

Using The Telephone

How many of us use the telephone to our greatest advantage? In sales, which is our analogy in marketing our talents and skills toward current and applicable job opportunities, the telephone is the most valuable tool.

People definitely make personal assessments over the telephone. We might decide whether an individual is someone we like or dislike, if they are someone we might “refer,” or simply put off.

We do not have the availability of “body language” over the phone, so judgments are made without the benefit of a most reliable source. That is why it is so important for us to **DO IT RIGHT** over the phone. Here are some simple tips:

1. Try to always get and use the person’s (answering the phone: secretary, etc.) name.
2. Be pleasant and smile. Yes, a smile can be “heard” and it is always a gift of acceptance of the other person.
3. Be courteous. You have no idea what the circumstances are of the individual with whom you are speaking, so do not be presumptuous in any way. If your contact is presently unavailable, ask when might be the best time to call back.
4. Usually, you won’t want to leave a message for your call to be returned, particularly if you know that you may not be present for the callback. Suggest first thing in the morning, last thing in the afternoon, etc., for you to attempt a callback.

5. Use proper diction. Although this is always important, it becomes all the more critical over the telephone. Speak at even pace and clearly. Mumbling not only annoys other people but it can make you appear unsure of yourself.
6. Remember that if you are using your networking appropriately, you have a good chance that your contact will respond to you because of the mutual acquaintance, friend, etc.. Also, you are **NOT LOOKING FOR A JOB** from your networking contact, and that needs to be clear right away.
7. Finally, have a pad and pencil available for two reasons. One, to note the matters you wish to discuss. Secondly, to record what is said to you...names of individuals (to enable you to address by name), messages, etc. Do not trust anything to memory. It's simply smart policy.

FOLLOW-UP TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS

WHEN TELEPHONING to arrange an interview, keep an outline of what you want to say in front of you. If you get thrown off track by some unexpected question or reaction, this outline will help you get back on the track. Plans have to be adapted to meet the individual situation, but, in general, proceed as follows:

WHEN TELEPHONING TO THE MANAGER'S SECRETARY, be firm and positive; avoid any appearance of arrogance. If you seem hesitant or unsure of yourself, the secretary may put you on the defensive, and your chances of getting to talk to the person you are calling are reduced. Expect to get through to him and to see him; set your goal for the contact. Try to get the secretary's name before speaking to her. Use her name as a first contact; give your name and say you are calling "Mr. Jones". Say, "Mr. Jones is expecting my call in connection with the correspondence we had." If at all possible, do not discuss your situation with the secretary. Remember that it may be part of her job to keep job seekers away from her boss - to direct them to the Human Resource Department. If she asks why you are calling, tell her that, "This is a personal matter which Mr. Jones knows about. Would you put me through to him?" If

the secretary tells you that Mr. Jones has your letter that he told her to refer you to Human Resources, try to get through by saying (with some concern in your voice), "Mr. Jones must have misunderstood my letter. May I please speak with him so that I can correct that impression." Realize that it is often more difficult to get his secretary sold on you seeing her boss than it is to convince him to see you.

DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME. IF HE/SHE STILL WILL NOT SEE YOU, then say, "I'm faced with the problem of making my availability known to potential employers who might be pleased to know of it. Could you suggest the names of two or three people you know --not people you think might have a spot for me --- but who, like yourself, are key professionals in their fields, the kind of individuals who are asked from time to time to suggest where a competent person to fill a particular spot might be located."

Note: The different varieties of letters that have been outlined are intended only as suggestions. You will need to write letters that meet your particular needs --- and fit into your particular job seeking program. At such time, the information in this program will prove very helpful.