

WA3: Communication and social, telephone handling, code of conduct, equal opportunities and relationships

3.3 Use telephone techniques effectively in accordance with organizational rules and procedures-effective telephone handling

LO45: Demonstrate ability to explain and demonstrate effective use of telephone skills according to organisational procedures; monitor the application of these skills and recommend changes in order to improve the experience of customers.



Module Details



Work Area Code:	3
Work area title:	Communication and social, telephone handling, code of conduct, equal opportunities and relationships
Unit Code:	3.3
Unit Title:	Use telephone techniques effectively in accordance with organizational rules and procedures-effective telephone handling
Learning Outcomes Ids:	LO45
Learning Outcomes titles:	- Demonstrate ability to explain and demonstrate effective use of telephone skills according to organisational procedures; monitor the application of these skills and recommend changes in order to improve the experience of customers. (LO45).
Recommended Duration:	3 hours
Trainer:	



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Basic telephone techniques-revision



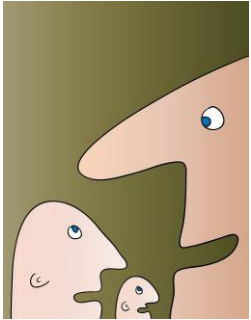
- Different types of communication
- Telephone in business communication
- The structure of a telephone call
 - Introduction
 - Main body of the telephone call
 - Completing a phone call
- Good practices



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Different types of communication



Face to Face



Telephone



TEXTING



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Telephone in business communication

- Telephone is one of the most common ways that businesses and customers communicate with each other
- Always remember:
 - If you are handling the phone, you are the first representative of your organisation the caller interacts with and as first impressions are important, it is essential that you make a positive one.
 - Satisfied callers will call again, continuing to do business with your organization.



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The structure of a telephone call, 1

- Introduction

- 4 rings
- The person who answers a phone call is the “face” of the company, the first person the client gets to contact
- The proper way to speak
 - MMC Good morning!
 - This is Fanis speaking.
Give the impression to the caller that he is welcome to call again and again.
- Discover the inner desires or needs
 - How can I help you?



The structure of a telephone call, 2

- **Main body**

- Discover needs of the caller

OR

- Identify the reason you are calling
- MAIN PART OF THE PHONE CALL MUST RELATE TO THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PHONE CALL
 - Objectives should be SMART



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The structure of a telephone call, 3

- Closing

- Are the objectives met?
- Is there an action plan?
 - If so, summarise the action plan
 - ...and thank the other person for the telephone call



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- If the line is occupied you need to inform the caller properly:

“Thank you for waiting on the line Sir/ Madam. Mr Williams is not available at the moment. Would you like to call later?”



Put a smile in your voice

- Rapid speech



impatience

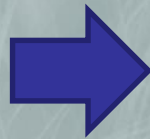
- rapid speech repetition



difficult to follow, necessitates

SLOW DOWN

- Slow speech



bored, unlively, not interested

QUICKEN THE PACE

Put a smile in your voice-do's



- Be kind, polite, direct, enthusiastic, and speak with a strong voice.
- Try to have little or no background noise, i.e. loud radio.
- Always have paper and pen by the telephone.



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Put a smile in your voice-don'ts

- Don't be too familiar.
- Do not yell or talk to others in the room while you are on the telephone Do not eat, drink, or chew gum while talking on the telephone.
- When answering the telephone and the caller did not hear your introduction and says, "Is _____ in?" DO NOT respond with: "Yes." This is confusing to the caller. Instead, answer by saying, "This is he/she" or "Speaking."





Methodological tool

Putting a smile in our voices

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Speak naturally

- Rapid speech suggests impatience; rapid speech is difficult to follow in face-to-face conversation, necessitates repetition in telephone conversations. SLOW DOWN.
- Slow speech, in contrast conveys an impression of lethargy, forgetfulness, lack of vitality.



