

Telephone English

Warm up:

- How often do you talk on the phone?
- Do you like talking on the phone? Why or why not?
- Do you ever have to talk on the phone at work?
- Do you ever have long conversations on the phone?
Who do you have them with?
- Do you prefer phone calls or video calls?
- If you get a call from an unknown number, do you pick up?



1. How would you feel about making the phone calls below in English? With a partner, discuss them and put them into a category.

How would you feel if you had to....

- a) Call a dentist and make an appointment?
- b) Call your electricity company about an incorrect bill you received?
- c) Call a person you like and ask them to go to dinner?
- d) Call an ambulance for a medical emergency?
- e) Call an angry customer and apologize to them for a late delivery?
- f) Call your internet company and deal with a lot of automatic messages (“press 1 if your already have an account” etc)?
- g) Call a lawyer about a complicated legal document you received in the mail?
- h) Call a hotel and ask for information about a room?
- i) Leave a message asking a friend to call you back?

| I'd be fine with it.... | I think I could do it... | I would be nervous... | No way! |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------|
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? Are your answers very different to your partners'? What would you do to prepare for these calls?



2. Read the conversation and fill in the gaps with a phrase from the options below

Kyle: Hi, welcome to Fat Frank's Funland, (a) Kyle, how can I help you today?

Natasha: Hi Kyle, I'm Natasha, I'm calling because my daughter's 11th birthday is on Saturday next week, and I'd like to make an (b) for her birthday party. Do you have any rooms (c)?

Kyle: Saturday is our busiest day, can I just (d) for a minute while I check?

Natasha: No problem. (*Natasha waits for a minute listening to bad music*)

Kyle: Hi, are you still there?

Natasha: Yes I'm here

Kyle: Great, thanks for (e). I checked and we have two rooms available on Saturday for Birthday parties, one is the Halloween themed scary room, and the other is----- (*the line goes quiet for a few seconds*), which one would you like?

Natasha: I'm sorry the (f) is bad, what did you say the second room is?

Kyle: The second room is the alien-themed room.

Natasha: I don't think she would like either of those. Is there anything else available?

Kyle: I'm (g) not, that's all we have on Saturdays.

Natasha: Ok, that's a shame, I'll talk it over with her and (h) you back.

Kyle: No problem, is there anything (i) I can help you with?

Natasha: No that's fine, thanks for your help.

Kyle: Have a nice day.



- | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| (a) 1. here is | 2. I'm named | 3. my name is | 4. call me |
| (b) 1. appointment | 2. arrangement | 3. organisation | 4. internship |
| (c) 1. able | 2. available | 3. outside | 4. furnished |
| (d) 1. delete you | 2. wait for you | 3. put you on hold | 4. hold you |
| (e) 1. waiting | 2. the wait | 3. your wait | 4. wait |
| (f) 1. contrast | 2. voice | 3. connection | 4. dial |
| (g) 1. told | 2. instantly | 3. afraid | 4. definitely |
| (h) 1. ring | 2. rang | 3. rung | 4. wrong |
| (i) 1. extra | 2. else | 3. other | 4. on top |

3. Student A wants to make an appointment for a kid's Birthday party at *Fat Frank's Funland*. Student A call Student B and make an appointment with your schedules.

Student A:

WEEKLY PLANNER

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p style="text-align: center; color: #e67e22;">MONDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 9-11 go to the bank. - 4-5:30 Spanish class | <p style="text-align: center; color: #e67e22;">TUESDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8:30-11 dentist appointment - 12-2 lunch with mum | <p style="text-align: center; color: #e67e22;">WEDNESDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3:30-5 parent-teacher meeting | <p style="text-align: center; color: #e67e22;">THURSDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8-11 take Buddy to the vet |
| <p style="text-align: center; color: #e67e22;">FRIDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5:30-11 Movie night with Frank! | <p style="text-align: center; color: #e67e22;">SATURDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8am go jogging with Pam :(- Pack for the holiday! | <p style="text-align: center; color: #e67e22;">SUNDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 11am flight to Majorca, HOLIDAY!!! | <p style="text-align: center; color: #e67e22;">NOTES</p> |

Student B:

WEEKLY PLANNER

| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY | SUNDAY |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------|
| <p>12-4pm pirate party</p> | <p>8-10:30 birthday breakfast</p> | <p>Closed for renovations the whole day!</p> | <p>12-4pm princess party</p> <p>5-8pm animal party</p> | <p>1-5pm alien party</p> | <p>10-2pm pirate party</p> | |

4. Jack works for a company that delivers coffee to supermarkets. He urgently needs to talk with his contact in the supermarket about an important contract. Listen to the call and answer the questions.

