would like to learn:

3. Attitudes and feelings we would like to change:

Introduction and Outcomes

Goal

To help you become more comfortable and effective when telephoning in English.

Objectives

By the end of this workshop, you should:

- + be aware of the connection between telephone skills and **corporate image**.
- + be knowledgeable in norms in **telephone etiquette**, formality and diplomacy in English-speaking countries.
- + be able to take **messages accurately** avoiding common errors in recording difficult to understand numbers and letters.
- + be better able to anticipate and react to various **telephone situations**.
- + be able to use **phrases and techniques** in clarifying information.
- + have learned to **react appropriately and confidently** when using English on the phone.

We will move ahead by exploring why good telephone skills are so important to firms and their clients.



THE VOICE OF THE ORGANIZATION

Politeness costs nothing and gains everything.
- Lady Mary Wortley Montague

Your Corporate Image



Learning Activity: *Find somebody who...*

- Step 1:** Look at the 'Find somebody who' worksheet below. Ask your fellow participants yes/no questions as you try to complete the tasks listed. There are two objectives: to fill in the sheet with names as quickly as possible, and to get as many different names as you can on the sheet.
- Step 2:** Start mingling around and try to fill in the sheet with names of people who answer 'YES' your questions when your facilitator says 'Go'.
- Step 3:** When you have filled in your worksheet take your seat so your facilitator can see you have finished.

Find somebody who...

1. has ever made a mistake while taking a message over the phone.
Name: _____
2. feels uncomfortable speaking in English on the phone.
Name: _____
3. has done telephone training in Czech.
Name: _____
4. can remember being put on hold for a long, long time.
Name: _____
5. has ever formed a positive opinion of an organization because of a telephone conversation.
Name: _____
6. has ever formed a negative opinion of an organization because of a telephone conversation.
Name: _____
7. thinks they know how telephone etiquette and corporate image are connected.
Name: _____



Learning Activity: A Case Study

Imagine walking into a hotel you have never been in before. Unless you have already called or checked out their web site, your first impression is probably the foyer and reception area. You can tell a lot about the kind of service you are going to get by the care taken in creating an attractive foyer with friendly, smiling and knowledgeable staff serving you at the reception desk.

In other industries, many people never step inside the doors. For them, the telephone and the Internet presentation may be the only chance to make an impression; in fact the telephone is the reception area. The way in which a call is handled could be the difference between growth and stagnation. The perception of an entire organization is passed on through the voice of a single individual.

Even in a personal service organization such as a hotel, the guest will usually make a telephone call to get information and book a room before arriving in person. If the same care is not taken in attending to that call, then the care and money invested in the foyer is wasted because the chances are that the guest will never see the reception area.

Let's have a look at a case that may illustrate why organizations take telephone etiquette seriously. Although the names of individuals and organizations have been changed this is an actual case where telephone skills really made the difference.

Glen's Decision

Glen Parks, a mature graduate student from Nova Scotia, Canada, was looking for a recognized university which offered a high-quality, one-year graduate-level diploma specializing in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) for adult learners. He found that many Canadian universities offered TESOL programmes, but very few specialized specifically in adult education.

After researching the schools, he came up with two universities, one in Central Canada and one in Western Canada: The University of Central Canada, and the University of Edmonton.

Listen critically to each of Glen's conversations and fill in the discussion sheet on the opposite page.

Factors Influencing the Success of a Call

What kinds of factors have an impact on the success of a telephone call? Some factors can be positive and some negative.



Learning Activity: *Helps and Hinders*

- Step 1:** Take the four index cards out of your Materials Package and try to think of two positive and two negative factors and write them in headline form, one on each card.
- Step 2:** When you have finished, come up and post your cards in the appropriate column at the front of the room. After you have posted your cards explain why you have chosen to post the cards in that particular column.
- Step 3:** When everyone has posted their cards, look at the all the columns and try to decide what the main negative threads are.
- Step 4:** Now try to brainstorm ways of avoiding these pitfalls and record your ideas on the worksheet below:

Ways of Avoiding Pitfalls in Telephoning

Lined area for writing answers to Step 4.

Telephone Etiquette and Convention

In addition to your observations, we have also identified some ways in which we can improve our success on the phone. They have to do with etiquette, improving the accuracy of information given and taken and knowing what to expect from a call.

Let's begin by seeing what you know about telephone etiquette in English-speaking countries.