Always let the caller answer



When you receive a call:

- Answer within three rings (if possible)
- Identify yourself and your company
(name & department)
- Listen actively
- Give caller the time to complete the question
- Use the hold button when leaving a line
- In case of wrong number be courteous



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Active - Empathic listening over the phone

*<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/empathic-listening>

- Be attentive, interested, alert and not distracted.
- Be a sounding board - allow the speaker to bounce ideas and feelings off you while assuming a nonjudgmental, non-critical manner.
- Don't ask a lot of questions.



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- Act like a **mirror** - reflect back what you think the speaker is saying and feeling.
- **Don't discount** the speaker's feelings by using stock phrases like "It's not that bad," or "You'll feel better tomorrow."
- **Don't let the speaker "hook" you.** This can happen if you get angry or upset, allow yourself to get involved in an argument, or pass judgment on the other person.

Active - Empathic listening over the phone

*<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/empathic-listening>

- Indicate you are listening by
 - Providing brief, noncommittal acknowledging responses, e.g., "Uh-huh," "I see."
 - Giving nonverbal acknowledgements, e.g., head nodding, facial expressions matching the speaker, open and relaxed body expression, eye contact.
 - Invitations to say more, e.g., "Tell me about it," "I'd like to hear about that."



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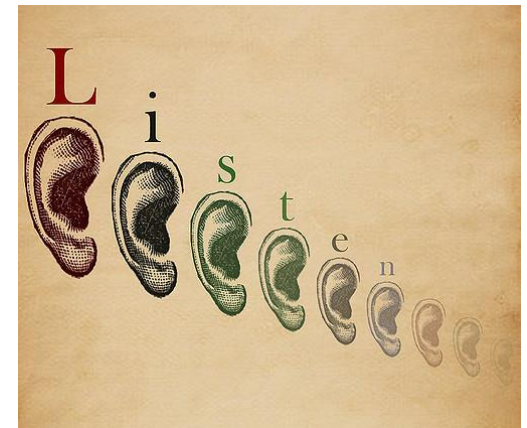
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Active - Empathic listening over the phone

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- Follow good listening "ground rules":
 - Don't interrupt.
 - Don't change the subject or move in a new direction.
 - Don't rehearse in your own head.
 - Don't interrogate.
 - Don't teach.
 - Don't give advice.
 - *Do* reflect back to the speaker what you understand and how you think the speaker feels.



Active - Empathic listening over the phone

*<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/empathic-listening>

- Empathic Listening:
 - builds trust and respect,
 - enables the disputants to release their emotions,
 - reduces tensions,
 - encourages the surfacing of information, and
 - creates a safe environment that is conducive to collaborative problem solving.



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Facts about collection calls



Always Be Prepared – Generally and Specifically

- Be Ready to Handle Excuses

Prepare a list of common debtor excuses, matching them with effective rebuttals.

- Arm Yourself with the Facts

- ✓ Review all the specifics of the debt you're calling about.
- ✓ exact amount owed
- ✓ terms of sale
- ✓ products/services purchased
- ✓ payment due date
- ✓ other open invoices

- Know Who You're Calling

Brief yourself on the customer's payment record /payment



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Speak Professionally and Authoritatively

Adjust the tone, pitch, inflection and speed at which you talk so to command attention.

- ✓ don't drink or chew gum
- ✓ speak a bit slower and pause often
- ✓ use a lower pitched voice and enunciate
- ✓ make sure you pronounce clearly the ending consonants of words

Learn to be Flexible

Listen carefully to the debtor and you will pick up clues to the best way to handle each situation.



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Facts about collection calls



Take Control and Don't Let Go

- Don't forget to show respect on your debtor
- Address him/her politely by name.
- Make the debtor feel like he/she is right, even when they are wrong.
- Take as much information as you can from the debtor.

Tip: Ask open-ended questions. Always listen carefully and take notes.



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Facts about collection calls



- Use the power of silence. Leaving blank spaces in the conversation compels the debtor to fill them in.
- Stay on target. Always bring the conversation back to the point of payment.
- Don't fall in the trap of rudeness. Keep your calm even if your interlocutor starts yelling at you or using abusive language.



