

When I'm Calling You -

a procedure for answering the telephone consistently well.



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Answering the Telephone

The telephone must be answered at the end of the third ring - too soon and the caller is surprised - later and the caller becomes impatient. Consistency is important.

Everybody should answer the telephone with same greeting which must be professional, enthusiastic and warm.

"Good morning, Anyco , James speaking." (Giving your name is important - particularly to regular callers who think that two people sound the same over the phone)

If callers want to speak to a named person and they are in the office and not on the phone.

"Certainly, I'll just put you through. Who's calling please"

If you know the caller - have a chat first if that is their style then put the call through.

(Avoid phrases like "I'll see if he's free" - "bear with me")

If the *called* person is in a meeting with a customer or on the phone:-

"He is in the office but he is with a customer/ on the telephone at the moment. Can I take a message or ask him to call you back?"

Always make a written record of these calls and then make sure you tell the *called* person that they missed a call and the name of the person who has called, even if the caller did not leave a message and did not ask to be called back.

If caller asks for or agrees to a call back, say "he knows the number" - ask for it anyway - it may have got lost.

If called person is in an internal meeting :-

Check before meeting what to do with calls. Even if calls are to be held, never say "He is in a meeting" or worse "He is a bit busy at the moment" or even worse "He's a bit tied up at the moment" - it give rise to unwelcome speculation!

The only reason for anyone not to take a call is that either they are out or in a meeting with a customer or on the phone to a customer.

Always ask if you or another person can help with the enquiry?

If called person is out of the office:-

Sound as though you know where he is and when he will be available. Best to say something more than "He is out"!

Try "I am sorry but he's out of the office today/at the moment and I am expecting him back at around (time) - **can I help** or get him to call you?"

Take number and good time to call when you know it will be possible.

Always offer a call back and don't leave the initiative with the caller **unless they are obviously selling something** - then you can let them call you again.

Write down every call on a duplicate message pad, recording time of call, initials of who took the call, the message and return number. Always check the return number by repeating it back to the caller for confirmation.

As a matter of routine, physically check with the called person, that messages have been received and acted on by using the master message pad and checking with the team every few days. Mark the master pad to show that the check has been made.

(The reason for this is - you may pass a message - we try to call the person back but they are engaged or out or something else - they ring back thinking we have not tried and it looks good if you can say you passed the message, and I know he has tried to call you but you were out, busy, etc)

General Rules

- Always make it sound as though this is the first call you have answered today (after two cups of coffee)
- Practise your voice tone and pitch to sound enthusiastic
- Always expect a customer who is going to spend millions with you
- Most callers form an impression of YOU and the COMPANY on how you sound when you answer the phone - How you sound is VERY, VERY IMPORTANT particularly to a first time caller.
- Always write down who called even if there is no message
- Always take a telephone number
- Always check messages have been received and dealt with.

This procedure is an extract from the operations manual that Jim Scott developed for his B2B telemarketing business and is one of many proven systems and processes that he uses to help his clients to run their own businesses with less direct, daily intervention. If you would like to know more about how Jim can help you to a Bigger Better Business that is easier to run, more fun to run and more profitable, please get in touch