



## 5.2: Effective Telephone Communication Skills

EN2106 – Communication Skills

**Level I - Semester 2**

# Effective Telecommunication Skills

- Can increase customer service
- The person who answers the phone (receptionist) is “the face” of the company as s/he is the first interaction the customer will have with the company
- Hence it is important to grab this opportunity and ensure that the caller will stay connected without going elsewhere
- Research shows that 90% of the customers who stop doing business with a particular company have experienced (at least once) poor customer service

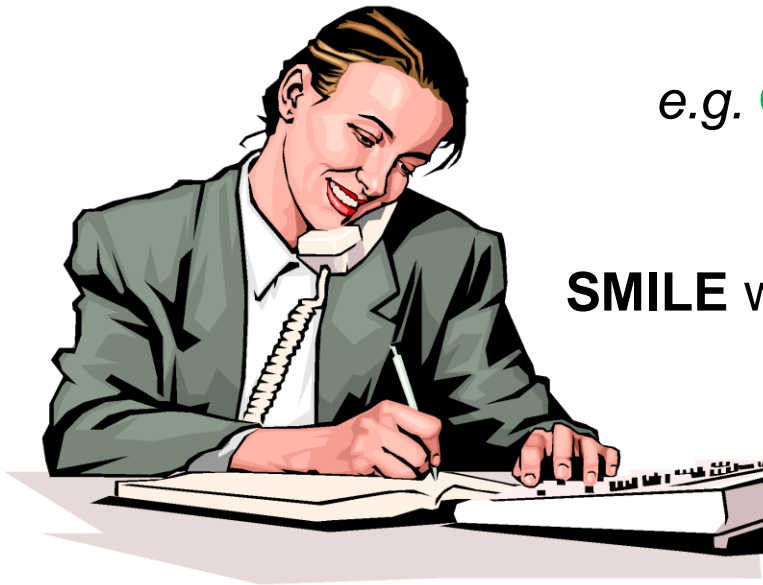


# Positive Tone

- A friendly, welcoming and positive tone will put the customer at ease and encourage him/her to do business with the company.

e.g. Good morning, ABC Company, May I  
help you please?

**SMILE** while you talk, your smile can be heard!



- A negative tone may annoy or discourage them (even if you speak welcoming words!).

# Clear Enunciation

- Speak clearly
- Use simple language
- Do not rush or be too slow when you speak
- Clear enunciation contributes to better understanding of your message which results in effective communication

# Be Sincere

- Answer the phone with a sincere intention to help the caller
- This builds trust between the customer (caller) and the company
- Have empathy, be honest, be compassionate and genuine

# Active Listening

- Active listening is very important in good communication
- This way the customer feels that his/her concerns are well addressed/ considered
- Leads to customer satisfaction
- Ensure a happy customer will repeat business and may even lead to referral for your business via word of mouth or social media
- **CONNECTIVES** are words that link clauses or sentences. They can be conjunctions or connecting adverbs.

# **Answering a business call is more than message taking!**

- It is definitely more than passing on messages or message taking
- You are the “voice” of your company, the representative of your company or brand (at least for the moment you answer the phone)
- Therefore, answer with responsibility

# Helpful Tips in Answering Calls

- In case you want to put the caller on hold, ask her/him whether it is alright. Callers may not like being ordered to hold or keep holding for *too long!*

*e.g.*

**( You):** “I’ll need to access the information from the database.

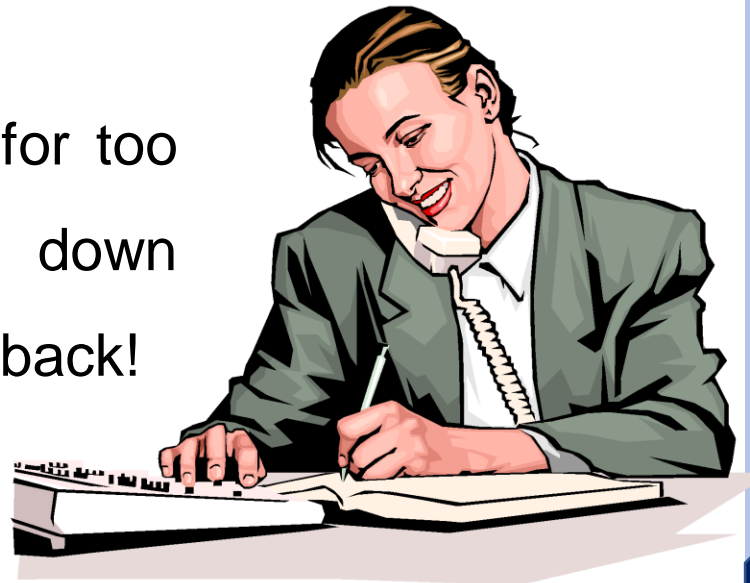
It might take me a few minutes. Are you able to hold?”

**(Caller’s Response):** “Yes, thank you!”



# Helpful Tips in Answering Calls

- Thank the caller for holding; not only at the end but also if s/he has to hold for more time than expected. This will bring the conversation back to a positive note.
- Don't keep the caller holding for too long. In such a case, take down his/her contact details and call back!



# Helpful Tips in Answering Calls

- Avoid excuses at all times! Callers call for a solution, *not* to hear excuses!

e.g. Rather than telling a customer, “This is not my department”, here is a better way...

**(Caller’s Request):** “This is Sunil Jayawardane. I have some questions about the invoice I received.”

**(Your Response):** “Hi, Mr. Jayawardane. Thanks. You actually need to speak with Daham in our billing department. I’m in the service area, but I can go ahead and connect you, and, just in case we get disconnected, Daham’s extension is 310. Would you able to hold?”

**(Caller’s Reply):** “Sure.”

# Helpful Tips in Answering Calls

- Providing spoken feedback signals is very important than in the case of a face to face situation.
- In the absence of such signals, the caller might wonder whether you are actually listening.

e.g.

**(You):** May I have your contact number please?

**(Caller):** Ok. Zero, seven, one, five, nine, two...(waits )

**(You):** (Silent)

**(Caller):** Er..do you hear me?

**(You):** Yes, I'm taking down, please continue

Had the receptionist given signals such as “yes”, “okay”, etc. for each digit, the caller wouldn't have got confused.

# Helpful Tips in Answering Calls

- Being able to control the conversation is an essential skill

For example, if your caller gets off the subject, you should be able to take control of the conversation smoothly, without making him feel offended.

e.g.

**(You):** *“When would you like us to deliver your new refrigerator?”*

**(Caller’s Response):** *“Well, let’s see, I have a cousin coming into town. He’s a , mountaineer who has climbed almost every mountain in Sri Lanka. Have you ever climbed The Knuckles Range?”*

**Control the conversation (with a gentle, related question):**

**(Your Reply):** *“Oh, I haven’t, but that sounds very interesting, and won’t it be a great reason to set up everything early? In fact, you might want to have your fridge before your cousin comes in. So, do you want us to deliver it on Thursday afternoon or Friday morning?”*

# Helpful Tips in Answering Calls

- Leaving a positive last impression is as equally important as the first impression in a business call.
- Statements such as; “We appreciate your business, thanks for calling” , “ We value your feedback, thank you”, could be given as a few examples

**Thank you.**