



Telephone Conversations

Task 1 Read the text about conference calls. Choose from (A–H) the one which best fits each space (1–6). There are two choices you do not need to use.

- A. and give you time to reflect on how the call is going.
- B. both internally and outside of their company.
- C. sometimes helpful to describe your body language.
- D. show your enthusiasm by the way you speak.
- E. if the other participants are not used to it.
- F. let more fluent speakers dominate the conference call.
- G. have native-speaker participants.
- H. there are several second-language speakers.

MAKING THE BEST OF CONFERENCE CALLS

A conference call is a telephone call in which someone talks to several people at the same time. Businesses use conference calls (1) _____. Usually they are for client meetings or sales presentations, regular team meetings, training classes and communication to employees who work in different locations. Conference calls help cut travel costs and allow workers to be more productive by not having to go out-of-office for meetings. Taking part in an international telephone conference is hard work. Here are some tips to help you:

1. *Call from a quiet location.* This is very important when (2) _____ from different parts of the world involved. Background noise can prevent us understanding each other.

2. *Speak slowly.* Speak at the speed you want to be spoken to. This is important when you (3) _____. They will often mirror the speed of the other participants. Give them a good example to follow, so that you are not continually asking them to slow down. But if participants do speak too quickly, don't wait – get them to slow down, and ask them to repeat or explain.

3. *Speak clearly.* Everyone has an accent. Your accent can be difficult to understand (4) _____. Accents sound more extreme over the phone, so speak clearly. Get some feedback on how you sound on the phone. If you have a strong accent, slow down and try to say your words carefully.

4. *Speak with energy.* Put some energy and enthusiasm into your voice. The others cannot see your face, so you have to (5) _____. Energetic voices energize the other participants. Energetic voices are easier to listen to. They strengthen the key messages, so that misunderstandings are less frequent.

5. *Ask for breaks.* In long telephone conferences, you should ask for 'bio breaks'. We are not just ears! The rest of our bodies need attention too. Short breaks help to concentrate (6) _____.

If you follow these rules, your participation in telephone conferences is sure to be a success, and other participants will be glad you took part.

Task 2. Fill in the words from the box.

responsible engaged fluent message put you through directory
dial answering machine text hold on

1. I don't remember the Mayor's phone number but I'll look it up in the _____.
2. Yesterday I phoned our business partner but the line was _____.
3. I can't call back later, as I am going out. Can I leave a _____ for Mr. Grant?
4. Thanks to technology, now you can leave a message on the _____.
5. Can you _____, please? Mr. Smith won't be long. He knows you are waiting.
6. Yes, Mr Boyd is in his office. I'll _____ to him in a moment.
7. Nowadays people don't have to _____ phone numbers as all of them are in their smartphones.
8. Although Jane is a very young assistant, she is _____ for telephone conversations with foreign partners because of her _____ English.
9. During the conference Angela couldn't phone her boss, so she decided to _____ him.

Task 3. Complete the telephone conversation with sentences A – E.

- A. Hold the line, please.
B. May I help you?
C. I'm putting you through.
D. Can I take a message?
E. Who is calling, please?

A: Hello, Susan Pelly speaking. 1) _____?
B: Yes, can I speak to Mrs. Mitchell please?
A: Sorry sir, but Mrs. Mitchell is not here at the moment. 2) _____?
B: No thank you. Can I speak to Mr. Smith please?
A: Mr. Smith, right. 3) _____?
B: This is Mr. Franklin from the Jackson & Perkins Law firm.⁵⁴
A: All right Mr. Franklin. 4) _____?
B: Is it going to be long?
A: No. 5) _____ right now.
B: Ok. Thank you very much.

Task 4. Complete the telephone conversation with sentences A – I. There are four sentences you don't need to use.

- A. Is there a problem?
B. The line is busy.
C. How may I help you?
D. One moment, please.

E. You're welcome.

F. Who is calling, please?

G. I'll you through.

H. Hold on a minute.

I. I won't be able to come tomorrow.

A: Good afternoon, Yan's Pizzas. **1)** _____?

B: Hello, I have an interview with Mr. Black at 4:30pm tomorrow for a part-time summer job.

A: **2)** _____?

B: It's Ken Bowman.

A: Ah yes, Mr. Bowman. **3)** _____?

B: Well, unfortunately I won't be able to come tomorrow. Could I possibly have another appointment for 12:30 on Thursday instead?

A: **4)** _____ I'll just check. Yes, that'll be fine.

B: Thank you very much.

A: **5)** _____ I'll inform Mr. Black of the change.
Thank you for calling