

# ENHANCING DELIVERY SERVICE: EFFECTIVE TELEPHONE



Communication and Language Studies Centre  
National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN)  
Public Service Department

## 1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will help participants learn techniques and skills and acquire knowledge and confidence to answer telephone calls in English and constructively respond to client enquiries and take messages effectively. It will also equip participants with skills to answer the telephone with proper etiquette.

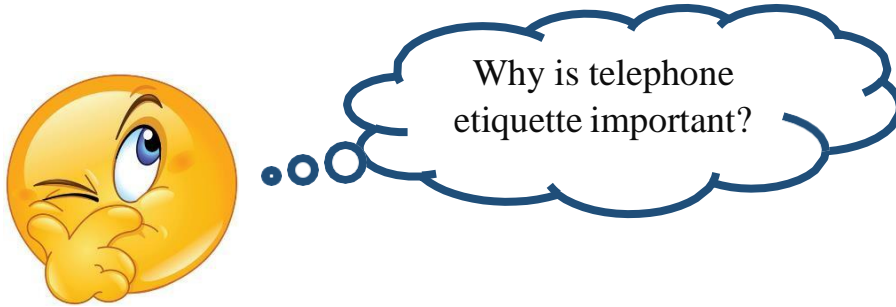
## 2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completion of the course, participants will be able to:

- improve their telephone skills;
- use effective techniques for using the telephone;
- develop better customer relations; and
- handle customer problems and complaints effectively.

### TIMETABLE

DAY 1		
TIME	TOPIC	METHODOLOGY
8.30 am – 9.30 am	Introduction & Course Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ice breaking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture</li> <li>• Role Play</li> <li>• Quiz</li> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul>
9.30 am – 10.30 am	Telephone Etiquette	
11.00 am – 12.30 pm	Telephone Skills 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Receiving calls</b></li> <li>○ <b>Making and taking calls</b></li> <li>○ <b>Taking messages</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture</li> <li>• Role Play</li> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul>
2.00 pm – 4.00 pm	Telephone Skills 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Asking for repetition and clarification</b></li> <li>○ <b>Asking the caller to wait</b></li> <li>○ <b>Ending the calls</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture</li> <li>• Role Play</li> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul>
DAY 2		
TIME	TOPIC	METHODOLOGY
8.30 am – 10.30 am	Telephone Skills 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Dealing with wrong number callers</b></li> <li>○ <b>Handling complaints and angry callers</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture</li> <li>• Role Play</li> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul>
11.00 am – 12.30 pm	Telephone Conversation 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Preparation &amp; Practise: Role play</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role Play</li> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul>
2.00 pm – 4.00pm	Telephone Conversation 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Role play activities</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role play</li> </ul>

**DAY 1: TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE****SESSION 1: 9.30 a.m. – 10.30 a.m.**

- You are the first person a caller hears
- Positive image of your department is formed
- Shows professionalism of the receiver
- Department's reputation is enhanced
- There is positive word of mouth

**TASK 1**


► Listen to the following telephone conversations. With a partner, discuss and then write down the dos and don'ts of answering a business call.

DOs	DON'Ts

**DAY 1: TELEPHONE SKILLS 1**  
**SESSION 2: 11.00 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.**


**1. RECEIVING CALLS**

**Answering at a switchboard (Operator)**

 *You say...*


Good morning Good afternoon Hello	BPP. Housing Loan Division. Accounts Section.	May I help you? Could I help you? Can I help you?
---	---	---

**Answering in an office**

 *You say...*

Hello, Good morning, Good afternoon, Good evening,	Accounts Section. Dato' Azman's office. Legal Section.
---	--

**Requesting identity**

 *You say...*

Who's calling, please? Who's speaking, please? Can I have your name, please? May I ask who's calling? Who's calling him/her? Who shall I say is calling?
---

 *You hear...*

This is Mr. Rodney King Abdullah. Robert Lim Abdullah speaking.
--

**Asking the caller to hold**

☛ *You say...*

Hold the line, please Hold on, please One moment, please Just a moment, please Please hold.	
The line's engaged at the moment. The line's busy at the moment. He's/she's speaking on the other line.	Will you hold? Please hold the line. Do you want to stay on the line?
How may I direct your call? Would you mind holding for a moment? Stay on the line, please while I connect your call. Certainly. Please hold the line while I transfer your call.	

