

**UČIONICA**

# TELEPHONE ENGLISH

Having a telephone call in any language includes the usage of certain phrases which help to build our listening skills and understanding of people on the other side of the line. Since non-verbal communication cannot be of much help in this case, we need to rely on our knowledge of certain language in which the phone conversation is being held. There are phrases which are used for answering a phone call, introducing yourself, asking to speak with someone, connecting someone, making special requests, taking or leaving a message for someone, finishing the call, and so on. The following examples can help you if you are nervous every time you receive a call from (or make a call to) a foreigner whose knowledge of Croatian is limited to 'Dobar dan'.

**Answering the phone**

'Hello, Entertainment Inc., how can I help you?'

'Thank you for calling Entertainment Inc. Julie speaking, how can I help you?'

'Lawyer's Office.'

**Introducing yourself**

'Hello, this is George Smith calling.'

'Hi, it's Bill from the marketing department.'

'Hi, it's Mark.'

**Asking to speak with someone**

'Could I / Can I / May I speak to Mr Robinson, please?'

'Is Steve in?' (informal, meaning 'Is Steve in the office?')

'Can I talk to your supervisor?'

**Connecting someone**

'Please hold while I put you through to his office.'

'Can you hold on a moment?'

'One moment please.'

'All our operators are busy at the moment. Please hold for the next available person.'

'I'm afraid her line is busy at the moment.'

**Making special requests**

'Could you speak up a little, please?'

'Would you mind repeating your name?'

'Would you mind spelling your name?'

'Can you please hold for a minute? I have another call.'

**Taking a message for someone**

'I'm afraid Mr Robinson is not here at the moment. Can I ask who's calling?'

'Would you like to leave a message?'

'I'll let Bill know you called'. / 'I'll make sure he gets the message.'

'Mr Smith is busy right now. Can you call again later?'

**Leaving a message for someone**

'It's Sarah from the lawyer's office. When do you expect him back in the office?'

'Could you ask him to call Jack when he gets back?'

'Can you write down my number? I don't think he has it.'

**Finishing a conversation**

'Thank you for calling Entertainment Inc. Goodbye!'

'I'll make sure your message is received. Talk to you later.'

'I'm afraid I have someone on my other line. We'll talk later.'

'Talk to you soon.'

**A) Telephone Quiz- choose the correct option.**

- When picking up a phone to call someone, you hear \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) a receiver b) a ringtone c) a dial tone
- If we are not at home, please leave a message on our \_\_\_\_\_ machine.  
a) dial b) directory c) answering
- You need to \_\_\_\_\_ '0' for the operator.  
a) dial b) hang up c) choose
- Jenny must be talking to her friend because I keep getting a \_\_\_\_\_ for the past two hours.  
a) answer b) busy line c) chat
- I know it was my boss calling because I have \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) dial tone b) address c) call display
- I always turn my \_\_\_\_\_ off when I'm working on something important.  
a) ringer b) call display c) receiver

Key: 1c, 2c, 3a, 4b, 5c, 6a

**B) Match the telephone-related words with their explanations.**

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| a) cordless     | 1 to press the buttons on the phone                                  |
| b) phone booth  | 2 a phone book   |
| c) receiver     | 3 a phone that is not attached to a wall                             |
| d) hang up      | 4 busy   |
| e) engaged line | 5 a place where you can pay to use a telephone in public             |
| f) ringer       | 6 the piece on the phone that you speak into and listen from         |
| g) dial         | 7 end a call   |
| h) directory    | 8 the sound-piece that alerts a person that a call is coming through |

Key: a3, b5, c6, d7, e4, f8, g1, h2

**C) Making an appointment over the phone: fill in the gaps with the words from the list. Some words are extra and you will not need them.**

*pen handy worried speaking buzz it's minute put leave for on afraid this be calling through*

A: Thank you for phoning General Cosmetics. Susan \_\_\_\_\_. How can I help you?

B: Hi Susan. \_\_\_\_\_ Jackie Wills \_\_\_\_\_. I need to speak to Mr Fisher ASAP. Can you \_\_\_\_\_ me \_\_\_\_\_?

A: I'm \_\_\_\_\_ he's in a meeting. Would you like to \_\_\_\_\_ a message?

B: Well, this matter is quite urgent. Let me check with my colleague.

Please hold on for a \_\_\_\_\_. Susan, do you have a \_\_\_\_\_?

A: Yes, go ahead.

B: Tell him that the last order has been delayed and we've been having problems with tracking down the truck driver. Let him call me as soon as he gets back to the office.

A: Okay, I'll make sure he gets the message. Is there anything else?

B: No, that's all. Thank you, Susan. Goodbye.

A: Thank you \_\_\_\_\_ calling. Have a nice day.

Key: speaking, it's, calling, put, through, afraid, leave, minute, pen handy, for



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