

MANAGING A PHONE CALL

STEP 1

How often do you receive telephone calls at work? Are the subjects of the calls always relevant?

STEP 2 Listen to the following phone conversation. Practice.



Carl: Hello, Carl Bauer speaking.

Alison: Hi Carl, this is Alison. How are you doing?

Carl: Oh, you know. Busy with the usual projects.

Alison: I hope the new boss isn't working you too hard.

Carl: Actually, she's been great. So, what can I do for you?

Alison: Well, I just wanted to discuss your projected figures for next month. By the way, how's Mario **getting along** in his new position?

Carl: He's doing fine.

Alison: Is he **getting on** well with the rest of the team? I know he can be a bit of an office clown at times.

Carl: Actually, he's **fitting in** just fine. Anyway, are you happy with the figures?

Alison: Yes, I think that **on the whole** they're reasonable for this time of year. But I think the figure for projected sales is a little optimistic in the **current** economic climate.

Carl: OK, I'll have another look and revise it. Well, it's been good talking to you, and ...

Alison: Yes, we must go out for a drink sometime and **catch up**.

Carl: Sounds good.

Alison: And I hear there's this great new bar that's just opened on Church Street. You'll really like it.

Carl: Alison, there's an important call just come in on the other line. I really have to go.

Alison: Oh, OK then. Speak to you soon. Bye.

STEP 3 Study the following adjectives to describe people.

Blunt

saying what you think without trying to be polite or considering other people's feelings.
I'll be blunt - that last piece of work you did was terrible.

Tactless

not careful about saying or doing something that could upset someone.
It was tactless of you to invite his ex-girlfriend.

Straight

Honest.
Just be straight with her and tell her how you feel.

Nosy

too interested in what other people are doing and wanting to discover too much about them:
She was complaining about her nosy parents.

STEP 4 Read the following telephone conversation and use the adjectives below to describe the speakers.



A: Hello John, how are things with you? Did you have a nice holiday with the family?

B: Yes, we went to Tunisia again. Look, tell me what you want. I'm very busy.



A: I just needed your cash flow forecast for next month.

B: OK, I'll email it to you after lunch.

A: How was the weather in Tunisia?

B: It was wonderful. I must go.

A: OK. Could you tell me how your new office is?

B: I have no time to talk to you. Can you get off the phone?

A: OK, bye.

Rude	blunt	chatty	direct	tactless	abrupt	friendly
Nosy	cold	unprofessional	straight	unfriendly		

STEP 5 use some of these phrases to improve the underlined phrases in the previous dialogue.

- How can I help you?
- I'm afraid I have to go.
- I'm afraid I'm really busy at the moment.
- Can you get back to me later?

STEP 6 listen again and complete the these phrases

1. _____, what can I do for you?
2. _____ the _____, how's Mario getting along?
3. _____, are you happy with the figures?
4. _____, it's been good to you.
5. There's an important call _____ come _____ on the other line.
6. I _____ have to _____.

STEP 7 Put the above expressions into the following categories. Write the number.

- a. Moving the conversation to the main subject of the call: _____
- b. Bringing the conversation back to the main subject of the call: _____
- c. Changing the topic: _____
- d. Bringing the conversation to an end: _____

STEP 8 Add the following expressions to the categories above.

- Anyway, the reason I called is because ...
- Before I forget,
- So, as I was saying,
- Anyway, getting back to what we were talking about, ...
- Was there something you wanted to discuss?
- I'll let you go now.