Learning Activity: *Etiquette and Convention Quiz*

- Step 1:** Do the quiz on the opposite page individually. Some questions may have more than one answer.
- Step 2:** When you have finished, compare your answers with those of a neighbour. Do you agree? If not, discuss your reasons for answering the way you did.
- Step 3:** Discuss your answers with the rest of the group.

Telephone Etiquette and Convention Quiz

1. The generally accepted length of time for returning a missed business call in English-speaking countries is:

a) within one working week	c) within 24 hours
b) within two working days	d) as soon as it is convenient
2. Callers should not be put on hold:

a) for more than 5 minutes	c) for more than 2 minutes
b) for more than 30 seconds	d) at all
3. When putting someone on hold you should:

a) say how long they will be on hold	c) ask if you can put them on hold
b) apologise	d) say why you are putting them on hold
4. When addressing a new business contact for the first time by telephone, it is all right to address him or her by his first name

a) true	c) false
---------	----------
5. When addressing an unknown woman by telephone, we should always use the title Mrs before her surname.

a) true	c) false
---------	----------
6. As the caller, the correct way to identify yourself to a person you know is:

a) Hello, here is Glen Parks	c) Hello, I'm Glen Parks
b) Hello, this is Glen Parks	d) Hello, my name is Glen Parks
7. Which is a standard way of answering a call?

a) Hello, Glen Parks speaking.	c) Hello, here is Glen Parks.
b) Hello, who is this?	d) Hello, it's Glen Parks.
8. Before putting somebody through to the person they want to speak to, you should ask for their name like this:

a) May I ask who you are, please?	c) May I ask who's calling, please?
b) What's your name, please?	d) Who is this, please?
9. When someone asks, "Could I have your name, please?", you could answer:

a) Yes, it's Glen Parks.	c) Yes, my name's Glen Parks.
b) Yes, I'm Glen Parks.	d) Yes, here is Glen Parks.
10. When telling a caller that they can't speak to the person they are trying to contact because they are doing something else at the moment, the best thing to say is:

a) I'm sorry but he is busy now.	c) Could you call back later?
b) I'm afraid he's tied up at the moment.	d) I'm sorry, he can't speak to you now.

Appropriate Language

Some of these points of etiquette are connected with phrasing our utterances diplomatically and according to standard convention. There are many ways to phrase ideas to soften them.

Knowing how direct we should be and what level of formality to use is very subtle and may be relatively difficult in English. In neutral or formal situations we normally express respect and present our ideas diplomatically using special structures, words and phrases which soften, or distance ourselves from our statements, requests and questions. In other languages it may be acceptable to be direct, but in a cordial relationship in English, unless we are very angry or emotional, we tend to hide our negative feelings and try not to be too direct. We need to be clear but tactful; being too direct may be offensive.

There were several examples of these structures, words and phrases in Glen's telephone conversations we listened to earlier.



Learning Activity: *Analysing Speech*

Step 1: Have a look at the telephone dialogue transcripts below.

Step 2: Find as many softening phrases and structures as possible and underline them.

Conversation #1:

UCC: Good morning. University of Central Canada. How may I direct your call?

Glen: Good Morning. My name's Glen Parks. I'm looking for information on programmes in Teaching English as a Second Language. I was on your web site and was quite impressed by the number of programmes you run.

UCC: Please hold. I'll redirect your call.

UCC: Department of Education.

Glen: Hello. I'm interested in getting information on your one-year TESOL programme aimed at teaching adults.

UCC: Well, the Registrar's Office is responsible for sending out calendars and programme information. Try calling this number, (605)555-1234.

Glen: Ok so that's (605)555-1234.

UCC: Yes that's right.

Glen: Thank you. Good bye.

UCC: Good bye.

UCC: Good Morning. Registrar's Office for the University of Central Canada.

Glen: Hello, I'm looking for information on graduate-level programmes in Teaching English as a Second Language to adults. I was wondering if you could help me.

UCC: Certainly, we can send you our calendar. Would you mind giving me your address, please?

Glen: Yes, it's RR#7 Faketon, Nova Scotia, B9V 8G3.

UCC: Right.

Glen: I'm rather worried about finding suitable accommodation in time. Could you possibly put a rush on that?

UCC: No Problem. I'll post the package first thing tomorrow.

Glen: Thank you very much.

UCC: Have a nice day.

Glen: Thank you. The same to you. Good bye.