**Connecting the caller**

☛ *You say...*

I'll put you through to I'll connect you with	the Accountant General's office. the officer in charge. the IT technician.
I'm putting you through. You're through. Go ahead. It's ringing for you. Thank you for holding. I'm connecting you now.	

**PRACTICE 1**

► *Listen and practise the following dialogues.*

**Dialogue 1**

Michelle: Hello, you've reached the marketing department. How can I help?  
 Male: Yes, can I speak to Rosalind Wilson, please?  
 Michelle: Who's calling, please?  
 Male: It's Richard Davies here.  
 Michelle: Certainly. Please hold and I'll put you through.  
 Male: Thank you.

**Dialogue 2**

Michelle: Hello, marketing. How can I help?  
 Male: Could I speak to Jason Roberts, please?  
 Michelle: Certainly. Who shall I say is calling?  
 Male: My name's Mike Andrews.  
 Michelle: Just a second - I'll see if he's in. Hello, Jason, I've got Mike Andrews on the phone for you ... Okay - I'll put him through. Hang on a moment, I'm just putting you through.

**PRACTICE 2**

*Practise the following dialogues.*

**R:** Receiver    **C:** Caller

**Dialogue 1**

- R: Good morning. Accounts Section. May I help you?  
 C: Good morning. May I speak with Encik Ismail, please?  
 R: Who's speaking, please?  
 C: This is Nor Jamaludin from Majlis Amanah Rakyat.  
 R: One moment, please ... I'll connect you.

**Dialogue 2**

- R: Good afternoon. Process and Payment Section. Can I help you?  
 C: Good afternoon. Can I speak to Puan Suhaila Mohammad, please?  
 R: May I know who's on the line, please?  
 C: This is Lim Ah Soo.  
 R: Hold the line, please... I'll connect you.

**Dialogue 3**

- R: Hello. Law Section.  
 C: Good morning. I'd like to speak to the person in charge, please.  
 R: He's speaking on the other line. Do you want to wait?  
 C: Yes, I'll hold.  
 R: (After a few moments) I'm putting you through.

**Dialogue 4**

- R: Good morning. Accounts Section. How may I help you?  
 C: Good morning. I would like to find out how long is the process to prepare the cheque?  
 R: Hold the line, please while I check.  
 C: Thank you.  
 R: Ma'am, the cheque will be ready within 3 working days.  
 C: That's great. Thank you.  
 R: You're welcome. Good bye.

**TASK 1**

*Look at the grammar summary. Then, decide if sentences 1-10 are correct  or incorrect .*

*Can I speak to someone about + **noun/verb + -ing***  
*I'm calling about + **noun/verb + -ing***  
*It's with regard to + **noun/verb + -ing***  
*It's about + **noun/verb + -ing***  
*I'm calling because of + **noun***  
*I'd like to + **infinitive***  
*I'm calling to + **infinitive***

1. Is there someone I can speak to about applying for the course? ( )
2. There's someone on the line calling about the new job. ( )
3. I'm calling arrange a meeting. ( )
4. It's with regard to place an order. ( )

5. It's about my application. ( )
6. I'm calling because of requesting a brochure. ( )
7. I like speaking to someone about the project. ( )
8. I'd like to have a chat. ( )
9. I'm calling to ask for some information. ( )
10. It's with regard to your request for a brochure. ( )


## TASK 2

*You call a person but her colleague answers. Look at 1-8. What do you say?*

1. Ask to speak to Puan Vasagie in Bahagian Kewangan.
2. Give your name.
3. Give your reason for calling.
4. Ask when Puan Vasagie will be back.
5. Ask to leave a message.
6. Say you want her to call you back on your mobile.
7. Give your mobile number.
8. Thank the person.

