

A 5-step guide to answering the phone professionally

1

Prepare



Ensure you're familiar with your phone system, how to put calls on hold, transfer and hang-up properly. Plan what you're going to say when you pick up the phone and how you're going to introduce yourself, keep it consistent to avoid getting flustered. Get ready to type up messages and notes onto your computer so they don't get lost!

2

First impressions count!



Try to answer the phone within 3 rings to give you a bit of time to focus and get in the zone, while still coming across as responsive and immediately available. Answer the phone by introducing yourself and your business. Callers want to know they've reached the right company and the right department first time round.

3

Be happy



The happier you sound the better impression you'll leave the customer with. This can be easier said than done, we can't be happy all of the time. You may be having a bad day, or just got off a bad call, we suggest answering every call with a smile (even if it is forced) it'll help you come across as positive and up-beat on the phone.

4

Remain polite and professional



Everyone has dealt with difficult calls in the past, whether it's due to struggling with a difficult complaint, a complex sale or simply a rude customer. It's important to remember that remaining calm and polite can help offset any irritation from the customer.

5

Be honest



You might not have an answer or a resolution and you may need to call the customer back. Ensure you admit you don't know something rather than giving false information. If you agree to call a customer back, do. We all know how annoying it is when people let you down! Afterall, honesty is always the best policy.

Missed call?

If you're not fortunate enough to have a Phone Answering Service in place then ensure that you check for voicemails and respond to missed calls as soon as you can. We get it, it's not always possible to answer every call, you could be on a break, in a meeting, or have left the office for the day. But that missed call could have been a sales enquiry, or missed customer service call which could affect valuable customer experience. Studies show that if you don't respond to a voicemail within 2 hours your business is forgotten, so to ensure all your calls get answered every time it's worth considering the support of a Phone Answering Service.