



BUSINESS SKILLS

LESSON 3: TELEPHONING

ANSWERING AND FINISHING A PHONE CALL

**AIM OF THE LESSON: TO LEARN HOW TO ANSWER AND FINISH
A PHONE CALL**



Version without a key.



1. WARM – UP

- Look at the pictures and answer the questions below them.



What's this?

and



What's this?



NOW THINK AND ANSWER:

- Which one do you prefer and why?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of both?



EXERCISE 1 – READING

- Read the text.

MAKE THAT CALL!

Effective business telephone calls in English are not as difficult as you think (...)!

Are you afraid of using the phone in English? Do your hands start to shake when you dial a telephone number and know that you will have to not only speak in English – but also understand the other person? Well, you are not alone. Millions of non-native speakers of English face exactly this situation every day – often at work and in high stress environments, where there is no alternative to talking on the phone.

Extract number:

Steps to making the perfect business phone call

Stop! Take your hand off that receiver. Before you pick up the phone... PREPARE! Get yourself ready first – and you will find it much easier to make that important business call. Here's a checklist of things you can do before you phone someone:

Write down the main points that you want to discuss with the person you are going to speak to.

These don't need to be long notes – in fact, it's better that you don't write whole sentences, as you will sound as if you're reading from a script. Just jot down (write quickly) a few bullet points – single words and short phrases are best.

Extract number:

Create the perfect telephoning conditions, if possible.

Get everything ready before you phone. If you're in a noisy office, try and find a quiet place where you can make the call. Ideally in a room where you can shut the door to keep background noise to a minimum.

Extract number:

Rehearse the call.

You can either do this silently in your head, or (preferably) speaking out loud. Think about what you will say, the type of reply you will receive and any possible points or questions that could come up during the conversation. If you know there are some tricky names or technical words that you will have to say, practice them before you ring the other person.

Extract number:

Take a deep breath.

If it's a really important, make-or-break call, get yourself physically ready. Do some deep breathing exercises before you speak. Have a drink in front of you – when you get stressed your throat can dry out – which can make you sound even more stressed.

Extract number:

Go ahead and dial

Right, so we've looked at how you can prepare for that big call you need to make. Now, let's consider some survival strategies you can use to help you to help you make it to the end of conversation.

Put yourself in control

If you **phone someone up** – using the suggestions in the previous situation – you will automatically **be in a better frame of mind** than if the other person calls you when you are not ready or in the middle of something else.

Extract number:

Get the other person to slow down

Extract number:

However, a native English speaker, particularly someone who has little experience of talking to foreigners, may not realise this. Trying to understand a British or American person **rabbiting on** at high speed can be incredibly frustrating. Why not tell the person you are speaking to at the beginning of the call that you do speak English, but you sometimes find it a bit tricky to understand everything, so it would be a lot easier if they spoke a little slowly.

Ask the other person to repeat something if you don't understand

Don't **assume** that if you miss something it probably isn't that important anyway: it may be the most important thing in the conversation!

Extract number:

Check that you both understand and agree on what has been said or decided

Extract number:

At the end of the conversation, summarise what you have agreed or check to see what the other person thinks you have said.

Source: <http://milanenglishblog.blogspot.com/2010/05/make-that-call-part-1.html>



Now complete the text above with the below extracts.

1. But using the phone in English doesn't need to be a nightmare. If you follow the simple suggestions described below – and learn some of the key business telephone expressions, you will soon find that making phone calls in English is one of the simplest and most direct ways of communicating with your clients, customers or other colleagues.
2. It's surprising how often (even in your native language) you think you've said one thing, but the other person has understood something completely different.
3. Having these notes in front of you – even if they're just written on a yellow Post-It™ will help you to focus on what you want you want to say and enable you to structure the conversation.
4. If it's a really bad time (for example, the fire alarm has just gone off or your boss is standing in front of you with a long list of figures that need to be checked, ask the other person if you can call them back).
5. Spending a short amount of time creating a relaxed, well-ordered phoning environment will be worth the effort.
6. Even if it's only a bottle of mineral water, keep some liquid nearby so you can take a few sips when the other person's speaking.
7. This can be more of a problem if you're talking to a native speaker: non-native speakers of English know that it is difficult to communicate in a foreign language – particularly on If you suspect that you haven't heard something properly – or you simply haven't understood – ask the other speaker to say it again or to explain.
8. Of course, if there is any really important written information that you need to pass on or receive, tell the other person you will send an email (and don't forget to send it) – or get them to send one to you.
9. If you suspect that you haven't heard something properly – or you simply haven't understood – ask the other speaker to say it again or to explain.



