

Script for **Unit 2 – Phone Conversations Go Wrong**

s/n	Script
1	<p>Welcome to the online learning of “Phone Conversations Go Wrong”.</p> <p>This is the second e-learning unit of "Represent Yourself & Your Organisation Well With Voice Call Phone Etiquette”.</p> <p>You will acquire an understanding of the process of transmitting and understanding information. From one person to another during a phone conversation It discusses the barriers to communication, so you are aware and actively manage these disruptions.</p> <p>It shares the importance of outcome-first attitude so you will be mindful and actively steer the phone conversation in the right direction.</p> <p>“Represent Yourself & Your Organisation Well With Voice Call Phone Etiquette” is a multi-part e-learning programme.</p> <p>It comprises of 4 learning units. You can choose to only take this e-learning unit, or to also take the remaining 3 e-learning units in no particular order.</p> <p>You may view the synopsis for each of the e-learning units.</p> <p>Click on the next button to proceed.</p>
2	<p>You may have heard –</p> <p>“What is said isn’t always what’s heard!”</p> <p>“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”</p> <p>“It is hard to listen when you are talking, or when you are thinking of a response.”</p> <p>“Listening is not understanding the words of the questions asked. Listening is understanding why the question was asked in the first place.”</p> <p>“Think twice before you speak ...because your words and influence will plant the seed of either success or failure in the mind of another.”</p> <p>“Lack of communication ruin everything ... because instead of knowing how the other person is feeling, we just assume.”</p>
3	<p>Phone conversations go wrong for so many reasons.</p> <p>There may be misinterpretations when there is no shared understanding between persons, on what is said or heard.</p> <p>There may be assumptions. For example, jumping to conclusions, or being too quick to judge, there may be lack of attentiveness, not being focused, or disinterested.</p> <p>Especially, if one had already decided what to say and do, without the intention, or desire, to uncover the real underlying issue or challenge.</p>

		<p>There may be undermining of our influences, and underestimating the weight of our words, that how we listen and speak directly impact others, as well as influence outcomes and results.</p> <p>Therefore, during a phone conversation a lot is going on between what is said and what is heard.</p> <p>Let us understand more with the Communication Model</p>
4		<p>Let us start with an activity to drag and match the concepts correctly. Give it a try!</p>
	Correct response	<p>Yes! You have gotten it correct. You will be learning more about these concepts and deepen your understanding</p>
	Incorrect response	<p>Not to worry that you have not gotten it correct. You will be learning more about these concepts and deepen your understanding.</p>
5		<p>Someone initiates the phone conversation.</p> <p>Your customer calls your organisation, meaning he or she is making an inbound call. You may call your customer, meaning you are making an outbound call. During the phone conversation, the roles of sender and receiver change. When your customer speaks, he or she is the sender. You are the receiver. When you speak, you are the sender. Your customer is the receiver.</p> <p>What would be the sender's expectations during the phone conversation? First, the sender expects to be given the time and attention, to convey the message. Then, the receiver is to understand the message from the sender's point of view. Finally, the receiver is to take actions based on what the sender wants.</p> <p>What would be the receiver's expectations during the phone conversation? First, the receiver expects the message to be clearly and accurately communicated. Then, the sender is to reaffirm correctness when the receiver checks on shared understanding.</p> <p>Finally, the receiver needs to be able to express different point of view, or different interpretation.</p>
6		<p>What is encoding? The person who speaks, that is the sender delivers a message, with a selection of spoken words and unspoken cues. Unspoken cues may be the tone of voice, example, sounding sad. It may be sighs, sounding disappointed. Therefore, the sender encodes the message in an intended way or manner, to convey the meaning.</p> <p>What is decoding? The person who listens, that is the receiver. Gets the message and interprets the spoken words and unspoken cues. In own way to give own meaning of the message and form an understanding of what is said.</p> <p>In an ideal situation when there's 100% accurate decoding of an encoded message It means there is shared understanding and agreement between the sender and the receiver, that both persons have the same mind, and see it the same way. At times, it takes a while to achieve shared understanding and agreement.</p> <p>Why so? It may be because of noise.</p>