## 2. MAKING AND TAKING CALLS

### Requesting a particular person or service

 *You say...*


May I I'd like to Could I Can I	speak to Mr. Harold Lee, please? speak to the Counsellor, please? speak to director, please? have the Counsellor's Office, please?
Put me through to the Administration Department, please.	

### Identifying yourself

You want to give your name or the name of your ministry/department in answer to a request for identity.

 *You hear...*

Who's calling, please?
------------------------

 *You say...*

This is	Mazliana, from Extradition Unit.
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I'm calling on behalf of Kamal Baharin.  
I'm calling from the Extradition Unit, AG Chambers.

If you do not wish to give your name

🗨️ *You say...*

It's a personal call.  
It's confidential.

👂 *You hear...*

Hold the line, please.  
One moment, please.  
I'll put you through.  
I'll connect you.

### PRACTICE 3

*Practise the following dialogues.*

**R** = Receiver                      **C** = Caller

#### Dialogue 1

- R: Good morning. Maritime, Territorial Matters and Civil Aviation Unit. May I help you?  
C: Good morning. May I speak with Ms. Fauza, please?  
R: Who's speaking, please?  
C: This is Mark Spade from the US Embassy.  
R: One moment, please... I'll connect you.

#### Dialogue 2

- R: Good afternoon. IAD Special Task Force. Can I help you?  
C: Good afternoon. Can I speak to Mr. Alfian, please?  
R: May I know who's on the line, please?  
C: This is Col. Tan Yee Mee from the Singapore High Commission.  
R: Hold the line, please... I'll connect you.

#### Dialogue 3

- R: Hello. Human Rights Units.  
C: Good morning. I'd like to speak to Mr. Anuar, please.  
R: He's speaking on the other line. Do you want to wait?  
C: Yes, I'll hold.  
R: (After a few moments) I'm putting you through.



**Informing caller of non-availability**

If the person being called is not in

☛ *You say...*

Sir/Madam, I'm sorry I'm afraid I'm terribly sorry	Puan Asda is the officer is he's she's	away on business on a business trip in Singapore out of town not in not in the office out	at the moment. at present. right now. just now.
		gone out for lunch. just gone out.	

**PRACTICE 4**

*Practise the following dialogues.*

**R:** Receiver    **C:** Caller

**Dialogue 1**

- R: Good morning. Enforcement Section.  
 C: Good morning. Can I speak to Puan Juliana, please?  
 R: I'm sorry, Puan Juliana is away on business at present.  
 C: Oh, when will she be back?  
 R: She should be back on May 9. Can anybody else help you?  
 C: No, thank you. I'll call back later.

**Dialogue 2**

- R: Good morning. Treasury Department.  
 C: Good morning. I'd like to speak to the person in charge, please.  
 R: One moment, please. I'll see if she's in... Hello, I'm sorry the person in charge is away on a course. Can somebody else help you?  
 C: Yes, can I speak to her assistant?  
 R: Certainly, I'll put you through.

**TASK 3**

*Tell the caller that the person he/she wants to speak to is not in.*

A: Hello. Could I speak to Encik Wan Ariff, please?

B: .....

A: Good morning. Could I speak with the Senior Federal Counsel?

B: .....

A: Good afternoon. May I speak with Mr. Kamal?

B: .....

**TASK 4**

*What would you say to the caller in the following situations?*

The person the caller wants to speak to is not in. The caller asks if another person could assist him/her.

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

The person the caller wants to speak to is not in. You inform the caller that you'll get another officer to assist him/her.

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

The person the caller wants to speak to is not in. The caller asks if you could assist him. You cannot assist him so you inform him appropriately.