Vocabulary from the text

- **dial a number** - to operate a telephone or make a telephone call to someone by pressing a particular series of buttons with numbers, or moving a disc with numbers, on the telephone / wykręcić
- **pick up the phone** - to make a telephone call to someone / odebrać telefon
- **a receiver** - the part of the telephone that you hold to your ear and mouth/ słuchawka
- **rehearse** - to practise a play, a piece of music, etc. in order to prepare it for public performance/ powtarzać
- **pass on information** - to tell someone something that another person has told you / przekazać informacje
- **receive information** - to get or be given something / otrzymać informacje
- **phone someone up** – call someone (Brit. English) / zadzwonić do kogoś
- **call back** - to return to a place in order to see someone or collect something / oddzwonić
- **rabbit on** - to continue talking about something which is not interesting to the listener / gadać o czymś bez końca
- **a frame of mind** - the way someone thinks or feels about something at a particular time / nastrój
- **assume** - to accept something to be true without question or proof / przyjmować, przypuszczać / zakładać



EXERCISE 2 – VOCABULARY EXERCISE

- Complete the sentences with the words from the box. Some verbs can be used twice.

dial a number	call back	pick up the phone
a receiver	pass on information	phone someone up

1. If you need me, you just have to _____ the phone
2. She said she'd _____ later to pick up that report.
3. She picked up the _____ and dialled his number.
4. If help is needed urgently, _____ 999.
5. _____ them _____ and find out when they are coming.
6. Can I _____ this number direct, or do I have to go through the operator?



EXERCISE 2 – opening and finishing a call - useful phrases

- PUT EACH PHRASE INTO A PROPER COLUMN:

1. I appreciate you taking the time to talk to me.
2. Good morning/afternoon/evening, York Enterprises, Elizabeth Jones speaking.
3. How may I help you?

4. Thank you for calling.
5. Hello, my name is I'm with *GPT Ltd* in London.
6. This is Paul Smith speaking.
7. Hello, this is Paul Smith from Speakspeak International.
8. Who's calling, please?
9. Many thanks for calling us.
10. How can I help you?
11. Good morning /afternoon/evening. How may I assist you?
12. Hello? Sales, speaking. / Hello, Martha Brown speaking.
13. What can I do for you today?
14. Is there anything else I can help you with today?
15. Could I help/assist you with anything else?
16. It's been nice talking to you. Bye.
17. World Talk.com, Angela speaking!

OPENING A PHONE CALL (11)	FINISHING A CALL (6)
phrase number:	phrase number:
phrase number:	
phrase number:	

phrase number:

phrase number:

phrase number:



EXERCISE 3 – USEFUL PHRASES

■ Complete the conversations with a proper phrase:

Conversation number 1

Receptionist = R

Customer = C

R: Good _____, engineering office, receptionist's desk. How _____ you?

C: Good morning. Yes, I need to confirm an appointment with Mr McGregor this afternoon.

R: Can I _____ your name, please?

C: Yes, Charles Smith.

R: Your appointment is at three forty-five.

C: Thank you very much. Please tell him that I am confirming today's meeting.

R: Certainly, I will.

C: Thank you very much for your help. Good bye.

R: Thank _____. Good bye.

Conversation number 2

Guest = G

Concierge = C

G: Hello.

C: Good afternoon, Madam. How _____?

G: Would you be able to get two tickets to the theatre for tonight?

C: I will certainly do my best. What kind of play would you like to see?

G: A comedy.

C: All right. I can get you tickets to the Buffo Theatre, for "A funny day". Don't you mind sitting on the balcony level. I am afraid all other comedy plays for tonight are completely sold out.

G: That's fine. Would you mind finding out for me tonight's availability at your Exclusive Restaurant as well?

C: Certainly. I will call your room within the next hour with some answers. What is your room number?

G: I'm in 803.

C: Thank you, Madam. I do hope that we can _____ you.

G: Thank you for your _____!

Conversation number 3

Clerk = C

Client = CL

CL: Hello! _____ speak to Ian Turner, please?

C: He is not at his desk at the moment, I am afraid. May _____ who's calling, please?

CL: I'm his client. My name is Brown, James Brown. I'll call him later.

C: Is there anything I can _____ to him?

CL: Yes, actually yes. Could you tell him that I will be coming earlier tomorrow?

C: Of course! What time exactly?

CL: An hour earlier!

C: Of course. I'll _____ your message.

CL: Thank you.

C: Thank you for _____ us. Good bye.