

1A > GETTING THROUGH ON THE PHONE

1 Discuss these questions with a partner.

- 1 What is difficult about using the phone in English?
- 2 How is it different from face-to-face communication?



2 **A ▶ 1.1** A business journalist is writing an article about fitness centres. He wants to arrange an interview with Life Health Clubs. Listen to the phone conversation.

1 Where is the Marketing Director?

2 Why can't he speak to the Sales Director?

3 Who does he finally speak to?

3 **A ▶ 1.1** Work with a partner and try to complete the conversation. Then listen again and check your answers.

Receptionist Life Health Clubs. How can I help?

Journalist Hi. ¹ _____ George Lawrence. I'm calling from Washington. ² _____ speak to the Marketing Director, please?

Receptionist ³ _____ he's in a meeting all day. Can I ⁴ _____ a message, Mr Lawrence?

Journalist How about the Sales Director?

Receptionist ⁵ _____ the line, please ... ⁶ _____ Mr Lawrence, but his line is ⁷ _____. Can I help?

Journalist Well, I'm trying to arrange a visit to your company for an article I'm writing on health clubs around the world.

Receptionist In that case I'll ⁸ _____ to our Public Relations Department.

4 Put the phrases from the conversation into these categories. Add any more you can think of.

Introducing yourself

Asking to speak to someone

Apologizing

Offering to take a message

Asking the caller to wait

Saying someone is not available

Transferring someone to another person / department

5 Match phrases 1–6 with similar meanings a–f.

- 1 The line's busy. _____
 - 2 Can I put you on hold? _____
 - 3 Would you like his voicemail? _____
 - 4 I'll put you through. _____
 - 5 May I say who's calling? _____
 - 6 Hold on. _____
- a I'll connect you.
b One moment.
c Could I have your name?
d He's speaking to another caller.
e Would you like to wait?
f Do you want to leave a message?

6 Find five mistakes in this conversation.

A Good morning. Can I speak to Harriet Parker, please?

B Who calls, please?

A I'm Antony Phillips from the Brussels office.

B OK, I'll see if she's in ... Sorry, her line's taken. Do you want to put on hold?

A Yes, that's fine, I'll hold ...

B Hello, her line's free now. I'll connect you through.

7 Work with a partner. Role-play these two phone calls.

Student A

- 1 You are the caller. Call B and ask to speak to Fernando Gomez in Marketing.
- 2 You receive a call from B. You are the receptionist. Try to help B with his / her call. The HR Department is having an all-day departmental meeting.

Student B

- 1 You receive a call from A. You work in Accounts. Try to help A with his / her call.
- 2 You are the caller. You want to speak to the Human Resources Manager.

1B MESSAGES AND VOICEMAILS

- 1 Work with a partner. List some of the times and situations when you can't or don't want to answer your phone.



- 2 Look at the reasons why people may not be able to answer a phone call. Complete each one with one of the prepositions below.

on at in off

- 1 They are ____ another line.
- 2 They are ____ holiday.
- 3 They are not ____ their desk.
- 4 They are ____ sick.
- 5 They are ____ a meeting.
- 6 They are ____ lunch.

- 3 **A▶1.2** Listen to four short phone conversations and answer the questions for each one.

- 1 Why can't the callers speak to the person they are calling?

Call 1 _____

Call 2 _____

Call 3 _____

Call 4 _____

- 2 What do the callers do: leave a message or say they will call back later / ask for someone to call them back?

Call 1 _____

Call 2 _____

Call 3 _____

Call 4 _____

- 4 **A▶1.2** Now listen again. Complete the sentences with the words used for taking and leaving messages.

- 1 Can I _____ a message?
- 2 Could you ask him to _____ me back, please?
- 3 Can you _____ him a message for me, then?
- 4 Could you _____ him I called and ask him ...?
- 5 Shall I _____ her a message?
- 6 Who shall I _____ called?

- 5 Find six mistakes in the conversation.

Erin Could I speak to Yann, please?

Receptionist I'm afraid he's on a meeting right now. I gave him a message?