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

**3. TAKING MESSAGES**

**🗨** *You say...*

- Can I take a message?
- May I take a message?
- Would you like to leave a message?
- Can I ask her to call you?
- Can I give him a message?



**👂** *You hear...*

No, thank you, I'll call back later.  
 Yes, would you let him know that I called? This is Mr. Tim McGraw.


**🗨** *You say...*

Of course,   can I have your name and number, please?

Certainly, Yes,	where can he contact you? what number are you calling from? we already have your number.
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 *You hear...*

This is Ms. Helena Rubenstein, and my number is 987 6296.

 *You say...*

Thank you. Right.	I'll ask her to phone you as soon as she comes in. I'll give him the message. I'll ask him to call you as soon as he's in. I'll let him know when he comes in.
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## PRACTICE 5

► *Listen and practise the following dialogue.*

- Claire: Hello, finance department.  
 Jennifer: Hello, can I speak to Adrian Hopwood, please?  
 Claire: I'm afraid he's in a meeting at the moment. Can I help?  
 Jennifer: No, I need to talk to Mr Hopwood, I think. What time will he be out of the meeting?  
 Claire: In about an hour. Can you call back later?  
 Jennifer: Okay, I'll do that.  
 Claire: Or can I take a message?  
 Jennifer: Actually, would you mind? Could you tell him that Jennifer McAndrews called and that I'm in the office all day if he could call me back.  
 Claire: Can I take your number, please?  
 Jennifer: Yes, it's 555 6872  
 Claire: 555 6872. Okay, I'll make sure he gets the message.  
 Jennifer: Thanks very much for your help, bye!  
 Claire: Goodbye!

## PRACTICE 6

*Practise the following dialogues.*

### Dialogue 1

- R: Good afternoon. Legal Section.  
 C: Good afternoon. May I speak to Puan Muhaini, please?  
 R: I'm afraid Puan Muhaini is in Singapore at the moment.  
 C: Could you tell me when she'll be back?  
 R: She'll be back next week. May I take a message?  
 C: Yes, could she call me back as soon as possible?  
 R: Of course. May I have your name and number, please?  
 C: My name is Mel Pereira and my number is 675 4354.  
 R: Thank you. 675 4354. I'll give Puan Muhaini the message.

C: Thanks very much.  
R: You're welcome.

**Dialogue 2**

R: Good morning. Internal Audit Unit.  
C: Good morning. May I speak to Encik Zuraimi, please?  
R: One moment, please... I'm sorry Encik Zuraimi is not in the office at the moment. May I take a message?  
C: No, thank you. What time do you think he'll be in?  
R: He said he would be back in at 3.00 this afternoon.  
C: Oh, I'll call back later. Thank you.

**PRACTICE 7**

► *Listen and practise the following dialogue.*

Michelle: Mr Hibberd's office!  
Peter: Hello, can I speak to Brian Hibberd, please?  
Michelle: I'm afraid he's in a meeting until lunchtime. Can I take a message?  
Peter: Well, I'd like to arrange an appointment to see him, please. It's Peter Jefferson here.  
Michelle: Could you hold on for a minute, Mr Jefferson. I'll just look in the diary. So when's convenient for you?  
Peter: Some time next week if possible. I gather he's away the following week.  
Michelle: Yes, that's right, he's on holiday for a fortnight.  
Peter: Well, I need to see him before he goes away. So would next Wednesday be okay?  
Michelle: Wednesday ...let me see ... he's out of the office all morning. But he's free in the afternoon, after about three.  
Peter: Three o'clock is difficult. But I could make it after four.  
Michelle: So shall we say 4.15 next Wednesday, in Mr Hibberd's office?  
Peter: Yes, that sounds fine. Thanks very much.  
Michelle: Okay, then. Bye.