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Telesales vs. telemarketing



TELEMARKETING: A service that stimulates interest, creates opportunities, provides information, factors customer feedback, makes appointments and produces leads by telephone.

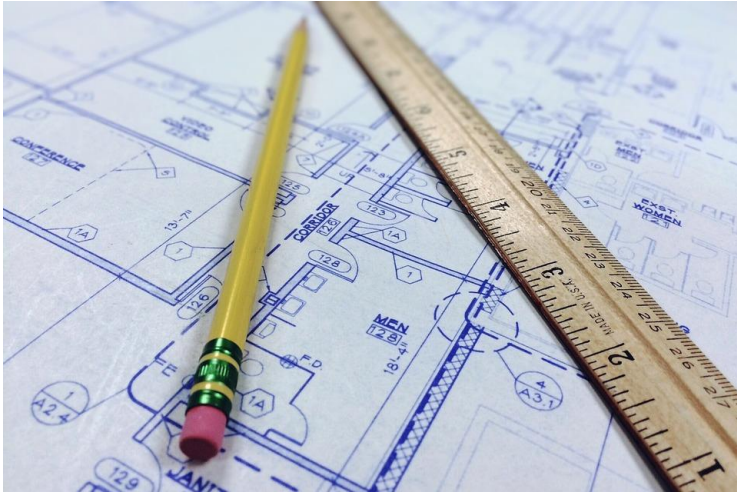
TELESALES: A service that sells your products or services directly to the customer by telephone.



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Telesales hints, 1



- Prepare a call plan. A call structure with milestones, such as:
 - Clear introduction
 - Effective questioning
 - Summarise
 - Present the solution
 - Handle objections Close



- **Ask effective questions**
 - Make appropriate use of probing and leading questions
 - ensure the conversation keeps on track, that you are directing it
- **Make sales recommendation:**
 - in a way which is clearly linked to the customer's need
 - Emphasize the ways in which your product or service solves their problem.





- **Create commitment**
 - ask for the order if **appropriate**
 - always ensure that you summarise **the next steps** and **who** will do **what** by **when**.

For more tips, visit:

- <https://www.callcentrehelper.com/25-tips-to-make-your-telesales-people-more-productive-21672.htm>
- <http://www.gsa-marketing.co.uk/telemarketing-tips-50-dos-and-50-donts/>



Prioritising sales calls



*<http://articles.bplans.com/10-ways-to-help-your-team-prioritize-their-customer-service-efforts/>

1. Just make sure customers are heard

Danny Meyer: “The customer is certainly not always right. But they must always feel heard.” – **Jon Cline, Rokit SEO**

2. Make a “most valuable customer” list

While of course outwardly “every customer is important” is a great philosophy, it’s just not true. A client is as valuable as their billings and their referral power. Create an internal list of the top clients in order of importance, and stress that they always get priority. – **Adam Stillman, SparkReel**



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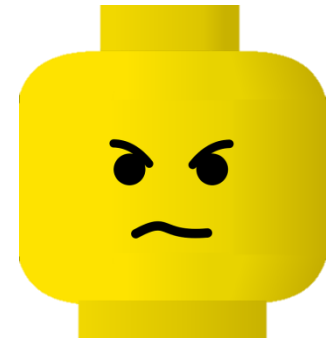
Prioritising sales calls



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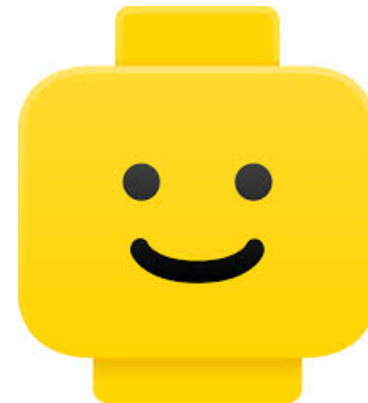
3. Be proactive with happy customers

The importance of dealing with unhappy and angry customers can't be overstated. Create also time and goals for customer outreach to emphasize proactive communication with your happiest customers. – **Robi Ganguly, Apptentive**



4. Make a blacklist and whitelist

List the angry customers in your blacklist and the happy customers in your whitelist, and have you or your employees log the amount of time you spend on each interaction and what each interaction was about, and try to balance time between both lists. – **Firas Kittaneh, Amerisleep**



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Prioritising sales calls



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5. Help those who suffer most from the problem you are solving

Surprisingly, it is often easier to turn your angry customers into advocates than your happy ones. If someone spent the time and effort to contact you and complain, it usually means they want your product to solve a problem that's really important to them. Find a way to resolve their complaints and you can often transition them from your worst complainers to your biggest advocates.