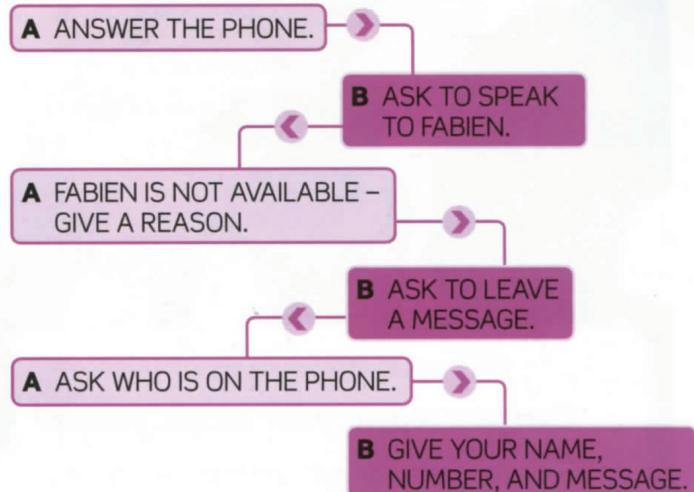
Erin This is Erin McCabe from Head Office. Can you tell to him that the meeting in Brussels has been cancelled?

Receptionist Brussels meeting cancelled ...

Erin Can you ask him to call back me as soon as possible?

Receptionist No problem. Do you give me a contact number?

- 6 Work with a partner and follow this flow chart to role-play a phone conversation. **B** is the caller.



- 7 Put phrases a-h below into categories 1-4.

- 1 Leaving a contact number _____
 - 2 Giving the time of your call _____
 - 3 Identifying yourself _____
 - 4 Giving a reason for the call _____
- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a Hi / Hello, this is ... | e It's 6.30 p.m. |
| b Call me back on ... | f You can reach me on ... |
| c This is a message for ... | g I'm calling at ... |
| d I was just wondering if ... | h I was just calling about / to ... |

- 8 **A▶1.3** In what order would you do 1-4 in 7? Listen to a message and compare it with your answer.

- 9 Think of a reason for calling a colleague and note down the main points of the call you will make. Now work in groups of four – A, B, C, and D.

1 Students A and B work together, and Students C and D work together. Role-play your phone calls, asking to speak to someone, then leaving a message. Make sure you note down the message your partner leaves.

2 Now Students A and C, and Students B and D work together, and pass on the messages that you noted down.

1C > DEALING WITH PROBLEMS ON THE PHONE

- 1 What sort of problems does this person have on the phone?



- 2 **A▶1.4** Listen to Kiko take a difficult call. What problems does she have? Does she deal with the problems well?

- 3 Complete the sentences with words for dealing with problems on the phone.

- 1 I'm sorry, who's _____? Can you repeat _____, please?
- 2 I'm _____, I still didn't _____ your name. Could you _____ it again, please?
- 3 _____ me a _____. I've got another _____.
- 4 Sorry _____ that. What can I _____ for you?
- 5 I'm _____ I can't hear you.
- 6 I think we got _____.
- 7 Thanks. I'll _____ you straight _____.

- 4 Look at the phone conversations. Correct the receptionist's rude responses.

- 1 Caller I'd like to speak to Matti, please.
Receptionist There's no Matti here.
- 2 Caller Ich möchte bitte mit Claudia sprechen.
Receptionist What?
- 3 Caller Oh hello. It's Mehmet here.
Receptionist Who?
- 4 Caller It's about the project.
Receptionist Wait. I have to answer the other phone.
- 5 Caller Hello, it's Mehmet again. We were speaking a minute ago.
Receptionist What happened to you?
- 6 Caller I wanted to talk to Stuart about the JW111.
Receptionist I don't know what you're saying.

- 5 **A▶1.5** Now listen and check your answers.

- 6 Work with a partner.

Student A:

You want to make three phone calls to:

- Susan Daniels, an important client
- Henrik Andersson, a colleague in Sweden
- the Accounts Department of your stationery supplier.

Student B:

You want to make three phone calls to:

- a potential new customer
- your boss who is at another branch today
- the Human Resources Manager in your company.

Take turns making the phone calls to each other. If possible, use your actual mobile phones and call each other from different rooms.

If you are making the call, try to reach the person you want or to leave a message. If you are receiving the call, roll a dice to select one of these problems:

- 1 The caller says something you cannot understand.
- 2 It is a wrong number.
- 3 You do not recognize the caller.
- 4 You are cut off.
- 5 Your phone rings with another call.
- 6 You connect the caller to someone else in your office.