		<p>Noise distorts the encoding & decoding of message. It breaks down communication. It gives rise to “that is not what I mean”. Recall misinterpretations, assumptions, distractions, disinterest, undermining.</p> <p>Noise is the cause of why phone conversations go wrong.</p>
7		Give the activity a try, and we will learn more about the concepts.
	Correct response	<p>Yes! You have gotten it correct.</p> <p>You will be learning more about these concepts and deepen your understanding</p>
	Incorrect response	<p>Not to worry that you have not gotten it correct.</p> <p>You will be learning more about these concepts and deepen your understanding.</p>
8		<p>There are four types of Noise. Let us start with the first type - process barriers. Breakdowns occur anywhere in the Communication Model. These breakdowns are process barriers. It blocks sending and receiving of messages. It impacts encoding and decoding of messages. It ultimately blocks the transfer of understanding between the sender and receiver.</p> <p>Process barriers include – Sender barrier, Receiver barrier, Encoding barrier, Decoding barrier, and Feedback barrier</p> <p>Fear of criticism, lack of confidence are examples of sender barriers.</p> <p>The staff hesitates to speak up during the phone conversation because the customer on the other line is a Director at senior management level.</p> <p>Feeling unwell, thinking about a project submission deadline, are examples of receiver barriers. The staff is preoccupied during the phone conversation and is not listening attentively to understand the situation.</p> <p>Remember that your customer may be the receiver. Example, your customer is not feeling well, he therefore has difficulty keeping up with the helpful instructions you have given over the phone.</p> <p>Using Singlish, saying some slangs, are examples of encoding barriers. The staff uses these during conversation to express himself and his views.</p> <p>However, the foreign customer may not fully understand what is said. So, it means the foreign customer is experiencing decoding barriers. Another example is a customer uses abbreviation, or acronym as he shares how his company uses the product. So, this is encoding barrier.</p> <p>The staff is not able to fully understand what it means. This is decoding barrier.</p> <p>The failure to check understanding, or ask relevant questions, are examples of feedback barrier.</p>
9		<p>The second and third types of noise are physical and semantic barriers.</p> <p>These barriers block sending and receiving of messages. It impacts encoding and decoding of messages. It ultimately blocks the transfer of understanding between the sender and receiver.</p>

	<p>Sights, sounds and stimuli are occurrences which may be unexpected and may become physical or environmental barriers.</p> <p>For instance, someone tapped on the shoulder of the sender or receiver and disrupted the conversation. A sudden foul smell may distract the thoughts of the sender or receiver. A poor reception or noisy workplace are also physical or environmental barriers.</p> <p>The earlier example about the sender or receiver feeling unwell, say with a headache. It is a physical barrier which causes him or her to lose focus and concentration.</p> <p>Semantic barriers impact understanding of what is said. The sender or receiver may not have a strong command of the language or understand the words differently.</p> <p>This may happen when slangs and argons are used or acronyms, abbreviations.</p> <p>Recall the earlier example about Singlish used with a foreign customer. Diversity of knowledge will also impact the conversation. For instance, the sender is an IT expert, and providing instructions using numerous technical terms. The receiver who is an entry level user may not understand what is said and what is expected of him or her to do.</p>
10	<p>The last type of noise is psychosocial barriers. Fields of experience, Filtering and psychological distance block sending and receiving of messages.</p> <p>It impacts encoding and decoding of messages. It ultimately blocks the transfer of understanding between the sender and receiver.</p> <p>The sender and receiver generally encode and decode messages in the context of their fields of experience. Their sense of reality and understanding is based on their life experiences, attitudes, values, beliefs, assumptions, stereotypes, biases and more. For instance, the sender jumps right into giving the step-by-step instructions thinking the receiver has already logged into her account.</p> <p>Another example is the receiver expects a reply on Sunday whereas the sender assumes it is 3 working days.</p> <p>Filtering means that our listening is guided. Like the saying goes we only listen to what we want to hear, more often than not we see and hear what we are emotionally tuned in to see and hear.</p> <p>Our moods and emotions also play an important part in what we hear and say. The sender may be impatient after having a hard day at work, and not elaborate as much as he should be.</p> <p>The receiver 'tunes out' of the conversation because he is worried about his sick child.</p> <p>Confidence or Interest in the conversation is another factor, which can block sending and receiving of messages.</p>

		<p>The zealous sender may be sharing too enthusiastically, with too much information which may not be useful.</p> <p>The receiver dislikes referring to an instructional manual, and is therefore not receptive when she was advised to use it.</p> <p>Psychological distance is similar to actual physical distance and it is about the comfort level between the sender and the receiver to have a fruitful phone conversation.</p> <p>Perceived sincerity and empathy are key to true communication when there is perceived honesty and understanding the conversation will be more straight forward, transparent, and authentic.</p> <p>Perception self and one's role also guides expectations, and what and how we listen and communicate.</p> <p>For instance, a sender who prides himself as a domain expert and feels that he must assert himself to get the receiver to follow his instructions. May come across as over-bearing, and hostile.</p> <p>This may negatively impact the receiver's desire to listen and pay heed to his advice.</p>
11		<p>Feedback occurs when the receiver responds to the sender's message and returns the message to the sender. Feedback allows the sender to determine whether the message has been received and understood.</p> <p>When there is feedback, there is two-way communication. Else, it would be just one-way instructions or giving directions with no opportunity to clarify or give comments.</p> <p>Giving feedback may be vocalizing or saying things like "mhmm" and "yes". It may also be paraphrasing to confirm correct understanding. It may also be asking for clarifications or more information, to elaborate what is said.</p> <p>Why is feedback important? Earlier, we shared that there are numerous noise and barriers which impact encoding and decoding of messages.</p> <p>If these noises are left unchecked, it means the risk of the phone conversation going wrong increases.</p> <p>Therefore, feedback is critical to manage, minimise or eliminate noise and barriers, to ensure shared understanding and good communications.</p>
12		Give the activity a try to test your understanding!
	Correct response	<p>Yes!!! You have gotten it correct.</p> <p>The sender encoded with a non-verbal cue, that is the long pause, while also expressed displeasure with the selected word "nonsense".</p> <p>The receiver decoded what was said and understand that a problem was encountered.</p>