**TASK 5**

*Match reasons 1-10 with phrases a-j.*

	<b>REASONS</b>		<b>PHRASES</b>
1	Ask the caller to wait.	a	Can I take a message?
2	Say you're ready to start.	b	Sorry, one moment?
3	Check the spelling.	c	I'm just getting a pen.
4	Check a difficult spelling.	d	OK. Go ahead.
5	Offer to take a message.	e	As in M-A-R-T-H-A?
6	Check the message.	f	Can you spell that, please?
7	Give a reason for waiting.	g	Is that 'M' as in Malaysia.
8	Check if that's the end of the message.	h	What's it about?
9	Ask for the spelling.	i	I'll read that back to you.
10	Find out the reason for the call.	j	Anything else?

**TASK 6**

*The telephone language below is inappropriate. Replace it with a more appropriate language.*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Inappropriate</b>	<b>Appropriate</b>
1.	He has gone out.	
2.	International Affairs Division here.	
3.	You can call the Extradition Unit. The extension is 123.	
4.	Call back later.	
5.	Who is this?	
6.	You wait.	
7.	You have to write in officially	
8.	Hello. Speak up I can't hear you.	
9.	Wrong number.	
10.	Don't come. We're closed.	
11.	He's not in the office yet.	
12.	She has gone to the bank.	
13.	Bye-bye.	
14.	It's not ready.	
15.	What is your name?	
16.	I don't know where he is.	
17.	Who?	
18.	Call back in 10 minutes. I'll find out.	
19.	You want to speak to who?	
20.	No one is in the office right now. I'm the only one here.	
21.	Yes?	
22.	Call back later.	
23.	I don't know.	
24.	I'm new here.	

**TASK 7**

*Work with a partner. Write a short telephone dialogue about a situation you encounter every day at work.*

**DAY 1: TELEPHONE SKILLS 2****SESSION 3: 2.00 p.m. – 4.00 p.m.****1. ASKING CALLER FOR REPETITION**☛ *You say...*

Pardon me?
Excuse me?
Say again?
I beg your pardon?
I'm sorry. Could you repeat that, please?
Please repeat that.
Could you say that again, please?
Would you mind repeating that?
Could you say that one more time, please?
I'm sorry. I didn't catch that.

**Notes: Intonation** is an important indication of politeness. You can make these phrases sound very polite or quite aggressive.

**PRACTICE 1**

*Do these pairs of sentences mean the same thing or something different? Write (S) same or (D) different.*

- Speak up, please. / Speak more loudly, please. ( )
- Speak more slowly, please. / Please hold a moment. ( )
- I did not catch that. / I could not hear that. ( )
- I could not hear you, I'm afraid. / I didn't understand what you mean. ( )
- Can you read that back to me? / Can you take a message? ( )
- Let me read that back to you. / Let me just check I have got that. ( )
- Would you mind repeating that? / Can you call me back? ( )
- Sorry, you have lost me. / I did not understand you, I'm afraid. ( )

**Asking Caller to Speak Slowly or Louder**☛ *You say...***Slowly**

Please speak a little more slowly.
Could you please speak slowly?
Would you mind not speaking so fast?
I'm sorry, Sir/Madam, you are speaking too fast. Could you speak slowly?

**Louder**

Sir/Madam, please speak a little louder.
Could you please speak a little louder, Sir/Madam?
Would you mind speaking a little more loudly?
I'm sorry, I can't hear you. Please speak a little louder.

**2. ASKING THE CALLER TO WAIT**

**CAN YOU SAY “NO?”**

**Tips:**

If you are busy, remember these simple techniques:

- Switch on your voicemail
- Ask them to call back later

☛ *You say...*

Please hold. I’m putting you through right now.  
 Are you OK to wait a couple of minutes or do you want to call back?  
 Just bear with me a moment.  
 I’ll be with you in a second or two.  
 Hang on a second.  
 Can you give me a minute or so?