1D MAKING ARRANGEMENTS ON THE PHONE

1 Work with a partner. Look at the phrases from a phone call below. Is the conversation formal or informal?

- 1 I'd like to meet you.
- 2 When are you available?
- 3 Does ... suit you?
- 4 I'm afraid I'm not available on Tuesday.
- 5 Shall we say ...?
- 6 That suits me.

2 **A▶1.6** Listen to Fenola Young using the language from 1 to talk to a supplier on the phone. Why and when are they meeting?

3 **A▶1.7** Listen to Fenola now using more informal language to talk to a colleague, Sven. Why and when are they meeting?

4 **A▶1.7** Listen again and write down the equivalent informal phrases to the formal ones from 1.

- 1 _____ for lunch next week?
- 2 When _____?
- 3 _____ Tuesday OK _____?
- 4 Sorry, I can't _____ on Tuesday.
- 5 _____ Thursday at 12.30 instead?
- 6 _____ good.



5 Work with a partner and role-play the following phone calls.

- 1 A supplier calling a new customer to arrange a presentation.
- 2 A colleague calling another colleague to arrange a tennis match.

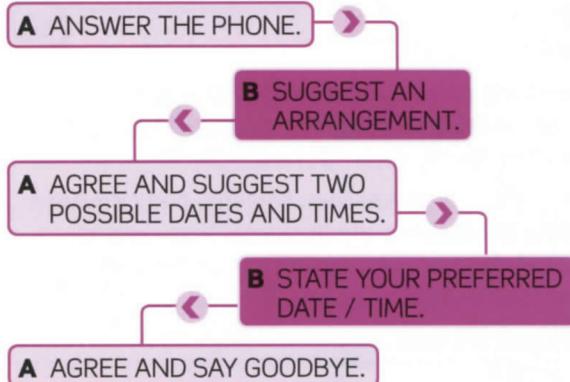
6 **A▶1.8** Listen to the end of a phone call between a customer and a sales rep and answer questions 1–3.

- 1 What do they arrange? _____
- 2 What is planned for the 30th? _____
- 3 What is planned for the 1st? _____

7 **A▶1.8** Listen again and complete these sentences.

- 1 Can we _____ a meeting then?
- 2 _____ about Tuesday the 31st?
- 3 I _____ the Wednesday.
- 4 The 1st of February? Yes, that _____ me.

8 Work with a partner. Take turns to answer the phone and make arrangements for the situations below. Use this flow chart and your own diaries if you have them.



- meeting to plan a new website
- visiting your new company headquarters
- celebrating your birthday
- an anniversary dinner
- playing golf or tennis

9 **A▶1.9** Sergio calls Elena again. Listen and answer questions 1–4.

- 1 What is the main reason for his call?
- 2 What else do they talk about?
- 3 What can't Sergio make?
- 4 What do Sergio and Elena move back?

10 Read this sentence and then change the diary page below.

'Fabio can't make the 27th, so we'll bring the meeting forward a day and move the tour back a day.'

26	27	28
	Meeting at 9.30a.m	
	Tour at 3p.m.	

11 Repeat your calls from exercise 8, but this time you can't make the appointments. Change the arrangements to a new time. Use your own diaries if you have them.

1E > EMAIL - FIRST CONTACT AND REQUESTS

1 Discuss these questions with a partner.

- 1 How often do you send and receive emails?
- 2 When do you choose to use email rather than SMS or letters?

2 Read the email and answer the questions.

- 1 Who is Angela?
- 2 Does she know Sabina Zawadzki?
- 3 What does Angela want?

Dear Ms Zawadzki 

My name is Angela Lopez, and I am a Spanish student at Western Business College. I was given your name by my tutor, Donald Kelly.

I am planning a career in publishing, and I am keen to learn more about the business. I am writing to ask if there are any opportunities for work experience in your company.

Thank you for your attention. I hope to hear from you soon.

