

# **Course: Business English**

## **Level 3**

Day №1

## UNIT 1 Getting in Touch

### 1.1 Calling new contacts on the telephone



- *How often do you have to call someone you don't know?*
- *What do you like to be called by people you don't know? By people you do know?*

***Ravi Singh sells health insurance. He is calling two different companies to talk to the human resources director. Look at the extracts from two conversations. Match the administrative assistants' questions on the left with Ravi's answers on the right.***



### Assistant 1

1. Who's calling please?
2. And your company?
3. I see. Is Mr. Yu expecting your call?
4. Well I'm afraid Mr. Yu isn't available at the moment. Could you please send your company catalog, and Mr. Yu will call you if he is interested?

### Assistant 2

5. Who's calling please?
6. Thank you. Are you a client?
7. Can I ask you what it's about?
8. I'm sorry but Mr. Platt is busy today. Could I take a message?

Ravi Singh

- a. No. I'm calling to introduce Mr. Yu to our company's products.
- b. OK. I'll put one in the mail.
- c. Ravi Singh
- d. Health Consultants Ltd.

Ravi Singh

- e. No, I'm not.
- f. Ravi Singh of Health Consultants Ltd.
- g. No, it's OK. I'll call again
- h. My company supplies health insurance. I'm sure Mr. Platt will be interested.

**Put sentences with similar meanings into pairs.  
Which sentence in each pair is more polite (P)?**

1. I can tell her you called.
2. Who's calling please?
3. Can I ask what it's concerning?
4. He's too busy.
5. Why are you calling?
6. Who do you work for?
7. Who's this?
8. Could I take a message?
9. Mr. Kwan's in a meeting right now.
10. Which company are you calling from?



**Read the text below and discuss.**

Supposed you're unsure of the gender of the person you're calling (say the first name is Jo), or you don't know if you should use the first or last name. Play it safe and use both: "Can I speak to Jo May please?"

In formal situations and on official occasions - when you are doing something where you represent not only yourself but also your company - stay away from nicknames. Not "Chaz" but "Charles".

On an envelope, you should use a title if possible. When in doubt, "Ms." is fine. If someone asks for "Mrs." or even "Miss" you can change it in your database, but let "Ms." be your default to women. If you're unsure whether to use "Ms." or "Mr." in the case of one of those names used by both men and women, leave out the title.

When speaking to people, you have to use your judgment. People have different views on what they would like to be called and they don't wear signs announcing their preferences, such as "Call me Jane" or "Call me Ms. Jones." You'll even find that someone you might refer to by his or her last name in company can be addressed by his or her first name in private.

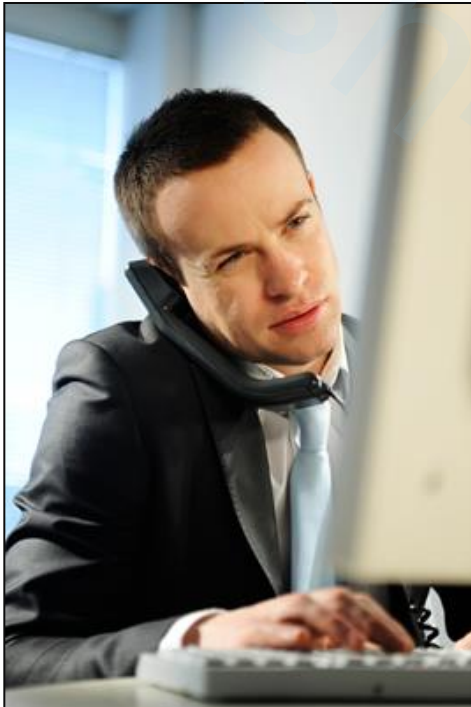


Finally, remember that when you travel internationally, you should expect to find most cultures use more formal titles and surnames than those used in American culture.

**Honorifics** – titles which are used to show respect for the person you are speaking to, for example, **Mr.** Kwan.

## UNIT 1 Getting in Touch

### 1.2 Getting through the right person



- *How important is it to answer the telephone well in your company/country?*
- *Does your company give guidelines for speaking on the phone? What are they?*

**Read the dialogues and answer the questions below.**

**Receptionist:** Good morning. GSK.

**Ravi:** Hello. I'd like to talk to someone in the Human Resources Department please.

**Receptionist:** One moment. I'll put you through.

**Ravi:** Thanks.

**Assistant:** Hello. Human resources.

**Ravi:** Good morning. My name's Ravi Singh. I'd like to talk to someone about your company's health insurance program please.