**TASK 1**

*What do you say when you put calls on hold?*

1. Ask if you may place the caller on hold before doing so.  
 .....  
 .....
2. If you need to be away for more than 30 seconds. Return and ask.  
 .....  
 .....

**3. ENDING THE CALLS**

☛ *You say...*

Thank you for calling. Your order for overnight delivery has been placed and you can expect it to be delivered within the next 24 hours.  
 Thanks for calling – I have another phone call so I will need to let you go.  
 Thank-you for calling. We very much appreciate your order and it has been a pleasure doing business with you.  
 If you find you need additional assistance, please call us back at 800-333-1212.  
 Thanks for calling and have a great day, Mr. Edward.

**Tips:**

- Thank the caller for calling and summarize what you did for the customer.

- If you have another customer waiting in line, tell him/her about the situation.
- Let the caller know you appreciate their business.
- Offer to help in the future by letting the customer know how to contact you or your company.
- Say goodbye but always let the caller hang up first.

**TASK 2**

*What do you say when you have to end calls?*

1. You don't want to take up too much of the caller's time

.....  
 .....

2. It's a pleasure talking to the caller. Arrange to meet soon.

.....  
 .....

**TASK 3**

*Role play the following situations.*

**Role Play A: Requesting Travel Information**

Student A:

Choose a city in your country. You are going to travel to this city for a business meeting over the next weekend. Telephone a travel agency and reserve the following:

- Round-trip flight
- Hotel room for two nights
- Restaurant recommendation
- Prices and departure times

Student B:

You work in a travel agency. Listen to student A and offer him/her the following solutions:

- Round-trip flight: Air Asia for business class - RM150, economy class - RM85
- Hotel room for two nights: JC Hotel RM120 a night in the downtown area, Great Swan Hotel RM 110 a night near the airport
- Restaurant Recommendation: Mummy's Kitchen - downtown – serve fusion dishes - average price RM70 per person



**Role Play B: Product Information**

Student A:

You need to purchase six new computers for your office. Call JA's Computer World and ask for the following information:

- Current special offers on computers
- Guarantee
- Possibility of discount for an order of six computers

Student B:

You work in at JA's Computer World answer student A's questions using the following information:

- Two special offers: Acer - with latest Pentium CPU, 256 RAM, 40 GB Hard Drive, Monitor included - RM2,500 **AND** HP (intel) - cheaper CPU, 64 RAM, 10 GB Hard Drive, Monitor not included - RM1,200
- 1-year guarantee on all computers
- Discount of 5% for orders of more than five computers

**Role Play C: Leaving a Message**

Student A:

You want to speak to Puan Saliha about an upcoming Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) project. If Puan Saliha isn't in the office, leave the following information:

- Your name
- Telephone number: 347 8910 (or use your own)
- Ask the receptionist to inform Puan Saliha to contact you back
- You can be reached until 5 o'clock at the above number. If Puan Saliha calls after 5 o'clock, she should call 458 2416

Student B:

You are a receptionist. Student A would like to speak to Puan Saliha, but she is out of the office. Take a message and make sure you get the following information:

- Name and telephone number - ask student A to spell the surname
- Message student A would like to leave for Puan Saliha
- How late Puan Saliha can call student A at the given telephone number

**Role Play D: Selling Your Product**

Student A:

You are a salesperson for Red Inc. You are telephoning a client who you think might be interested in buying your new line of office supplies. Discuss the following information with your client:

- New line of office supplies including: copy-paper, pens, stationary, mousepads and white boards
- You know the customer hasn't ordered any new products during this past year
- Special discount of 15% for orders placed before next Monday

Student B:

You work in an office and receive a telephone call from your local office supplier. As a matter of fact, you need some new office supplies so you are definitely interested in what the salesperson has to offer. Talk about the following:

- New pens, stationary and white boards
- Do they have any special offers?
- You would like to place an order for 200 packages of copy paper immediately (before next Monday)

### **Role Play E: Calls from the Employer**

Student A:

Your boss is on a business trip. He/she is giving you (secretary) an order to complete few tasks. These are the things you must do:

- Reserve an appointment for a meeting with an external stakeholder
- Remind the sales team to prepare a report on the company's performance
- Book a ticket flight back from the business trip

Student B:

You are a department manager. You are away on business. You have asked your assistant to do these things while you're away:

- Reserve an appointment for a meeting with an external stakeholder – date will be on three days after your return, place will be at a five-star hotel
- Remind the sales team to prepare a report on the company's performance – the team must prepare the report and present to the board of directors this week
- Book a ticket flight back from the business trip - business class only

**DAY 2: TELEPHONE SKILLS 3**  
**SESSION 1: 8.30 a.m. – 10.30 a.m.**

**1. DEALING WITH WRONG NUMBER**

Sometimes people dial the wrong number. How would you respond to a situation like that in your job? Share your experience with the class.

**TASK 1**

► *Listen to the following conversations. Fill in the blanks with the most appropriate phrases.*

**Dialogue 1**

Male: Hello, this is the press office.  
 Michelle: Rachel Allsop please.  
 Male: I'm sorry,\_\_\_\_\_. There's no-one of that name here.  
 Michelle: Oh. Can I check the number I've got... is that not \_\_\_\_\_?  
 Male: \_\_\_\_\_,\_\_\_\_\_5558790.  
 Michelle: Oh sorry about that.\_\_\_\_\_.  
 Male: No problem! Bye!

**Dialogue 2**

Male: Hello, press office,\_\_\_\_\_?  
 Ruth: Hello. Paul Richards, please.  
 Male: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, but he does work here.\_\_\_\_\_. In future\_\_\_\_\_.  
 Ruth: Did I not dial that?  
 Male: No you rang 5558790.  
 Ruth: Oh,\_\_\_\_\_.  
 Male: No problem. Hang on a moment and I'll put you through to Paul's extension.  
 Ruth: Thanks.

**2. HANDLING COMPLAINTS AND ANGRY CALLERS**

**A. How to handle complaints and angry callers?**

These are some of the steps to handle complaints and angry callers:

- a) Listen to your customer
- b) Pacify him/her
- c) Empathise with him/her
- d) Ask questions
- e) Provide feedback and summarise
- f) Suggest some alternatives
- g) Come to an agreement

**TASK 2**

With a partner, write a simple dialogue and do a role-play of the following situations. You may choose either Situation 1 or Situation 2. Use the following stages that you have learnt to deal effectively with the caller.

**Situation 1:**

You are an officer from a local council. A caller complains to you about the problems created by some foreigners who live in your residential area. The details of the complaint are as follows:

- they are loud and noisy
- many others would visit their friends during weekends to attend parties
- park cars irresponsibly
- loud rock and roll music throughout the night
- behave rowdily
- throw trash and sometimes bottles with broken glasses
- need peace and quiet
- cannot sleep or rest

**Situation 2:**

You are a supervisor. Someone calls you to complain about the rude and unfriendly staff working at the counter. The details of the complaint are as follows:

- staff busy talking to another person while attending to her
- staff made a mistake in the calculations
- she has to point out to the staff the mistake
- the staff was very offended by that and told her
- the staff didn't apologise for her mistake

**B. What should you say?**

Lodging a complaint				
Look Look here Listen	I'm	sorry but	.....	
			.....	
	I	not satisfied with .....	not happy with .....	really must complaint about .....
Responding to a complaint				
I apologize I'm sorry		for the inconvenience,	Mr. ... Mrs. ... Ms. ... sir. madam.	I'll look into it straight away. I'll attend to it immediately.
		about that,	what you mean.	

	I	understand	how you feel. your problem.
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**TASK 3**

The telephone language below is inappropriate. Replace each one with a more appropriate language.

