



TLP-Five Minute Read Over Coffee.

Focus: Feel better on the telephone in English



The telephone can still be a powerful tool so don't just hide behind your email!!



REFLECTION CORNER: FIVE GOOD REASONS TO USE THE PHONE

- ✓ 1) You can **save a lot of time**. Think how many emails can be avoided by a good 10-minute telephone call. Crucially you can clarify something that is unclear - 'in the moment'.
- ✓ 2) You can show **your human face** 😊 😊. The value of just spending a couple of minutes asking your colleague or customer how their summer went is too often underestimated.
- ✓ 3) It can '**speed something up**' or '**unblock something**'. We all have the tendency to deprioritize/put off responding to an email.
- ✓ 4) It avoids the temptation to be **passively aggressive** and **hide behind an email!** I have seen people communicate in an aggressive way by email but when you speak to them, they are much more open and conciliatory.
- ✓ 5) A good telephone call can be **spontaneous** and **flexible**. I like to phone some of my clients while walking around my neighbourhood. If you suffer from 'Zoom fatigue', too many back-to-back virtual meetings at your desk, a phone call can feel fresh and different.

PRACTICAL LANGUAGE – STARTING IN A GOOD WAY

RECEIVING THE CALL

- ✓ Toby Higson, speaking.
- ✓ How may/can I help you?
- ✓ Hi Peter, how are you doing? (You recognize the number).

MAKING THE CALL

- ✓ My name is Toby Higson.
- ✓ I am calling about...
- ✓ I am calling with reference to/regarding...
- ✓ May I speak to Peter?
- ✓ I would like to speak with/to someone about...
- ✓ Could you put me through to/connect me to...

PRACTICAL LANGUAGE – HAVE THE CONFIDENCE TO QUESTION

💡 In French I sometimes pretended I understood everything on the phone to protect my professional credibility. Not a good idea. Asking somebody to slow down or clarify a point is a sign of confidence not weakness.

- ✓ Would you mind repeating that please? Would it be possible to slow down a little?
- ✓ Could you say that one more time/again?

PRACTICAL LANGUAGE – KEEP COOL AT THE END

💡 Take your time to finish in a good way. Imagine three steps!

STEP 1: USEFUL TRANSITION PHRASES

- ✓ Thank you for your time today/for your help on this.
- ✓ I really appreciated talking that through with you.
- ✓ I look forward to our next meeting/discussion....
- ✓ Is it ok if I just summarize/recap/go over the main points?

STEP 2: ENDING PART 1

- ✓ Have a good day, afternoon, evening, rest of the week, weekend.

STEP 3: ENDING PART 2

- ✓ Goodbye/bye.

LANGUAGE CORNER

1. **Hang up** (put the phone down often when you are angry).
2. **Hold on** (wait).
3. **Cut off** (disconnected, not your fault!).
4. **Pick up** (answer the phone).
5. **Put on** (give the phone to somebody in the same room).
6. **Put through** (transfer the phone to somebody in a different room).
7. **Call back** (return the call).
8. **Get through** (try to connect).
9. **Look up** (research).
10. **Give up** (stop trying).

More on the telephone. Contact me Toby Higson, toby@tlp.lu to join my learning community.

- Pick up the phone <https://youtu.be/XeJr28UDlxl>
- Starting a telephone call <https://youtu.be/llhPOYTssNg>
- Ending a telephone call <https://youtu.be/08-08SRCjAg>