**Assistant:** Sure. You can talk to my colleague. I'll put you through.

**Ravi:** Great. Thanks.



1. Who does Ravi want to speak to?
2. Is he successful?
3. Why is he successful/unsuccessful?

## Telephone etiquette tips:

### *Incoming calls*

**Tip 1:** All incoming calls should be answered in a timely manner.

**Tip 2:** business calls should always be answered with a phrase like, “Good morning, ABC Company, Carol speaking, may I help you?” In a busy office where the phone is answered hundreds of times each day, this particular phrase may be too much today. If so, it can be shortened to a phrase that is less wordy. But the name of the company needs to be stated as soon as the phone is answered along with the person’s name who answers the phone. This lets the caller know they have reached the right business, and lets them know to whom they are speaking.

**Tip 3:** Never put a caller on hold, but if you have to, be sure to check back with them every minute or so and ask if they would like to continue to hold. This lets them know that they have not been forgotten, and that you are attending to their call.

**Tip 4:** speak clearly and slowly when you answer a business call. Do not slur or mumble your words. Speak with confidence so the person on the other end has the feeling that you know what you are doing.

**Tip 5:** Never be rude to a caller, no matter how rude they are. Always remember to handle yourself in a professional, business-like way. This includes handling the situation in a calm, cool manner.





## Telephone etiquette tips:

### ***Outgoing calls***

**Tip 1:** the same as Tip 4 above. Speak clearly and slowly when you make a business call. Time maybe money, but if the other party cannot understand what you are saying, then you are wasting your time.



**Tip 2:** the same as Tip 5 above. All customers expect to work with a professional organization. One sign of a professional organization is how customers are treated by the people who work there.

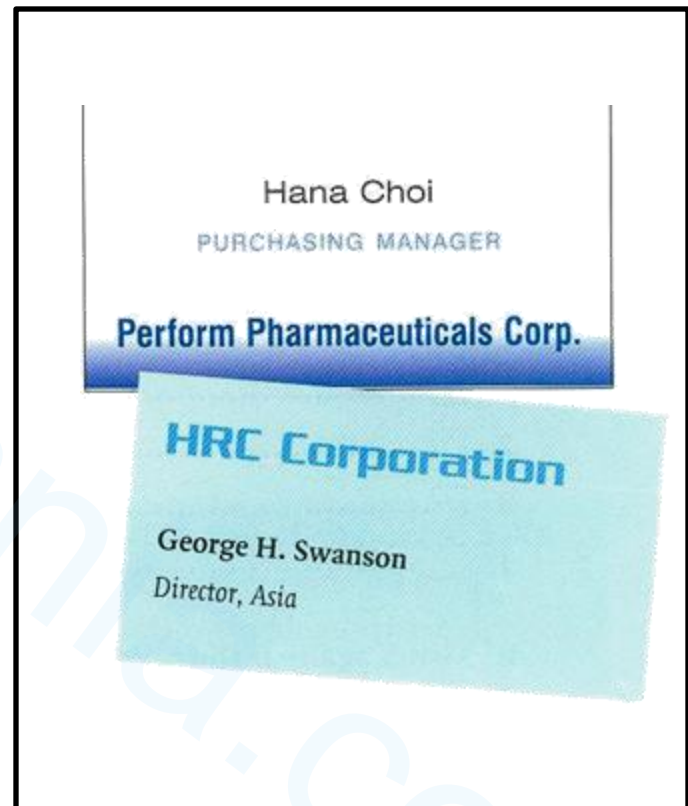
**Tip 3:** when calling another business, it is proper etiquette to give your name and the company's name you work for to whoever answers the telephone. Do not make them guess who it is or make them force it out of you.

**Tip 4:** if you get the wrong number, apologize to the person who answers the phone – do not just hang up. This is especially important nowadays when people have caller IDs on their phone. All they have to do to find out who rudely hung up on them is to look at their phone.

**Tip 5:** when leaving a phone message, always state your name, company, phone number and reason for calling. Try not to repeat yourself and use up an unreasonable amount of time.

Look at Hana Choi's business card. You are her assistant. Your teacher will call you to speak to your boss. Find out who is calling and why. Explain that your boss is busy and doesn't want to be disturbed.

Now reverse the roles. You work for the Cabot Hotel. You want people to put visitors in your hotel and use it for conferences. Look at George H. Swanson's business card. Call him and try to make an appointment.



***Thank you for  
today!***

***I'm looking forward to  
seeing you again!***