

from the Workplace Training Center

Top 10 guidelines for using the phone at work

Phone calls continue to be one of the most dependable and effective communication tools. In a world where emailing and texting are becoming the most popular choices for reaching out to someone, the phone call is a more personal option. A quick call can be much more efficient than a round of emails, text messages or instant messages. They are crucial in maintaining customer relationships. And when face-to-face meetings aren't an option, they are the only choice for addressing conflict, providing feedback, and discussing sensitive or confidential matters.

Ground Rules

1. **Answer the phone enthusiastically.**
2. **Identify yourself always.** When answering the phone, say something like "John Doe, XYZ Co." When making a call, say "This is John Doe from XYZ Co. I'm calling to ..."
3. **Focus on the call.** Turn away from your computer, set aside what you are working on and pay attention. If you multitask, the other person will know, and you could appear scattered or rude.
4. **Answer a call by the third ring.**
5. **Give your recipient a true estimate** of the amount of time that you will need.
6. **Speak in a pleasant and professional tone.**
7. **Maintain a moderate speed.** If you speak too fast, you'll seem hurried or the person may not understand you.
8. **Show a genuine interest** in the person's call.
9. **Use standard manners**, such as saying "Please" and "Thank you."
10. **Ask your callers for permission to put them on hold.** Always offer a brief explanation as to why you are placing a caller on hold.