Conversation #2:

- U of E:** Good morning. University of Edmonton. How may I direct your call?
Glen: Hello, My name's Glen Parks and I'd like to get some information about your TESOL programs. I wonder if you can help me.
U of E: I'll put you through to the Secretary for the Faculty of Education. One moment please.
Glen: Thank you very much.
U of E: Good Morning. Faculty of Education. Joan Gardener speaking. How can I help you?
Glen: Good morning. My name's Glen Parks. I'm looking for some information about your graduate-level TESOL Program for adult learners.
U of E: Yes, we have a Master of Education in TESOL and a one-year Graduate Diploma in TESOL. Both of these programs are run by the Department of Adult, Career and Technology Education. I'll transfer you to Mrs. June Thomas, the Assistant to the Head of the Department if you would like to speak to her personally.
Glen: Yes, thank you very much.
U of E: Good morning. The Department of Adult, Career and Technology Education. June Thomas speaking. How may I help you?
Glen: Good morning. My name's Glen Parks. I'm looking for some information on your one-year TESOL program. I'm hoping you can help me.
U of E: Certainly, the program's open to graduate level students having at least one year of teaching experience. I'd be happy to send you an information package including the University's calendar if you like.
Glen: Yes, thank you very much. Could you send it to Glen Parks, RR#7 Faketon, Nova Scotia, B9V 8G3?
U of E: OK, let me read that back to you. It's Mr. Glen Parks, RR#7 Faketon, Nova Scotia, B9V 8J3.
Glen: Well, almost...The postal code is B9V 8G3.
U of E: I've got it.
Glen: When should I expect to receive your package? I'm afraid I'm in a bit of a hurry. I'd kind of like to make my decision as soon as possible so I can start looking for housing.
U of E: I'll have that in the post for you this afternoon. You should have it by Friday. If you are worried about housing, I'll enclose our on-campus housing brochure with the calendar. We do provide affordable, conveniently located housing for students. If you have any questions when you receive the package, please contact me directly on (403)999-3338 or e-mail me at j.thomas@uofe.ca.
Glen: Right (403)999-3338 or j.thomas@uofe.ca. Thank you very much for your help. I'm looking forward to receiving your material then.
U of E: Thank you for your call. Have a nice day!
Glen: Thanks. The same to you. Bye.

Step 3: When you have finished, compare the phrases you have found with a partner.

Step 4: Discuss your opinions with the rest of the groups and categorise each phrase under one of the headings on the following page.



COMMON PHRASES

*It is difficult to tell how much men's minds
are complicated by a kind manner and gentle
speech.*

- Cicero

Common Phrases

The phrases we have just identified are the kinds of phrases we need to practice as we learn to improve our telephone skills. In the second half of this workshop we will do a lot of practice and drilling which we hope will result in a heightened level of confidence for you as you deal with telephones at work. But before we move on to that let's have a look at some other phrases you will frequently encounter.



Learning Activity: *Collecting Phrases*

Step 1: With a partner, go through the phrases listed below and discuss them deciding in what context they might be used. Several mean the same or almost the same as other phrases.

Common Telephone Phrases:

Would you like to hold?	Just one moment please.
I'm afraid the line's busy.	Can I tell her who is calling?
May I ask who's calling?	Let me know if there's anything else I can do.
You're very faint.	I'm sorry but the line is engaged at the moment.
Can you bear with me for a second?	I'm sorry, could you repeat that for me?
I think we have a bad connection.	I'm afraid he's out of the office at the moment.
I'm afraid I didn't catch all of that.	How may I direct your call?
Let me read that back to you....	Could you read that back to me?
I'll connect you.	I'm afraid she's away from her desk at the moment.
I'm afraid I'm not available then.	Would you mind spelling that, please?
Thank you for calling.	May I ask the nature of your call?
Could you make it Friday?	Give me a ring if you have any problems.
Have a nice day!	I'm afraid he's in a meeting at the moment.
What can I do for you today?	How can I help you?
May I take a message?	Could I leave a message for her?
Can you hold the line, please?	I'm sorry. I think you've got the wrong number.
I'll transfer your call.	Would you like to leave a message for her?
Right then, Monday at 10:00.	Hello, this is Mark Simmons calling...
Until Monday, then.	I'll see you next Monday, then.
Hi Mark, nice to hear from you.	So, Monday at 10:00, then.
The reason I'm calling is to ask...	I'm looking forward to seeing you on Monday, then.
Would Friday morning suit you?	I'm afraid she's tied up at the moment.
I'll put you through.	I'm sorry. I must have dialed the wrong number.
Do you know when she'll be in?	It's nice to hear from you.
It's been nice talking with you.	It's quite important.
It's rather urgent.	Where/when/how can she be reached?
Anyway, I'll see you on Monday.	Could you possibly put a rush on that?

