Telephoning: Checking on an Order

Doing business across borders requires precise coordination, especially in the era of "just-in-time" delivery where goods need to be shipped to the customer at exact times. When a product is made in one country, assembled in another, and sold in a third, the companies involved need to be in constant communication from start to finish. Making sure that orders are made and delivered on time is an essential part of international business, and a lot of the monitoring will be done by phone. So, in this episode we're going to look at ways to check on the progress of an order over the telephone.

A while back in BEP 92 & 93 we met Bill, a buyer for Bancroft's, a chain of women's clothing stores in the U.S. He's placed a large order with Viva, an Italian fashion company, which is being coordinated by Catherine Traynor, Foxtrot's shipping manager. Foxtrot is Viva's U.S. distributor.

It's now several months later and the order is due to be delivered. But Bill has just received a call from Bancroft's warehouse to let him know that only half the order has been delivered so far. Now he's calling Catherine to check on the rest of the delivery.

Listening Questions:

1. How does Catherine let Bill know she's looking for information about his order?
2. Where is the second part of the shipment?
3. What does Catherine offer to do to avoid separate deliveries in future?

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