

Telephone Etiquette



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POSITIVE ATTITUDES: TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE

Keeping a positive attitude is encouraged at SVSU in order to interact with callers and coworkers in the most productive manner.

Poor attitudes can upset customers.

- Callers might become dissatisfied with you and the offices at SVSU.
- Callers might complain to employees or other individuals in the community, hurting our reputation.
- If callers are dissatisfied, they might not use the many helpful services given by staff at SVSU.

Poor attitudes can affect the workplace.

- If you have a bad attitude, your coworkers can become angry and frustrated with you.
- You and your coworkers might make more mistakes and become less productive because of the distraction.
- Bad work ethic costs SVSU money and the cost ultimately falls on the students in tuition increases.
- And, of course, you can get fired for having a bad attitude.

Tone is very important.

- The tone of your voice is the most accurate indicator of your attitude
- 18% of your tone is verbal, or the words you use.

- 82% of your tone is vocal, or the sound of your voice.
- How you say something is much more important than what you say! Using polite words will have no effect if you have a sour tone.

Word choice helps you sound professional.

- Your word choice is a good indicator of how efficient you are and if you take your job seriously.
- Speak eloquently, and use proper word flow.
- Avoid slang and try not to stammer (“umm,” “ahh,” “uhh”) or mumble.

Phrases to avoid:

- “Hold on a minute.” (then putting the caller immediately on hold)
- “That’s not my job.”
- “She’s not in yet.”
- “I’m going on lunch break, so I’ll do it later.”
- “They’re in the bathroom.”

Phrases to use:

- “May I place you on hold, please?” (gaining the caller’s permission, then placing them on hold)
- “I can connect you to our specialist in that area.”
- “She’s away from her desk, may I take a message?”

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- “Let me call you back after I look up your information.”
- “I’d be happy to do that this afternoon.”

Sometimes, your job will be stressful, but it is important to stay calm and keep a positive attitude.

Tips for staying positive:

- Focus on the caller’s needs instead and help them out of their frustration.
 - Take 3 deep breaths. If you are about to snap at someone, this will help you control your temper.
 - Take 5 minutes to write down what is bothering you, take a 30 second memory vacation, or think about a positive role model. Controlling your feelings is a great way to improve situations you have little control over.
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RESOLVING CUSTOMER ISSUES: TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE

Compassion

- Compassion is a crucial part of customer service
- Showing compassion lets people know that SVSU cares about them and sincerely wants to help
- You never know how your actions can impact someone’s life
- A caller might be upset about something you had nothing to do with

Attention

- Give your full attention to the caller
- Multi-tasking and good listening aren’t compatible so stay off of Facebook, texting, email, etc.
- Stop whatever else you’re doing, and give the caller your attention

Attitude

- Attitude plays a big part in active listening
- Keep a good attitude even if the caller does not
- Convince yourself that they have something important to say. They probably do!

Focus

- Make sure you are focused on listening
- Take brief notes
- Write down questions or concerns that the caller has
- Obtain the caller’s name
- Give a few verbal acknowledgements but don’t interrupt



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Confirm

- Make sure you clearly understand what was said and ask clarification questions if necessary
- Verify spelling of names and numbers they give you
- Briefly restate or paraphrase what the caller said

When dealing with angry callers...

- Acknowledge the caller's feelings
- Don't overreact to trigger words
- Don't blame anyone for the problem
- Listen patiently to the complaint and clarify
- Give sincere apology
- Solve the problem yourself

Tips for staying calm

- Calm your senses and stay relaxed
 - Close your eyes for a few seconds to calm yourself
- Breathe deeply
- Exercise and nutrition
- Treat each problem with concern and understanding

BASIC TELEPHONE USAGE: TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE

Placing a call (on-campus)

1. Lift handset
2. Listen for dial tone
3. Dial 4 digit number

Placing a call (off-campus, local)

1. Lift handset
2. Listen for dial tone
3. Dial "9"
4. Dial outside number

Placing a call (off-campus, long distance)

1. Lift handset
2. Listen for dial tone
3. Dial "9" then "1"
4. Dial area code and outside number

Answering a call

1. Long ring means the call is from **ON CAMPUS**
2. Quick rings means the call is from **OFF CAMPUS**



1. Always remember to smile!
2. Answer within 2 rings
3. Greet caller and identify your office and yourself "Hello, Career Services Office, this is Jane, how may I help you?"

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4. Be sure to:

- a. Listen actively
- b. Show genuine concern
- c. Speak clearly and slowly
- d. Use the caller's name
- e. Ask appropriate questions and take notes
- f. Respond to the caller's request
- g. Verify the caller's information and double check spelling of names and telephone numbers
- h. If you have to transfer, notify the party you are calling about the transfer

Don't...

- Get frustrated, annoyed, or irritated
- Say "umm," "ahh," or mumble
- Multitask (eating, e-mails, Facebook)
- Be rude
- Blame another party
- Give too much information
- Drop a transfer
- Make blind transfers

If the call is coming to another employee's desk and he or she isn't there...

- Pick up your phone
- Press * (Star) then 7

Placing on hold

1. Ask: "May I place you on hold?"
2. Press HOLD
3. To return to the caller, press the flashing line button

Transferring a Call

1. Ask the caller to wait
2. Press TRANSFER
3. Dial extension number
4. Share information with called party
5. Hang up

Transferring a Call to Voice Mail Off Campus (2 quick rings)

1. Ask "Would you like to leave a message on his/her voice mail?"
2. Press FLASH
3. Enter pass code 4097
4. Listen for voice
5. Enter Extension
6. Hang up

Transferring a call to Voice Mail On Campus (1 longer ring)

1. Press FLASH
2. Enter pass code
3. Listen for voice
4. Press * (Star)
5. Enter Extension
6. Hang up

Always treat each call with care...treat them as you would want to be treated!