

3 Could I leave a message?

AIMS

- Preparing to make a telephone call
- Receiving calls
- Taking and leaving messages
- Asking for and giving repetition
- The secretarial barrier

1 Preparing to make a telephone call

- 1 Look at the cartoon. What do you imagine they are saying? Say what the problems are and how problems like this can be avoided.



- 2 Listen to the recording of Clare Macey, a director of Inter Marketing, suggesting ways to prepare for telephone calls. Then tick the suggestions that she makes that are included in the list below.

Do *not* try to guess what the other person will say.

Think about your objectives from the call – any questions you need to ask or things you need to say.

If someone calls and you are not ready for them, ask them to call back later.

Desk preparation: prepare the desk – paper, pen, any relevant documentation, computer files.

Check recent correspondence, know the situation.

Have your diary on hand, so you can fix appointments.

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3 Different people have different objectives in a telephone call. What do you think are the objectives of the people in the situations below? The first is done for you as an example.

a) A purchasing manager who has received an incomplete delivery.



- To tell the supplier that the delivery is incomplete.
- To arrange to get the rest of the delivery sent as soon as possible.
- (Possibly) to complain about the poor service.

b) A computer operator with a software problem calling a software helpline.



c) A sales representative for a furniture manufacturer making a first call to Moda Design, a company which sells office furniture.



d) A purchaser at Moda Design who takes the call in situation c.




2 Receiving calls

- 1 Look at the picture as you listen to the recording. Say what the problem is and how problems like this can be avoided.



UNIT 3 Could I leave a message?

-  2 Listen to another short extract from the recording of Clare Macey. Here she is talking about being prepared for incoming calls. Tick what she recommends.

Send an email suggesting someone calls you – then be prepared for their call. ☐

If you expect a call, think about what the other person will say or what they will ask. ☐

Check any relevant documentation or correspondence. ☐

If you are busy or not ready when they call, ask them to call back later. ☐

3 Taking and leaving messages

-  1 Listen to the recording and write key information on the message pads below.

a)

| | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|
| P H O N E M E S S A G E | TO | DATE | TIME | AM PM |
| | FROM | AREA CODE | | |
| | OF | NO. | | |
| | | EXT. | | |
| | MESSAGE | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | SIGNED | | | |
| | PHONED <input type="checkbox"/> | CALL BACK <input type="checkbox"/> | RETURNED CALL <input type="checkbox"/> | WANTS TO SEE YOU <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | | WILL CALL AGAIN <input type="checkbox"/> | WAS IN <input type="checkbox"/> URGENT <input type="checkbox"/> |

b)

Telephone Messages

To _____ Date _____

From _____ Time _____

Of _____ Phone _____ / _____
AREA CODE/NUMBER

Message

Signed _____

Discussion

Compare the styles of the callers in the two conversations you have heard. How are they different? Comment on how the people answering the calls handle each caller.

Now listen to two more examples and complete the message pads below.

c)

| | |
|--|---|
| TO: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> URGENT |
| DATE _____ | TIME _____ |
| WHILE YOU WERE OUT | |
| M _____ | |
| OF _____ | |
| PHONE _____ | |
| <small>AREA NUMBER EXTENSION</small> | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TELEPHONED | <input type="checkbox"/> PLEASE CALL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CAME TO SEE YOU | <input type="checkbox"/> WILL CALL AGAIN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WANTS TO SEE YOU | <input type="checkbox"/> RETURNED YOUR CALL |
| MESSAGE _____ | |
| _____ | |
| _____ | |
| _____ | |
| _____ | |
| SIGNED _____ | |

d)

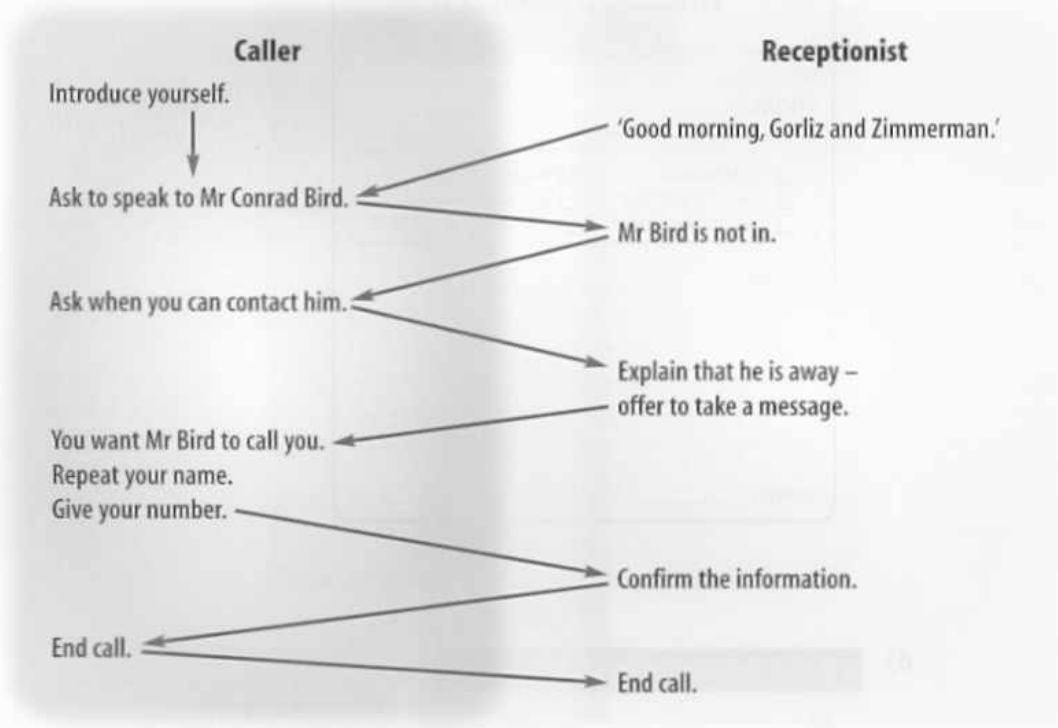
| Computer Services User Support | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| TO _____ | Problem/enquiry: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ |
| FROM _____ | |
| TIME _____ | |
| EXTENSION _____ | |
| DEPARTMENT _____ | |
| WORKSTATION _____ | |
| NOTES _____ | |