Inappropriate	Appropriate
1. MINDEF.	
2. Call back later.	
3. Who is this?	
4. You wait.	
5. Wrong number?	
6. He not yet come.	
7. She has gone to the bank.	
8. Bye-bye.	
9. What is your name?	
10. I don't know where he is.	
11. Auntie/Uncle	
12. You want to speak to who?	

**C. Improve the way you serve**

Being vigilant with your words can help you score in customer service. Unfortunately, even with the best intention in the world, many people sabotage their own efforts through miscommunication. They believe they are being helpful, and perhaps they truly are, but their choice of words conveys another message.

**TASK 4**

Write down the polite way of saying the following phrases.

Not so good	Better
That's not my responsibility!	

I want to talk to the boss right now!	
Sorry to keep you waiting.	
I will have to see what I can do.	
I don't know I am new here.	
Can you write a letter?	
I'm sorry I'm busy right now.	
Can't you read? The instructions are given on the website.	

**TASK 5**

► You will watch a video. As you watch, list some of the language expressions based on the functions that Paul uses when dealing with Mrs. Decker. You may refer to Transcript 1 below.

- a. To greet \_\_\_\_\_
- b. To introduce \_\_\_\_\_
- c. To apologise \_\_\_\_\_
- d. To offer \_\_\_\_\_
- e. To request \_\_\_\_\_
- f. To empathise \_\_\_\_\_
- g. To promise \_\_\_\_\_
- h. To reassure \_\_\_\_\_
- i. To empathise \_\_\_\_\_
- j. To summarise \_\_\_\_\_
- k. To suggest alternatives \_\_\_\_\_
- l. To ask for preference \_\_\_\_\_

## TRANSCRIPT 1

- Paul: Oh, hi. Sorry for keeping you waiting, my name is Paul. How may I help you?
- Mrs D: No, you tell me! I'm Mrs. Decker. I bought these shoes last week for my daughter's wedding. This morning I tried them on. Before I could walk to the mirror, the heel broke. I have a wedding this Saturday. My dress is fine. The shoe is dead. I'm sick and tired...
- P: Mrs. Decker, could you come over here and discuss this please? Look, you must be upset. I'm really sorry this happened.
- M: You being sorry doesn't put new shoes on my feet. What kind of place is this? No one cares about quality anymore.
- P: I know and I'm going to do everything I can to correct this situation.
- M: It's going to make me furious.
- P: I'd be too, Mrs. Decker. I'm sure we can work this out. Do you mind if I ask you some questions?
- M: Hurry up! The wedding is Saturday.
- P: It'll just take a few minutes. When did you buy the shoes? Do you by any chance have the receipt?
- M: Tuesday and Yes!
- P: Oh, I see. You bought it on sale.
- M: That's true. So what? It's still no good. You can't sell customers lousy shoes just because they're on sale. I'm tired of this.
- P: You know I can just imagine how frustrating this must be. I mean with all you have to do to get ready for your daughter's wedding, you don't really want to go around returning shoes.
- M: I do have one or two more things to do.
- P: Just to be sure I understood correctly. You bought the shoes on Tuesday and tried them on the first time today. They broke and you need them by the end of the week. Since they are on sale, you're worried that you won't be able to return them.
- M: Well they're certainly not wearable.
- P: Mrs. Decker, I wish I could give you a cash refund but we since the shoes were purchased on sale, we can't do that. But here's what we can do. We can exchange it for another pair, we can give you a credit slip or we can repair for you at no expense. Now that might be your best way to go since you need the shoes for the wedding. Now which would you prefer?
- M: Can you repair them today?
- P: We can send them back on a rush for you and have them back a day after tomorrow which should be plenty of time for you.
- M: Alright. Now you're absolutely sure they'll be here tomorrow.
- P: They'll be here 9.00 am sharp I promise. Please ask for me when you come in to pick them up.
- M: Thank you, I will.
- P: Thank you, Mrs. Decker. And again I'm really sorry this happened. We'll see you a day after tomorrow.
- M: Thank you again.