Step 2: After you have discussed the meanings, sort the phrases into functions and transcribe them onto your Standard Telephone Phrases worksheet.

Step 3: Write Czech translations for all the phrases you do not know.

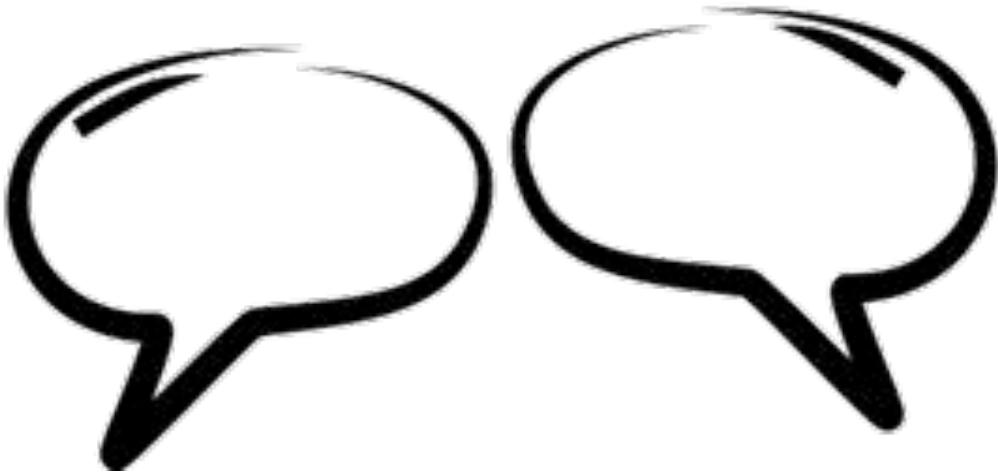
Step 4: Tick off the phrases you would use in Czech.

[&] Learning Activity: *Creating a Dialogue*

Step 1: Now create a telephone dialogue that would be typical for you at work using the blank flow chart below. Use as many of the phrases and structures you have learned today as you can. Be sure to use the same kinds of structures that you would normally use in Czech.



Common Phrases





GETTING IT RIGHT

*I fear our mistakes far more than the strategy
of our enemies.*

- Thucydides

Typographical Symbols

Much of the information we give and take over the phone is dictated and then spelt aloud to ensure accuracy. Before we can begin really practising to improve our telephoning skills, we need to make sure we are able to take accurate information. This means that we must go back to some basic but often confusing elements of the language. Numbers and the alphabet may seem elementary, but they very often cause problems in comprehension and pronunciation. Since errors in dictating and taking down numbers and letters can result in unnecessary delays and costs, they will be reviewed in this section.

Typographical symbols are not often covered in many general English courses, but they very commonly encountered on the phone, especially when we speak about e-mail, Internet and even postal addresses. So before we start practising, let's review some basic material and introduce some new vocabulary for you.



Learning Activity: *Typographical Symbols*

- Step 1:** Look in at the incomplete Typographical Symbol Table opposite and write in the English names for all of the symbols you know.
- Step 2:** Get up and mingle around asking your fellow participants to help you fill in the words for the symbols you don't know.

Typographical Symbol Table

Symbol	Word
@	
-	
—	
/	
\	
.	
‘	
,	
“...”	
#	
*	
—	
:	
;	
é	
č	
ů	

Getting It Right

Numbers

In English, we read different types of numbers differently depending on whether the number is 'long' or 'short', or a 'label' or a quantity.

When numbers express quantities, whether dollars, hairs on your head, cars, or whatever, they are read normally. However, there can be confusion in two areas.

- + Care must be taken not to confuse teens and tens (e.g. 18 and 80).
- + When we are speaking of numbers greater than 999,999,999, there is a difference between American English and traditional British English. For an American, 1,000,000,000 is one billion, but in traditional British English it is one thousand million. Although the trend seems to be towards the American since the US is such an economic power, it is best to check the number of zeros since a misunderstanding could be extremely costly.

