

# Phone Etiquette Tips

## Incoming Calls

Telephones should always be answered with a phrase like, "Good morning, XYZ Dept., Carol speaking, may I help you?" In a busy department or unit, this particular phrase may be too much to say. If so, it can be shortened to a phrase that is less wordy.

- ✍ When answering, identify your department and your name.
- ✍ For those staff with private extensions, identify the Planning Unit or building, and your name: Don't assume the caller knows who you are.
- ✍ Speak clearly, slowly and with confidence.
- ✍ Always be polite – 3 key phrases:
  - "Please"
  - "Thank you"
  - "I'm sorry"
- ✍ Do not keep people on HOLD too long. Ask the caller if she/he would prefer to hold or leave a message on voicemail.
- ✍ If necessary, you may offer to call back (call within 5-10 minutes)

## Outgoing Calls

Courtesy is as important in speaking over the phone as in talking to people face to face. When you talk on the telephone, remember:

- ✍ Express yourself clearly and concisely
- ✍ Be certain of the number you're dialing, to avoid disturbing someone unnecessarily. If you do reach a wrong number, it is important to say, "I'm sorry, I dialed the wrong number." before hanging up.
- ✍ After someone answers the phone, give your name before asking for the person desired.

## Common Telephone Courtesy Hints

1. Make sure of the correct number so as not to risk disturbing strangers. After dialing a wrong number simply say, "Sorry, wrong number."
2. Identify yourself, both when placing and answering calls.
3. Keep your conversations as brief as possible.
4. Make business calls well before the close of the office hours.
5. When the number you are calling is not answered quickly, wait long enough for someone to put aside what he or she is doing. It may take several rings to be transferred or forwarded to voicemail.

## Telephone Messages

Write down complete information:

- ✍ Name of caller
- ✍ Date & time of call
- ✍ Caller's phone number
- ✍ Brief message
- ✍ When caller can be reached
- ✍ Your name

Before hanging up, double-check with caller to be sure the message is accurate.

*For private calls, you may call the Administration Office and ask if there is a private phone available. There is a phone in the Dean's Conference Room that could be used or one of the offices might be available.*

## Transferring Telephone Calls Within the Library

Transferring calls between units,  
departments, or branches:

“I believe it is the X department that  
can help you. I’ll transfer you, but  
let me give you the number first in  
case the transfer fails. It is…….”

You might consider giving a brief clue as to  
the content of the call but not to make the  
caller wait more than a few seconds:

“This is [Your Name]. I’m  
transferring a caller who wants to  
renew a book... who is angry  
about... who has a reference  
question... who wants to suggest that  
we purchase a new journal title....”

1<sup>st</sup> revision (4/16/02)

## Cells Phones

Use consideration when bringing cell  
phones to work:

- ✍ Leave cell phones turned off when possible.
- ✍ Set the ring volume low or to simple ring setting.
- ✍ When receiving a call, put the caller on hold and find a private place to talk; or take the number, and call back at a more appropriate time and place.