- Why is Mr. Howard not in the office, and when will he be back? *He is on holiday and will be back on Monday*
- Why doesn't Jess give Jack Mr Howard's personal number? *She is not allowed to give out personal numbers*
- Why does Jess put Jack on hold? *She has a call on the other line.*
- Why does Jack need to get in contact with Mr Howard? *He needs a contract signed before he can deliver coffee to the supermarket.*
- Why doesn't Jack leave his email? *Mr Howard already has it because Jack has emailed him multiple times*

5. Jess wrote a message for Mr Howard but made 5 mistakes. Listen to the call again and correct the mistakes in the message below.

Urgent message for you John!

- Mr Jack ~~Cranspy~~ called from ~~Qual Tea and Coffee~~ **Cransby from Quality Coffee**
- He said you need to get back to him by ~~Thursday~~ about a contract. **Tuesday**
- Call him back on ~~04 198 55 642~~ **04198 555 642**
- He said he sent you several emails.
- Delivery could be delayed ~~by up to~~ 2 weeks. **More than 2 weeks**

Just to confirm...

One of the best ways to avoid mistakes like Jess made in the message above is to confirm all the information you are being given.

Eg. "My name is Toni, T-O-N-I"

"Ok so just to confirm, that was T-O-N-Y?"

"No sorry it's T-O-N-I, I for India."

If Jess had confirmed the information Jack was giving her, she could have avoided a lot of miscommunications.

Useful phrases for taking a message:

Hello, my name is how can I help you?

I'm afraid he / she isn't here at the moment

Would you like to leave a message?

Ok, let me just get a pen.

Ok could you spell that?

Ok, so just to confirm, that's correct?

Is there anything else I can help you with?1

Useful phrases for leaving a message:

Hi my name is..... can I speak to?

I'm just calling about

Could you please tell him/her that.....?

He/she can call me back on



6. Pairwork: Study the phrases above and call your partner to leave a message. Student A leaves the message, student B takes the message. When you have finished your call make sure student B has written down the details correctly.

Student A

Situation 1

You need to call your friend Toby and let him know that the address of your party has changed. The new address is 18 Hamperton Road. The party starts at 7pm, he should bring snacks.

Situation 2

You want to call an airline to see if you can cancel your tickets and get a refund. Ask for someone from the refund department to call you back on 04 7882 3614 or email you at jamieanderson49@yahoo.com

Situation 3

You want to book a hotel room but need to make sure they have a place for dogs to stay (you are travelling with your dog). They need to check with the manager and call you back. Your number is +61 198 667 326

Situation 4

You want to talk to your landlord because your heater is broken. Leave your name and number, and leave the address you stay at (68 Luftbringer rd). Ask him to call back as soon as possible.

Student B

Call 1

Name:

Reason for call:

.....

Contact:

.....

Call 2

Name:

Reason for call:

.....

Contact:

.....

Call 3

Name:

Reason for call:

.....

Contact:

.....

Call 4

Name:

Reason for call:

.....

Contact:

.....

Audio Transcript

Jess: Hello, welcome to Maxi Mart, my name is Jess, how can I help you?

Jack: Hi Jess, my name is Jack Cransby, I'm calling from Quality Coffee, Could I speak to John Howard?

Jess: Let me just check...I'm afraid he's not in the office at the moment, would you like to leave a message?

Jack: Do you know when he will be back?

Jess: I'm afraid he won't be back until Monday, he's taking 2 days off for a holiday.

Jack: I see... the problem I'm calling about is quite urgent, I really need to speak to him as soon as possible, could you give me his personal phone number?

Jess: I'm very sorry but we're not allowed to give out personal numbers here. If you leave a message with me, I will make sure he gets it as soon as possible.

Jack: Ok could you tell him that Jack Cramspy -

Jess: Sorry let me just get a pen... Ok Im ready

Jack: Could you tell Mr Howard that-

Jess: Oh I'm sorry Mr Cramspy, I have a call on the other line, do you mind holding?

Jack: No that's fine.

Long pause with bad music

Jess: Mr Cransby, are you still there?

Jack: Yes I am.

Jess: Ok, I'm sorry for the interruption, what is the message for Mr. Howard?

Jack: That's fine. Could you tell Mr Howard that we are missing a very important contract for the delivery. We cannot deliver the goods without this contract. We need Mr Howard to send us this contract by Tuesday at the latest, if he does not then the delivery will be delayed.

Jess: Ok, and could you spell your last name Mr Cramspy?

Jack: Sure, it's C-R-A-N-S-B-Y

Jess: Ok got it.

Jack: And can I leave my personal number so he can get in contact with me easier?

Jess: Sure, what's the number?

Jack: It's 04 198 555 642

Jess: Ok got it. Would you like to leave your email as well?

Jack: No thanks, I'm pretty sure he already has it, I've sent him about 5 emails about this

already.

Jess: And where did you say you were calling from?

Jack: Quality Coffee. Oh and could you please tell him that if he doesn't get us that contract as soon as possible, the deliveries could be delayed by more than 2 weeks.

Jess: Ok, I will let him know, is there anything else I can help you with Mr Cramspy?

Jack: No that should be everything, thanks for your help.