When numbers are used as labels to identify something, they are read differently. Do you know the rules?



Learning Activity: *Numbers of Identity*

Step 1: Analyse the patterns and try to discover the rules for pronunciation of labelling numbers.

Quantity	Identity
1	1 (a diagram label in a document)
19	19 (a contestant number)
119	119 (hotel room number)
307	307 (a car model)
1990	1990 (the year)
2006	2006 (street address)
13,119	13919 (a part number)
115, 918, 480	115 918 480 (a telephone number)
7,890,267,170	007 890 267 170 (a credit card number)

Rules for Reading Numbers of Identity

- + Short numbers (four or sometimes five or fewer digits) are broken into groups of two numbers between the hundreds and tens place and read as two (or three if there are five digits) separate numbers (e.g. 9/90 or 19/90 or 1/19/90)
 - The exception is numbers with a zero in the tens place (e.g. 3/'O'/7) and the zero is read as an 'O' (oh).
- + For long numbers (five or more digits), we say each digit in the number individually (e.g. 5/7/8/5/6/9)
 - Again zeros can be the exception. We sometimes say zero as 'oh', but we tend to say 'zero' when we want to be clear.



Learning Activity: *Saying Numbers*

- Step 1:** Sit with a partner and use the Number Cards to practise saying numbers.
- Step 2:** Place the cards in a stack between you and take turns flipping the top card and saying the number according to the rules we have just learned. Pay attention to whether it is a number of quantity or identity.
- Step 3:** After you have read the number on your card, put it back on the bottom of the deck.
- Step 4:** Write down any difficulties you have and continue practising the numbers until your facilitator tells you to stop.

Pronunciation and Comprehension of Difficult Numbers

There is one more problem related to the pronunciation and comprehension of numbers. To illustrate, write down the phrases your facilitator dictates in the table below.

Number Dictation Practise

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 10. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 12. _____ |

Now check your work with a partner.

The Alphabet

It is clear that misunderstanding numbers can be costly, but misunderstanding how names, addresses or products are spelt or pronounced can also be costly or embarrassing. Misspelling addresses can cause delivery delays which can result lost business or late delivery penalties. Misspelling names in messages can cause embarrassment for the person who returns the call. Furthermore, getting a client's name right is simply the professional thing to do and it takes very little effort. Not taking the time to get it right, on the contrary may send the client a negative signal.

So, as is the case with numbers, we need to be aware of our weaknesses in order to prevent avoidable errors.



Learning Activity: *Pronunciation and Comprehension of Difficult Letters*

Step 1: Try matching the letters on the left with their phonetic transcriptions on the right.

Match the Letters with their Phonetic Transcription

English Letter	Phonetic Transcription
A	/dʌblju/
C	/eɪtʃ/
E	/es/
G	/si:/
H	/aː/
I	/vi:/
J	/kju/
K	/wəl/
Q	/eɪ/
R	/aɪ/
S	/i:/
U	/ju/
V	/dʒi:/
W	/keɪ/
Y	/dʒeɪ/

Getting It Right



Learning Activity: *The Letter Card Game*

- Step 1:** Stack the Letter Cards on the table between you and your partner
- Step 2:** Take cards in turn and dictate each card's contents to your partner. Your partner should write down letters dictated on the Letter Dictation Worksheet below.
- Step 3:** After dictating the contents of the card, lay the card face down in front of you. *(Note: it is important to stack the cards in the same order they are read)*
- Step 4:** When all the cards have been dictated and recorded, check them with your partner. If there are mistakes, decide whether they are with the dictation or transcription.

Letter Dictation Worksheet

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 13. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 14. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 15. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 17. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 18. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 20. _____ |



MAKING THE CALL

Much can be learned in play that will afterwards be of use when the circumstances demand it.

- Jan Amos Komenský

Making the Call

What We Say in Context

Knowing about common pitfalls is very important in avoiding errors, but to become skilled in anything, we must practise. The remainder of this workshop will be dedicated to practising through various simulation activities.