Regards 

Angela Lopez 

3 Label the parts of the email.

- 1 closing sentence _____
- 2 closing salutation _____
- 3 sender's name _____
- 4 opening salutation _____
- 5 reason for writing _____
- 6 introduction _____

4 Put these parts of an email in the correct order.

Would you like to meet for a coffee to discuss any help you might need while I am here? _____

Dear James _____

I look forward to hearing from you. _____

I have just started a work placement here and thought I would introduce myself. _____

Andrea Haussmann _____

Please let me know when you are free. _____

Best wishes _____

5 Work with a partner. Read these emails and answer the questions.

- 1 What is the purpose of each email?
- 2 Do they include all the elements in 3? Should they?
- 3 How do they differ in tone?

Dear Sir or Madam 

I am writing to enquire about your trainee programme. I understand you offer traineeships to business studies graduates.

I would be grateful if you could send me details of this programme.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours

Alex Prower

Steve 

I was just wondering if you could send me the account details of JP Partnerships. I need to check an order from last year.

Thanks

Sandra

Hi Peter 

I am working on a pitch for a new client and was hoping you might be able to help me. I'd be interested in seeing any examples of successful pitches you have done. Please could you send me some from the last two years?

Thanks in advance

Philip

6 Look back through all the emails on this page and underline any useful expressions in them. Then put the expressions into these categories.

Opening salutations

Reason for writing

Making a request

Closing sentence

Closing salutation

7 Using some of the phrases in 6, write an email to a company asking for information on their products.

1F > EMAIL - ENQUIRIES



1 Work in groups. Make a list of all the reasons why a business makes enquiries of a supplier, e.g. to ask for a brochure, to check an order.

2 Read and complete the email with these words.

Could recently also planning
future know stand including

Dear Sir or Madam

We saw your ¹ _____ at the Montreal trade fair, and we would like to ² _____ more about your CCTV products.

GFC Designs is a graphic design agency, specializing in design solutions for businesses. We have ³ _____ moved to new business premises, and we are ⁴ _____ to replace our security cameras in the near ⁵ _____.

⁶ _____ you please send us your latest catalogue, ⁷ _____ a full price list? We would ⁸ _____ like to know if you install and maintain your security systems.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully

Claude Danvers

3 When you write an email, you should organize your ideas clearly. Number these items in the order you find them in **2**.

- a Request to reply _____
- b Your enquiry _____
- c Polite ending _____
- d Description of your company _____
- e How you know about the supplier _____

4 Work with a partner and discuss how you would reply to the email in **2**. What would you include in the email?

5 Read this reply and compare it to your ideas in **4**. Then answer these questions.

- 1 What does Ingrid send with the email?
- 2 What information does Ingrid ask for and why?

Dear Mr Danvers

Thank you for your enquiry. Please find attached our full, up-to-date price list. You can see our catalogue on our website by clicking on [this link](#).

I have also attached an order form, should you wish to place an order with us.

I would be grateful if you could let me know where you are based, so that I can also send you details of our delivery options.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Yours sincerely

Ingrid Mühlé

6 Complete the response with appropriate words.

Dear Ms Mühlé

Many thanks for getting back to me so quickly, and for supplying the ¹ _____ and the ² _____.

In answer to your question, my company is based in ³ _____.

Attached is the completed ⁴ _____. I hope I have filled it in correctly.

I look forward to ⁵ _____ the goods.

Best wishes

Claude

7 Find phrases in the emails in **5** and **6** that come under these categories.

- Acknowledging someone's email _____
- Including separate files in the email _____
- Polite ending _____

8 Work with a partner. Each person writes an email requesting something from another company. Use some of the phrases in **7**.

Then swap your emails and write a reply to your partner. Continue doing this until you feel the email exchange is at a natural end.



- 1** Look at these notes from a meeting and answer the questions.

- 1 What are the notes about?
- 2 What points need no further action?
- 3 What still needs to be done for the other points?
- 4 Which of the points will Elaine be taking on herself?

Conference planning meeting 20/03

Update from Elaine:

- 1 **Venue:** booked – Sheldon conference centre.
- 2 **Accommodation for delegates:** Still trying to negotiate deals with local hotels.
- 3 **Speakers:** All but two have confirmed. Need to chase up these two.
- 4 **Catering:** Have received quotes from three suppliers. Action point: circulate quotes to team.
- 5 **Sponsorship:** no action yet taken, volunteer needed to take this on.
- 6 **Publicity:** Freelancer to create flyers. Need to check availability.