Discussion

Discuss the style of the various speakers in the last two conversations. How does the style change according to the speaker and the situation? Is the style used always the right one?

Practice

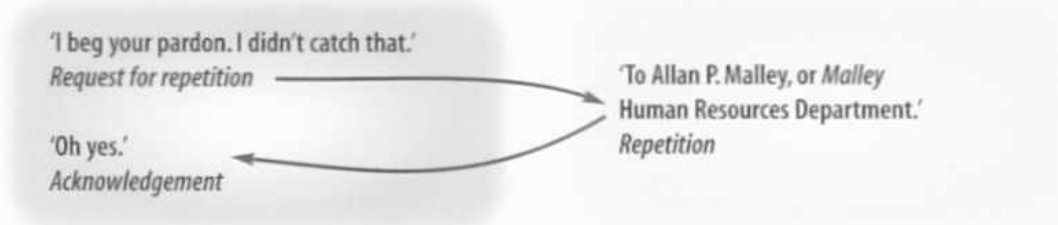
Use the following flow chart to make a complete telephone conversation. If you need to, listen again to the recordings you have heard and refer to the Language Checklist on page 32.



Now listen to the recording of a model answer.

4 Asking for and giving repetition

- 1 Listen to the recording of a conversation between a woman who calls the Human Resources Office in the Singapore branch of Michigan Insurance Inc. She has to attend for a job interview.
- a) The first time you listen, say why she calls.
 - b) Listen again. Notice that there are four requests for repetition. Why?
- 2 In each request for repetition, the person asking for the repetition also acknowledges it. It is important that any repetition is followed by an acknowledgement. Look at the following example that you have heard:



Listen again. Identify two other ways to acknowledge repetition.

- 3 Look at the following situations and listen to the recording for each one. In each case, suggest why someone might ask for repetition and suggest a suitable phrase.



Role play 1

Work in pairs. Student A should turn to File card 5A. Student B should turn to File card 5B.

Role play 2

Keep to the same A or B. Student A should turn to File card 6A and Student B should turn to File card 6B.

5 The secretarial barrier



- 1 Frequently a sales representative may make a 'cold call' to a purchasing manager or some other influential person in a company. Imagine the following situation:

Dominique Peron is Personal Assistant to Jacques Le Grand, Production Controller in Compagnie Tarbet Garonne (CTG), a French manufacturer of paints and varnishes. M. Le Grand has asked not to be disturbed by uninvited sales calls. Walter Barry from London would like to speak to M. Le Grand.



- a) Listen to the tape and say what Dominique is trying to do. What is her objective?
b) Dominique Peron finally makes a suggestion to the caller. What does she say?



- 2 Listen again. Complete the script below by writing down all the phrases used by Dominique Peron to block the caller.

CTG: Bonjour, ici la CTG.

WALTER BARRY: Good morning, Walter Barry, here, calling from London. Could I speak to M. Le Grand, please?

CTG: Who's calling, please?

WALTER BARRY: I'm sorry – Walter Barry, from London.

CTG: Er, _____, please?

WALTER BARRY: Well, I understand that your company has a chemical processing plant. My own company, LCP, Liquid Control Products, is a leader in safety in the field of chemical processing. I would like to speak to M. Le Grand to discuss ways in which we could help CTG protect itself from problems and save money at the same time.

CTG: Yes, I see. Well, M. Le Grand _____

WALTER BARRY: Could you tell me when I could reach him?

CTG: He's _____

_____, then _____

_____ in New York. So it is difficult to give you a time.

WALTER BARRY: Could you ask him to ring me?

CTG: I _____

_____, he's _____

WALTER BARRY: Could I speak to someone else, perhaps?

CTG: Who in particular?

WALTER BARRY: A colleague, for example?

CTG: You are speaking to his Personal Assistant. I can deal with calls for M. Le Grand.