Learning Activity: *Strip call*

- Step 1:** Take the strip call roles your facilitator has given you. These strips of paper constitute one half of a telephone conversation. Another participant has the other half of your dialogue. Your task is to find the person who has it.
- Step 2:** When you find their partner, assemble the call in a logical order together.
- Step 3:** When you finish, have a look at the Sample Telephone Calls in the Appendices of this workbook. Go through the four calls and record any new standard phrases in the appropriate place in your Standard Telephone Phrases Worksheet.
- Step 4:** Now compare the calls with the dialogues you prepared on pages 23 and 24.
- Step 5:** Go through the dialogues you wrote and discuss how they could be improved.
- Step 6:** Practise your improved dialogues with your partner. Do each dialogue several times and then try it with your workbooks closed.

Turns a Call Can Take

In real life, of course, there are a lot of factors which could come into play when we are trying to contact someone by telephone. Very often, we have to go through switchboard operators and assistants before we are able to speak to the person we really would like to speak to.

Sometimes we never get to speak to the person at all. He/she could be tied up, away from the phone, out of the office or simply may not wish to speak with us. Sometimes we are bounced around from person to person like a tennis ball, sometimes we are put through to the person's voice mail, sometimes we are asked to leave a message and sometimes we are cut off.

We have to be prepared to speak with a number of people as we try to pass through the corporate maze in order to speak with the person we really want to contact. Let's simulate a more complex situation complete with switchboard operators and assistants.

Making the Call

Learning Activity: *The Telephone Maze*

- Step 1:** Using Telephone Maze Worksheet #1 read the conversations aloud, each taking different roles. Try all possible paths at least twice.
- Step 2:** Change roles and repeat.
- Step 3:** Repeat steps 1 and 2 with Telephone Maze Worksheet #2.
- Step 4:** Repeat steps 1 and 2 with Telephone Maze Worksheet #3.
- Step 5:** Now try to remember some of the conversations while sitting back-to-back.
- Step 6:** Transcribe any new phrases onto the Standard Telephone Phrases Worksheet.

On Your Own

We have been doing our best to prepare ourselves for various telephone situations. However, in real life, no one knows exactly what the person on the other end of the line is going to say. Telephone conversations, like face-to-face conversations could lead you anywhere.

Having practised several structured phone call scenarios, let's try a final simulation game.

Learning Activity: *The Telephone Simulation Board Game*

- Step 1:** Working with a partner and using the Telephone Simulation Game Board, take turns rolling the die. Move your piece the number of spaces indicated by the die. If you land on a square with directions, do what they say. Take a Call Card if you are instructed to do so while your partner takes a Contact Card and play out the simulation activity with your partner to a successful resolution. The game ends when both players have reached the finish square. If you finish ahead of other groups, try playing out some of the simulations you haven't done.



CLOSURE AND EVALUATION

The more extensive a man's knowledge of what has been done, the greater will be his power of knowing what to do.

- Benjamin Disraeli

Closure and Evaluation

Reflection

Take a moment to reflect on what we have been through in this workshop. Look at questions below. Remove yourself from the process. Imagine you have been a fly on the ceiling watching this whole workshop from beginning to end. Take a moment to think about the questions as objectively as you can. No one will see your answer but you, so be honest with yourself!

1. What have we done here? Why?

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2. What happened to you? Try to summarize what you learned or felt.

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3. What could you use? How could you adapt ideas to suit your own needs? Can you think of any alternatives?

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APPENDICES

Sample Telephone Calls

Sample Dialogue #1:

- PP: Hello, this is Pete Peters from XYZ inc. May I speak with Mr John Smith in Inside Sales, please?
- JS: Speaking. Hi Pete. Nice to hear from you. How are things?
- PP: Hello John, not so bad, and how are you?
- JS: Fine thanks. What can I do for you today?
- PP: Well, the reason I'm phoning is to place a rush order for 1550 units of your part number 1673815-2. That's the number plate lighting unit for the 2006 902 model.
- JS: OK. So that's 1550 number plate lighting units; part number 1673815-2.
- PP: Yep, That's the one.
- JS: Right, bear with me for a moment while I check to make sure we've got enough in stock... OK. You'll have it on your doorstep first thing tomorrow.
- PP: That's great! Anyway, I'd better let you go. I'm sure you've got a million things to do.
- JS: All right. Let me know if there's anything else I can do for you
- PP: Right, so I'll be looking for those parts tomorrow morning, then. Thanks for all your help.
- JS: Any time. Thanks for calling. Have a nice day.