- 2** Read these email extracts from Elaine. Which points from the meeting do they address?

1

Dear Mr Carson



Further to our conversation last week, I wonder if I could press you on a decision as to whether you will speak at our conference in June.

2

Dear all



Following on from our meeting yesterday, here are the three quotes I talked about. Please take a look and let me know what you think. Please note that I am still expecting two more quotes as well.

3

Hi Tania



As you know, in the conference planning meeting yesterday it was agreed that I would need to get some help with one of the tasks. I was told you had a bit of spare time at the moment. Is that the case? I'm copying in Amanda so she is aware I'm asking you for your time.

- 3** All of the emails above are following up on a previous discussion or meeting. Find phrases in the emails that mean the following:

- 1 As we discussed in ...

- 2 This is extra / new information:

- 3 I'm letting [someone else] read this email ...

- 4 We decided that ...

- 4** ► 1.10 Elaine has found a freelancer to make the flyer for the conference. Listen to a phone conversation they have and answer the questions.

- 1 When does Harriet have to finish the flyer?
- 2 What is Elaine going to do next?
- 3 What do they agree on at the end of the conversation?

- 5** Write two follow-up emails from Elaine.

- 1 Write to the Sheldon Hotel to confirm the conference booking.
- 2 Write to Harriet, the flyer designer, confirming her job and attaching the job details. You also want your boss, Fiona Porter, to know about this.
- 3 When you have written your two emails, compare them with a partner's. Did you both include the same things in your emails? Do you have any advice on how to improve them?

1H > EMAIL - LEVELS OF FORMALITY

- 1 Look at the pieces of advice about writing emails. Which ones do you agree with? Discuss your answers with a partner.

Emails follow most of the rules of business letter writing.

Always use an appropriate ending.

Always use an appropriate greeting at the start.

Use complete words – don't use contractions or abbreviations.

Use complete sentences.

- 2 Decide which of the following are formal [F], informal [I] or can be found in both situations [B].

Yours faithfully _____

Dear Mr Dunne _____

Best wishes _____

Yours sincerely _____

All the best _____

Thank you for your enquiry. _____

Please contact us if you have any further enquiries. _____

How are you? _____

Take care. _____

We look forward to hearing from you. _____

It's me again! _____

Dear Sir or Madam _____

Looking forward to the meeting. _____

Hi Sam _____

See you soon! _____

Regards _____

- 3 Read these emails and answer the questions.

- 1 In email a, what does Bruno ask Colette to do?
- 2 In email b, what information does Colette add?
- 3 In email c, what information does the hotel request?
- 4 In email d, what does Colette offer to do?
- 5 Which emails are more informal and why?
- 6 What do the abbreviations btw, FYI, and asap mean?

a

Colette

Thanks for booking the meeting with the Du Pont clients. Could you book me a room at the Park Inn Hotel, Geneva for the three nights? The usual – non-smoking, quiet double room!

Thanks

Bruno

btw: Do you know if Claire is going too?

b

Dear Sir or Madam @

I am writing to enquire if you have a double room, single occupancy, available for three nights, 27th, 28th and 29th March, for Mr Bruno Levy. He requires a non-smoking, quiet room.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

Colette Montand
Personal Assistant

c

Dear Colette Montand @

We have a double room for the nights you require. It is a quiet room at the back of the hotel and is on a non-smoking corridor. The price is 300 Swiss francs per night, including breakfast.

The hotel has security-controlled parking for an extra 25 Swiss francs per day.

We will hold the booking for 48 hours but we require your credit card number to confirm it.

Please could you also inform us if Mr Levy requires parking.

Yours sincerely

Carlo Graf

d

Bruno @

FYI – I've booked the hotel.

Do you want me to book you a parking space at the hotel too? I need to get back to them asap on this.

Colette

- 4 You are Colette. Write the following emails.

- 1 Write to the hotel: confirm the booking and give credit card details (VISA 6783 2612 4382 9032, expiry date: 06/15). Bruno doesn't need a parking space.
- 2 Write to Bruno asking him when he wants to travel to Geneva.
- 3 Write to the hotel: book another room for Sophie Meyer.
- 4 Write to Bruno asking him if you should book a train ticket for Sophie.