## Obj: 1.01D - Phone Answering Tips to Win Business

* By [Susan Ward](https://www.thebalance.com/susan-ward-2946932) Updated June 07, 2016
* Retrieved from: https://www.thebalance.com/how-to-answer-the-phone-properly-2947153

Phone answering skills are critical for businesses. The phone is still most business's primary point of contact with customers. And the way you answer your company's phone will form your customer's first impression of your business. Here's how to answer the phone properly and win business:​​

1) Answer all incoming phone calls before the third ring.

2) When you answer the phone, be warm and enthusiastic. Your voice on the phone is sometimes the only impression of your company a caller will get.

3) When answering the phone, welcome callers courteously and identify yourself and your organization. Say, for instance, "Good morning. Cypress Technologies. Susan speaking. How may I help you?" No one should ever have to ask if they've reached such and such a business.

4) Enunciate clearly, keep your voice volume moderate, and speak slowly and clearly when answering the phone, so your caller can understand you easily.

5) Control your language when answering the phone. Don't use slang or [buzz words](https://www.thebalance.com/speak-for-success-speech-lesson-5-2948547). Instead of saying, "OK", or "No problem", for instance, say "Certainly", "Very well", or "All right". If you're a person who uses fillers when you speak, such as "uh huh", "um", or phrases such as "like" or "you know", train yourself carefully not to use these when you speak on the phone.

6) Train your voice and vocabulary to be positive when phone answering, even on a "down" day. For example, rather than saying, "I don't know", say, "Let me find out about that for you."

7) Take phone messages completely and accurately. If there's something you don't understand or can't spell, such as a person's surname, ask the caller to repeat it or spell it for you. Then make sure the message gets to the intended recipient.

8) Answer all your calls within one business day. I can't emphasize this one enough. Remember the early bird? The early caller can get the contract, the sale, the problem solved, and reinforce the favorable impression of your business that you want to circulate.

9) Always ask the caller if it's all right to put her on hold when answering the phone, and don't leave people on hold. Provide callers on hold with progress reports every 30 to 45 seconds. Offer them choices if possible, such as "That line is still busy. Will you continue to hold or should I have \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ call you back?"

10) Don't use a speaker phone unless absolutely necessary. Speaker phones give the caller the impression that you're not fully concentrating on his call, and make him think that his call isn't private. The only time to use a speaker phone is when you need more than one person to be in on the conversation at your end.

11) If you use an answering machine to answer calls when you can't, make sure that you have a professional message recorded, that does the same thing as tip #3, and gives callers any other pertinent information before it records their messages. Update your answering machine message as needed. For instance, if your business is going to be closed for a holiday, update your recorded answering machine message to say so and to say when your business will reopen.

12) Train everyone else who answers the phone to answer the same way, including other family members if you're running a home-based business. Check on how your business's phone is being answered by calling in and seeing if the phone is being answered in a professional manner. If they don't pass the test, go over this phone answering tips list with them to make sure that everyone at your business knows how to answer the phone properly.​

**Principles of Business**

**1.01D-How to Answer the Telephone Properly**

Directions: Go to: <http://sbinfocanada.about.com/cs/management/qt/telephonetips.htm>, and read the article about how to answer the phone properly. When answering a phone call, it is important to remember that someone has taken the time to call you. Before you hang up, ensure that you have completed everything that you can, and it may be nice to ask, “Is there anything else I can help you with?”

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Key Tips to Answer the Phone Properly** | **Example** |
| DO’s | | |
| 1 | Answer the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ before the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ring | *Ex. Ring, Ring, Hello* |
| 2 | Be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |
| 3 | Identify \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |
| 4 | Speak \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ words |  |
| 5 | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ all calls within \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ business day |  |
| 6 | Use an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ machine to answer calls when you can \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |
| 7 | Take phone messages \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. |  |
| *Things Not to Do* | | |
| 1 | Don’t use \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. |  |
| 2 | Don’t use a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ phone unless \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ necessary. |  |
| 3 | Do not put a caller on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ without asking them \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Provide callers on hold with progress reports every \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ seconds. |  |