



## How to be effective on the phone

Increase confidence and effectiveness when you use the phone.

**Does anyone need telling how to use the phone effectively in this mobile age of telecommunications? We might not think so, but we all know that bad practices can emerge out of over familiarity as well as a lack of experience.**

Lets start with those things we've all done on occasions, but really do not make good telephone practice. We could list a lot of them, so here is just 20!

Continued doing other things while on the telephone?	Said you'd call back – and then didn't	Let the phone ring unanswered	Had to make second call because you forgot to ask about..	Pretended you've been cut off	Made faces to your colleagues about the person on the other end	Lost callers whilst transferring them to another extension	Claimed to be someone else	Been caught out because you didn't confirm it in writing	Lifted a ringing receiver and replaced it at once
Had to ask callers to repeat themselves because you were distracted	Hung up when you've heard an answer phone	Said "I'm afraid there's no one here to help you".	Said "It's not my job."	Said "Its not our policy to..."	Said "Sorry you've got the wrong department."	Said "Are you sure you've followed the instructions?"	Said "If you hold just a second" – and then you took forever.	Said "I don't see what the problem is."	Said "You're not the first one to complain about this."

**Good phone technique is a real bonus to personal effectiveness and good communication. Here are 4 tips for phone success:**

- 1 Know what you want to achieve**  
Make it your practice to write down a few summary sentences that outline the purpose of the call before you dial the contact. When possible one clear purpose is always better than many small goals for a call.
- 2 Know what you want to say**  
Plan what you are going to say on the phone. Even seasoned users would benefit by listing key questions and statements on a piece of paper before making the call. Think about beginning, middle and end, not rocket science, just good planning.
- 3 Quickly get to the point**  
Don't be rude, but move quickly to the point of the call and stick to it. Don't allow the other person to hijack the outcome unless you are sure that it will be helpful to change what you have planned.
- 4 Know when to say goodbye**  
Don't waffle on and on, once the objective of the call has been met, control the end of the call. Remain polite but don't lose your valuable time to too much chit chat.



**All of us can benefit from revisiting these tips from time to time, even if we already use the phone all day long. Good phone practice will not only assist you but the other party as well. Clarity of purpose and speech will come through aiding understanding, engagement and results.**