– **Charlie Graham, Shop It To Me, Inc.**



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Prioritising sales calls



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6. Build proactive client relationships.

The difference is between customer service (being reactive) and client relations (being proactive). Don't wait for a customer to call angry. Instead, focus your resources on building client relationships where you proactively set daily or weekly touch points with your clients. Being proactive will eliminate angry clients and will allow your entire staff to focus on building happy relationships.

– Kristopher Jones, LSEO.com



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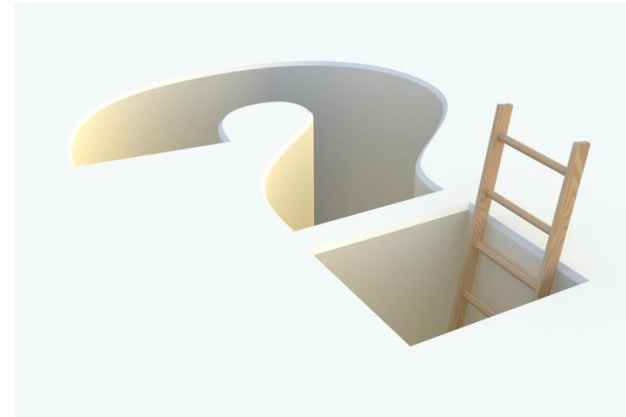


*<http://articles.bplans.com/10-ways-to-help-your-team-prioritize-their-customer-service-efforts/>

7. Address the problem areas

People get angry for many reasons, but don't let these episodes drain your energy. Look at the main reasons they are upset, and see what you can do to solve those issues. If these are clients, are they your best clients, or are they the clients who regularly make irrational demands? If it's the latter, let them go. Your most valuable clients deserve your most valuable asset: time.

– **Alfredo Atanacio, Uassist.ME**



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RULE OF THUMB:

When you are unsure or can't solve a problem, save your and the customer's time!

Forward the call to the right person

- **A colleague**
- **The repairs dept.**
- **Generally, where they can help**





The use of tools can help!

- Create a call/message log
- Include prioritization
- E.g. different colours (red=urgent)
- Include contact details of the caller
- Include the person you believe is going to solve the issue!

While You Were Out

For _____
Date _____ Time _____
.....
M _____
of _____
Phone _____ Fax _____
Email _____

<input type="radio"/> Called	<input type="radio"/> Returned Call
<input type="radio"/> Called to See You	<input type="radio"/> Will Call Again
<input type="radio"/> Stopped By	<input type="radio"/> Will Return
<input type="radio"/> Wants You to Call	<input type="radio"/> Wants You to Email
<input type="radio"/> Other	

Message: General Urgent

Signed _____



Methodological tool

Organisational Procedures

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- **Review Question 1**
 - List the techniques associated with professional telephone communication
- **Review Question 2**
 - Name 3 sales and money collection techniques that may be used by telephone
- **Review Question 3**
 - Which of the prioritising tips is the most useful in your opinion? Justify your answer



- Telephone communication techniques:

- Put a smile in your voice
- Practice active listening
- Speak naturally
- Always let the caller answer

- Telesales tips

- Prepare a call plan
- Use effective questioning
- Create commitment

- Prioritising calls

- make sure customers are heard
- Make a “most valuable customer” list
- . Be proactive with happy customers
- . Make a blacklist and whitelist
- Help those who suffer most from the problem you are solving
- Build proactive client relationships
- Address the problem areas





Well Done!

**You have
completed
this unit**



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