WALTER BARRY: Yes, well ... er ... yes ... could I ring him tomorrow?

CTG: No, _____

_____. Listen, let me suggest something. You send us details of your products and services, together with references from other companies and then we'll contact you.

WALTER BARRY: Yes, that's very kind. I have your address.

CTG: Very good, Mr ... er ... er ...

WALTER BARRY: Barry. Walter Barry from LCP in London.

CTG: Right, Mr Barry. We look forward to hearing from you.

WALTER BARRY: Thank you. Goodbye.

CTG: Bye.



3 Listen to the beginning of another conversation. A sales manager from a tools manufacturer is telephoning a car components company.

- Who does the caller ask to speak to?
- What is the result?
- Why is the caller successful / not successful here?

Role play 3

Work in pairs. Student A should refer to File card 7A and Student B should use File card 7B.

Role play 4

Keep to the same A or B. Student A should refer to File card 8A and Student B should turn to File card 8B.

TRANSFER

Think about any of the following – whichever is most likely for you now or in the future. Prepare the call (maximum three minutes preparation!). Explain the details of the situation to a colleague or to your teacher, then practise the call.

- Ring a company to ask for product details or prices.
 - Ring a hotel to book a night's accommodation.
 - Ring a travel agent to ask about flights to a city you need to visit.
- If possible record your conversation.

Language Checklist

Telephoning (1)

Introducing yourself

Good morning, Aristo.

Hello, this is ... from ...

Hello, my name's ... calling from ...

Saying who you want

I'd like to speak to ... , please.

Could I have the ... Department, please?

Is ... there, please?

Saying someone is not available

I'm sorry he / she's not available ...

Sorry, he / she's away / not in / in a meeting / in Milan.

Leaving and taking messages

Could you give him / her a message?

Can I leave him / her a message?

Please tell him / her ...

Please ask him / her to ring me on ...

Can I take a message?

Would you like to leave a message?

If you give me your number I'll ask him / her to call you later.

Offering to help in other ways

Can anyone else help you?

Can I help you perhaps?

Would you like to speak to his assistant?

Shall I ask him to call you back?

Asking for repetition

Sorry, I didn't catch (your name / your number / your company name / etc.).

Sorry, could you repeat your (name, number, etc.)?

Sorry, I didn't hear that.

Sorry, I didn't understand that.

Could you spell (that / your name), please?

Acknowledging repetition

Okay, I've got that now.

(Mr Kyoto.) I understand.

I see, thank you.

Skills Checklist

Telephoning: Preparation for a call

Reading – background information

Desk preparation

Have the following available:

- relevant documentation / notes
- correspondence or email received
- computer files on screen
- pen and paper
- diary.

Check time available

How much time do you need?

How much time do you have?

Objectives

Who do you want to speak to?

In case of non-availability, have an alternative strategy:

- call back / be called back – when?
- leave a message
- speak to someone else
- write or fax information
- use email.

Do you want to:

- find out information?
- give information?

Introduction

Do you need to refer to:

- a previous call?
- a letter, order, invoice or email?
- someone else (who?)
- an event (what? when?)

Prediction

What do you expect the other person to say / ask you? How will you respond?

Language

Key phrases (see Language Checklist)

Pronunciation

Spelling

Quick Communication Check

1 Introducing yourself and saying what you want

You are on the phone. Complete the sentences with the correct words on the right.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| a) Can I _____ to Mr Johnson, please? | Speak / say |
| b) _____ Jan Van der Saar. | My name's / I'm |
| c) I'm _____ from Amsterdam. | living / calling |
| d) Can you _____ me the Purchasing Department, please. | fix / give |
| e) I'd like some _____, please. | informations / informations |

2 Leaving and taking messages

Complete the exchanges below with words from the box.

- A Can I _____ a message?
 B Yes, please. Please _____ him I'll arrive at about three in the afternoon.
 C He isn't here at the moment. _____ you like to leave a message?
 D Yes, _____ you say Mr Sorensen called?
 C I'm sorry, can you _____ your name?
 D Yes, it's Sorensen. S ... O ... R ... E ... N ... S ... E ... N.
 E Shall I ask him to _____ you tomorrow?
 F No, it's okay. Please tell him I'll _____ later.
 G I'd like to _____ a message for Mr Casey, please.
 H Yes, of course. Who's calling?
 G Angelo Gherrini, from Milan.

leave
take
could
call
would
tell
ring back
repeat

3 Asking for repetition

Make sentences from the following.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| a) can I'm that you repeat sorry? | didn't you I hear. |
| b) said I'm understand I what didn't you sorry. | you that spell can please? |
| c) sorry speak I'm slowly more please. | say you what did? |

Key
 1 a) speak, b) My name's, c) calling, d) give, e) information
 2 A take, B tell, C would, D could, E repeat, F call, G ring back, H leave
 3 a) I'm sorry, can you repeat that?
 b) I'm sorry I didn't understand what you said.
 c) I'm sorry, please speak more slowly.
 What did you say?
 I didn't hear you.
 Please can you spell that?