

## TLP Five-Minute Read Over Coffee – The power of the telephone

This article celebrates the power of the telephone! Firstly, by highlighting five benefits and secondly, five essential phrases to use when speaking in English.

### Five good reasons to use the telephone

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 good 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.

### 5 good expressions to use when speaking

While you cannot script a telephone call, there are some expressions that can really help to give a professional impression.

1. **'Toby Higson speaking'**. That little word **'speaking'** is crucial in conveying a professional tone. You might then follow up with **'How can I help you?'** - in particular if you are in a customer facing role.
2. **'How are you doing?'** Take the time to make some small talk with a good contact. If you are asked this question, don't simply say **'I am fine and you'**. Give a little more than that but know that you are not expected to make a speech about your weekend 😊 . **Example: 'How are you doing Toby? I am**

***good thanks, feeling pretty refreshed after my holiday in the UK and you - good holiday?'***

3. ***'Would you mind repeating that?', 'Could you repeat that one more time?', 'Would it be possible for you to speak a little more slowly?'***. The biggest temptation is to pretend that you have understood something when speaking on the phone in your second language. This can take you to crazy places. It is a sign of confidence to ask someone to repeat or slow down.

4. A smooth transition. Often my clients struggle with how to end a telephone call smoothly in English. I recommend a little transition phrase before closing the call. Something like one of the expressions below.

- ***'Thanks for your time today'/ 'thanks for your input on this'/ 'I appreciate your thoughts on this...'***

(An alternative to the above)

- ***'I look forward to seeing you at the next team meeting'/ 'I look forward to getting your feedback on the proposal'***.

5. End the call with a ***'have a good something'***. While it might feel obvious, I think it really helps to end professionally with an expression like ***'have a good day/have a good week/have a good weekend/have a good transition back to work'*** and then ***'goodbye'***. If the other person says, ***'have a good xx'***, you can simply say, ***'thanks, you too'***

I hope this is helpful and look out for some TLP Newsletters on the same subject coming soon.

Best wishes

Toby

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