**How to conduct effective phone conversations with customers**

*\*Being able to communicate effectively over the phone can help you build a rapport with your customers and achieve the desired outcomes in your conversations.*

1. **Be confident**

A common mistake made by phone operators is the inability to take the initiative and guide the conversation. As a result, their voice may shake, the caller loses interest, and the connection is lost.

To make a successful phone call, it's essential to speak confidently, so your confidence transfers to the person on the other end of the line. This can be achieved through repetition and proper breathing techniques. Some might even benefit from speech coaching to improve their communication skills, but the effort will be well worth it for increased personal effectiveness.

1. **Maintain naturalness**

When we speak to someone face to face, many sensory cues come into play, including sight, sound, and smell. Over the phone, all that remains is sound, and the listener's sense of hearing becomes more acute due to heightened focus.

Your caller will easily pick up on insincerity or an artificial tone. To avoid this, the operator should be well-versed in their script. Before the conversation, go over the script again and think about the intonation you'll use.

1. **Be an active listener**

Engaging the customer in the conversation is crucial. Endless one-sided monologues have become tiresome, and automated information systems can handle such tasks efficiently.

Make sure to ask questions, show genuine interest and sincerity. Avoid turning the conversation into an interrogation and prepare a set of engaging questions in advance. The number of questions should depend on the call's duration.

1. **Avoid imposing your thoughts on the customer**

Do not assume or speculate on behalf of the customer, complete their sentences, or make assumptions. This only leads to irritation and a desire to hang up.

1. **Eliminate filler words**

As an operator, you represent the company. Even if the person you're speaking with uses filler words, you should avoid mimicking them. This applies to vocal pauses like "um," "uh," "uh-huh," or "ah," as they disrupt the conversation's flow and make you appear unprofessional.

1. **Remember the importance of your voice**

When a speaker has a pleasant and clear voice, it's more enjoyable to listen to. Ensure your voice isn't strained, squeaky, excessively loud, or too soft. Visiting speech specialists can help you achieve this, and you can also find exercises online that teach you how to breathe correctly, use your body for resonance, and speak from the diaphragm.

1. **Intonations enhance your speech**

Before making a call, think about the mood each section of your script should convey. Pause when necessary, emphasize certain points, and focus your listener's attention on specific aspects.

1. **Follow phone etiquette**

There are several rules for professional phone conversations:

* Begin with a polite greeting and, if possible, use the person's name.
* Introduce yourself and explain the purpose of your call.
* Ask if it's a convenient time to talk, and if not, arrange a suitable call-back time.
* Construct your statements clearly, concisely, and with clear benefits.
* Always end with a pleasant farewell.

**Other valuable tips**

These are just some of the tips you can use to improve your phone conversations.

* Try to engage and make the conversation interesting for the other person.
* Listen to recorded calls to identify strengths and weaknesses and work on improvements.
* Don't be afraid of objections; learn how to handle them effectively.
* Smile while speaking; it can be heard in your tone.
* Don't fear mistakes; if they occur, acknowledge them and make amends.
* Don't rush, maintain a good pace, and don't try to end the conversation too quickly.
* Address the person by name at least three times.
* Eliminate pauses by using sounds that indicate active participation in the conversation.
* Repeat what the other person said to show understanding.
* Ask clarifying questions and summarize the information received.
* Offer solutions to problems, not just products.

The art of phone conversations can be learned by anyone. Remember that every customer and every word they say is important. When engaged in a conversation, eliminate personal issues, bad moods, and fatigue. Create a comfortable, beneficial environment for communication and continuously improve yourself – the results will undoubtedly follow.