

Module 6 – Telephone Practice

Center for Learning and Teaching

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| 1. Telephone Reminders | p. 2 |
| 2. Telephone Role-Plays | p. 3 |
| 3. Telephone Summary | p. 12 |

1. Telephone Reminders

Checklist

Before the call

Prepare well before you call.
Plan what you want to say.
Prepare answers to possible questions.
Send an e-mail before the call, if necessary.
Have all information available.

Beginning the call

Make a greeting and identify yourself clearly.
Ask for connection to the person you want to speak to.
After connection, greet the person.
Smalltalk
Give a reason for the call.

During the call

Create a positive atmosphere.
Communicate your objective clearly.
Listen—make sure you understand.
Check—make sure the other person understands you.

Ending the call

Confirm the result of the call.
End politely and positively.

2. Telephone Role-Plays

Below are a number of telephone role-plays. They are divided into administrative departments.

1. International Faculty (2 Role-Plays)
2. Academic Affairs (2 Role-Plays)
3. Welfare (2 Role-Plays)
4. Your Phone Calls (2 Role-Plays)

Please work through each role-play with your partner. Please follow the instructions for each role-play carefully. Please plan your call before you pick up the phone.

1. International Faculty

Role-Play 1

Staff

You need to call a Professor in the American Studies Department and tell him there is a problem with his visa and he needs to go to Japan next week (at his own expense) to get a visa extension.

Be polite and instructional.

Plan

Faculty

You receive a call from Head Office informing you of a visa problem and that you must go to Japan next weekend at your own expense to get a visa extension.

Be shocked, argumentative, seek explanations why this problem happened and why you have to pay for this trip, try to find an alternative solution.

Notes

Role Play 2

Faculty

You need to phone the Housing Office and complain that the electricity is not working in your room and that you received no notification from the office about this problem in advance.

Be aggressive, dominant and demand an apology and explanation.

Plan

Staff

You will receive a phone call from an angry faculty member regarding electricity problems. Explain to the Professor that there is maintenance being carried out on campus and that the electricity is off today. The power outage was advertised online and posted on the dorm noticeboard in Korean.

Be polite and apologetic.

Notes

2. Academic Affairs

Role-Play 3

Staff

You need to phone a Professor in KAC because he went over his grade curve in all classes. He did not stick to the curve system and in each class he went over the curve with 4-5 students. You will need to inform the Professor that he will need to change his grades of this will reflect badly on his possibility for promotion and his department's funding.

Plan

Faculty

You will receive a phone call from the Academic Affairs complaining about your grading. They will argue that you exceeded your grade limits in all classes and that you need to change your grades. You cannot do this however because, you don't want to and it is already too late to change your grades. Find a compromise.

Please be defensive and defend your grading and grading system.

Notes

Role-Play 4

Faculty

You telephone the Academic Affairs office because you want to be out of Korea longer, and don't want to come back to Korea 2 weeks before the semester starts; this is not stated on your contract and you were never told this before you signed your contract. Your chair is demanding that you come back to Korea 2 weeks before semester starts.

Be argumentative and defensive about your needs.

Plan

Staff

You will get a phone call from a Professor asking for clarification on university policy regarding vacation period and length of allowed stay outside Korea. You will need to explain the policy and contractual obligations to the Professor.

Be informative.

Notes

3. Welfare

Role-Play 5

Staff

You need to call a Professor and let her know that more tax will be deducted from her salary this month, as she owed tax from last year. It is February. Explain why this has happened, clearly, with tax rates and information.

Plan

Faculty

You will receive a phone call informing you that you will be taxed more in tomorrow's pay. You don't understand why and need explanations. You feel you have paid all your taxes to date and can't understand this situation.

Be unaccepting of this situation and demand tax information.

Notes

Role-Play 6

Faculty

Your wife is recently unemployed and depends on your salary. You have one child. Your wife's parents are also over 65 years of age. You want to know if they can be listed as dependents under your health insurance scheme, therefore giving you tax breaks in February.

Be questioning, and polite.

Plan

Staff

You will receive a phone call asking you for information regarding family dependents on a Professor's health insurance, the possibility of this and the possible tax breaks the Professor could receive due to these additions to his insurance.

Be informative, polite and clear.

Notes

4. Your Phone Calls

Role-Play 7

Staff

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Plan

Faculty

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Role-Play 8

Staff

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Plan

Faculty

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3. Telephone Summary

DO

- plan the call thoroughly. Have clear objectives.
- send an e-mail before you call when necessary.
- anticipate what the other person will say. Prepare your responses.
- have all necessary information at hand.
- refer to this book for essential phrases.
- e-mail ahead to allow the person time to prepare.
- smile when you phone. Be polite and agreeable.
- check that your respondent is free to talk.
- be efficient. You are representing your company.
- use questions to identify key issues.
- be concise. Time is money.
- listen actively. Confirm regularly that you understand.
- stand up. It gives you more authority.
- speak clearly and slowly.
- allow people to finish what they are saying.
- handle complaints politely.
- avoid complex language.
- check that the other person understands.
- take notes during a call. Write them up afterwards.
- send a follow-up e-mail to confirm.
- finish with a positive phrase.

DON'T

- call if you are unprepared.
- assume your respondent is available to talk when you call.
- lose control if someone becomes aggressive.
- forget that you represent the company on the phone.
- waste time.
- pretend to understand.
- assume the person has understood everything.
- interrupt.
- rely on your memory for important details.
- forget to write down important details.
- put the receiver down too quickly. It can seem rude.