Sample Dialogue #2:

- SB: Good Morning. Acme Wooden Ice Cream Sticks Limited. How may I direct your call?
- SH: Hello. Could I speak with someone in Accounts Receivable, please?
- SB/LC: Certainly. I'll transfer you to Mr Lloyd Coleman. One moment please....Good morning, Accounts Receivable. Lloyd Coleman speaking.
- SH: Good morning Mr Coleman. This is Sylvia Harley of Frozen Treats Unlimited, Ltd. I'm calling about your invoice #15426-12. I'm afraid there appears to be an error.
- LC: Please bear with me a moment Ms Harley; I'm looking it up as we speak. . . Ah, yes. It was dated 29 February and was for 1,000,000,000 sticks!?
- SH: Yes that's right. The problem is that we ordered and received 100,000 sticks.
- LC: Yes there appears to have been an error on our side. 1,000,000,000 sticks is a lot of ice cream... I'll have a corrected invoice printed and sent to you by post this afternoon.
- SH: Fine, so I'll hold off on payment until I receive the corrected version, then.
- LC: That will be fine. I apologise for the mix-up.
- SH: No problem. Mistakes happen. Thank you for your help.
- LC: Thank you for calling. Have a nice day.
- SH: You too. Bye-bye.

Sample Telephone Calls

Sample Dialogue #3:

RW: Good afternoon, Ralph Wader speaking.
MN: Hello Ralph. Mike Nichols here. How are you today?
RW: Oh, Hi Mike, I'm fine thank you, and you?
MN: Oh, not too bad. Listen, the reason I'm calling is to confirm my visit next Friday.
RW: Great! What time is your flight getting in to San Diego?
MN: Well, we are scheduled to arrive at 09:50, but you know these international flights with all the connections...
RW: Why don't you give me your flight number and we will have somebody pick you up at the airport.
MN: Well, thank you! That would be lovely. It's BA 676 from Heathrow via JFK.
RW: Great, I'm looking forward to seeing you on Friday, then.
MN: Me too. It will be great to see everyone in the San Diego office again. Talk to you soon.
RW: OK. Take care and have a safe trip.
MN: Thanks. Bye.

Sample Dialogue #4:

JG: Good Afternoon. May I speak with Bob Douglas in Sales please.
BD: Speaking.
JG: Oh, Hello Bob. This is Jenny Greg from Misty Moon Resorts calling.
BD: Oh, Hi Jenny, How's the new playground equipment working?
JG: Well, that's why I'm calling. We seem to have a defective set on our hands. A crack has appeared in the main support beam. We're afraid it could collapse and someone could be hurt.
BD: Really? We have never had a problem with that model before, but I will send a serviceman out there to look into it first thing tomorrow morning. In the meantime you might want to make sure no one uses it.
JG: Yes we have already cordoned it off. So I'll expect the serviceman at around 8:00,
BD: Yes, he'll be there at 8:00.
JG: Great. Thank you for taking care of this so quickly. I'll call back after discussing it with your guy tomorrow.
BD: I'll look forward to hearing back from you. So thanks for calling and have a nice day.
JG: Thanks very much. The same to you. Bye.
BD: Talk to you tomorrow. Bye.

Appendices

Glossary of Terms

anticipate	-	to predict; to expect
appropriately	-	in a suitable way; in a way consistent with the situation
avoid	-	to stay away from
calendar	-	a university catalogue
contribute	-	to share; to give towards a goal
digit	-	one of ten number symbols between 0 and 9
drill	-	to practice by repetition
convention	-	a traditional or established way
cordial	-	friendly, warm
distance	-	to remove personal involvement
encounter	-	to meet with
error	-	mistake
establish	-	to set; to set up
ensure	-	to make certain
facilitator	-	a helper (in this case a helper with learning or a teacher)
flip	-	to turn over
foyer	-	large entrance area; reception area
furthermore	-	in addition to this
heighten	-	to raise; to increase
involve	-	to be a part of; to take part in
label	-	to name
mingle	-	to mix or socialize with other people
objective	-	aim; target
orally	-	by spoken word
outcome	-	result
perception	-	the way we see or understand something
pitfall	-	an obstacle; a trouble spot; a danger
recipient	-	the person who receives something
remainder	-	what is left, the rest
simulation	-	an imitation of a real situation
stack	-	to pile on top of one another
subtle	-	not obvious
switchboard	-	the central telephone system in an organization
transcribe	-	to make a copy in writing
utterance	-	something said orally
vital	-	very important, essential
whisper	-	to speak very softly (e.g. you might whisper a secret)