		<p>There is noise present during the phone conversation, as there are doubts raised about having a good understanding of the situation.</p> <p>There is feedback, as the receiver paraphrased to confirm what was said.</p>
	Incorrect response	<p>You have not gotten it correct. Let us try to better understand the concepts.</p> <p>The sender encoded with a non-verbal cue, that is the long pause, while also expressed displeasure with the selected word “nonsense”.</p> <p>The receiver decoded what was said and understand that a problem was encountered.</p> <p>There is noise present during the phone conversation, as there are doubts raised about having a good understanding of the situation.</p> <p>There is feedback, as the receiver paraphrased to confirm what was said.</p>
13		Also give this activity a try to test your understanding!
	Correct response	Yes! You have gotten it correct.
	Incorrect response	You have not gotten it correct. Do also review and revise the earlier content.
14		<p>Recall the earlier part about the sender’s and receiver’s expectations? Conversations get tough when expectations are not met. Similarly, when there is a lack of shared understanding. Noises, barriers create misinterpretations and with little or no feedback</p> <p>The phone conversation will escalate to be tough and uncomfortable for all parties.</p> <p>Practising outcome-first attitude by the staff can help steer the phone conversation back on track and stop it from becoming bad to worst.</p>
15		<p>You may have heard –</p> <p>“Watch your attitude. It is the first thing people notice about you.”</p> <p>“People may hear your words, but they feel your attitude.”</p> <p>“Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference!”</p> <p>“Attitude determines the outcome!”</p> <p>“A positive attitude will lead to positive outcomes!”</p> <p>“Attitude determines how well you do it.”</p> <p>In summary, your attitude towards the customer and the challenge faced by him or her, is very important.</p>
16		<p>If you had taken Unit 1 – Phone Conversations Impact Customer Experience You may recall the need for the staff to demonstrate responsiveness, accuracy, appropriateness, and accountability.</p> <p>It essentially means the staff is practising outcome-first attitude.</p>

		<p>The staff needs to show responsiveness, that is – be sensitive to what was asked, and prompt to take actions.</p> <p>The staff needs to ensure accuracy and appropriateness, that is – recommend or take actions that are correct, feasible and suitable, and will resolve the need or request.</p> <p>The staff needs to exhibit accountability, that is – be responsible to follow through from start to end, and if the customer’s request needs to be re-direct for someone else to follow-up, ensure that there is closure at the end of the day.</p>
17		<p>You may not be the product innovator, the person who conceptualised the service, the marketing in-charge, or CEO etc.</p> <p>But at the point of the phone conversation, the customer expects you to be able to act on their needs and requests. Essentially, the customer must feel satisfied that you have done to the best of your ability to meet his or her needs</p> <p>In order to work towards achieving these desired outcomes, you must therefore take actions, and go about with the necessary works and support with responsiveness, accuracy, appropriateness, and accountability.</p> <p>Contrast this with a staff who goes about the phone conversation with a me-first attitude. He or she will be focusing on personal needs. Actions will also be limited, perhaps to close the case quickly. To avoid spending a long time with an unhappy customer. To not taking the trouble to check with another department, and ask for their help.</p> <p>So, it means to just do the bare minimal, so he or she need not work on case any further.</p>
18		Give this activity a try to understand how to demonstrate outcome-first attitude!
	Correct response	Yes!!! You have gotten it correct.
	Incorrect response	You have not gotten it correct. Let us try to better understand the concepts.
19		Click to submit your assessment about practising outcome-first attitude.
		Yes!!! Thank you for your commitment to practise outcome-first attitude And work towards having great phone conversations with your customers.
		Please tell us your concerns about practising outcome-first attitude.
20		<p>Congratulations! You have successfully completed Unit 2 - Phone Conversations Go Wrong.</p> <p>If you wish to save a copy of the e-Learning script, please click on the link. We end with a reflection activity, so you can give more thoughts to how you have been conducting your phone conversations with the customers.</p> <p>Think about your encoding or decoding habits, or the noises and barriers which negatively impact your phone conversations.</p> <p>Please click on the link to submit your reflection. We thank you and we wish you success in learning and applying the skills and know-how!</p>