Unit **6**

Telephone communication

In this unit you'll learn how to:

- Assess the importance of telephone communication within the company.
- Identify the different devices and business opportunities for telephony.
- Analyse the various services offered by telephone media.
- Make and receive effective corporate phone calls.
- Properly apply verbal and non-verbal communication techniques.
- Use your phone as a tool for business and marketing purposes.

And you'll study:

- The importance of telephone communication for the company.
- Phone media used today.
- The most common features of the fixed and mobile telephony and through call centres.
- The rules to achieve a good telephone communication.
- Telemarketing: types, characteristics and uses.

1. Telephone communication

Telephone communication is **one of the most important forms of communication within the company**. Although today its use is being replaced by other forms of communication (such as email), phone use is one of the most common means by which to materialize both **internal and external communications**.

It is very important in business because it is the medium through which the **first contact** with, or from the company is made. So, before any personal contact, the usual thing is to make a phone call to arrange an interview or to specify any matter or topic. The interlocutor at the other end of the line will form an idea about the company depending on the impression after this first telephone contact.

In any case, beyond the business sector, it is also crucial to follow a proper technique when having telephone conversations, as it is an essential tool to achieve our goals in a phone call, either as its senders or its recipients.

From the standpoint of business communication, telephone use has an enormous advantage: **interlocutors don't see each other**, and this may work for solving tricky or unfavourable situations. As interlocutors don't see each other, the arguments provided in a telephone conversation may be more solid and credible if we apply the proper techniques and procedures.

Another advantage of this type of communication is that we can do other things as we speak, such as taking notes, search for something on the computer, ask something to a work mate (always with discretion), and so on.

Thus, we may say that applying the appropriate telephone techniques is essential to get the most out of this communication tool in business.

Thanks to advances in technology, telephone communication devices have evolved generating new services and expanding its capabilities.

Case study 1. Who invented the telephone?

Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922) has been traditionally regarded as the inventor of the telephone. However, both Antonio Meucci and Elisha Gray claimed that they were also the authors of this invention. What can you say? Find information online about the three of them (for example, www.asinorum.com/meucci-bell-y-gray/407 or www.xatakaciencia.com/telecomunicaciones/7-de-marzo-graham-bell-se-lleva-el-gato-al-agua).

Solution:

From the information in these links, it seems that the inventor of the first voice-transmission device was the Italian Meucci; however, he couldn't inscribe the patent of his *telettrofono* because of several economic and bureaucratic reasons. Both Graham Bell and Gray inscribed on February 14, 1876 two separate inventions that were essentially the same in the patent office, but the former got priority in the process (apparently because of his contacts in the office). But in 2002, the Congress of the United States of America also recognized Meucci's invention.

Activities

1. Today, there are several phone companies operating in Spain, but do you know which company had the monopoly on phone service in our country? When did it begin operating in Spain?

2. Customer phones usually start with the prefixes 900, 901 or 902. What are the differences among these prefixes?

3. Do you know how many users of mobile telephony are there in Spain? Are they many or just a few regarding the population in our country? Check these links for further information: http://www.ontsi.red.es/ontsi/es/indicador/evolucion-del-numero-de-clientes-de-telefonia-movil-en-espana and www.ine.es.

2. Telephone media and equipment

Almost everybody has a phone today (mobile, mostly). This device is widespread among the population and, as we stated above, is one of the most important communication tools in the field of business.

At the present time, more and more companies are using telephone systems to provide their business services.

The various **devices** used in telephony are usually grouped into three types:

- Fixed individual devices.
- Private branch exchanges (PBX).
- Mobile devices.

We will know more about these devices in the following sections.

2.1. Fixed telephony devices

These devices are known as **fixed telephones.** They are non-portable devices that connect to other phones or to a telephone exchange through a network of conductive metals (**copper networks**, although today these are being replaced by optical fiber networks).

2.2. PBX

> A **private branch exchange or PBX** is the equipment that connects calls between two destinations or ends.

They are located in places or locations that hold all the equipment that plays the role of connecting two different geographical points. Telecommunication companies manage the equipment and provide services to both business and individuals.

Basically, PBXs are small telephone exchanges that are installed in the offices of a company; their basic functions are call transfer among extensions, caller ID, conference calls, call waiting and voice mail, among others, according to the needs of the company.

While they may be analogue or digital, digital PBXs today have virtually replaced the analogue devices.

Furthermore, the development of services through the Internet has changed the classical concept of PBX, which has been replaced by IP PBXs.

A. IP PBXs

Also known as **VoIP phone systems**, these comprehensive telephone systems provide telephone calls over IP data networks (Fig. 6.1).

An IP PBX is configured to send all calls using data packets through a **data network** (Internet), rather than through traditional telephone network. As we indicated above, companies are now replacing their traditional systems for IP PBXs because of their many advantages.

Fig. 6.1. IP PBX model.

A — Vocabulary

- **Optical fiber.** Transmission medium that is often used in telecommunications, consisting of a very thin fiber (it has the thickness of a human hair) that is made of transparent material, glass or plastics. It sends light pulses that represent data to be transmitted. The light source may be laser or LED. Compared to copper networks, it is much cheaper (the raw material is sand), but it has the disadvantage of its fragility and difficulty to be welded.
- **Laser.** Beam with a single wavelength (monochromatic), and therefore with a single colour.
- **LED.** Light-emitting diode.
- **Diode.** Electronic component that allows an electric current to pass in only one direction.
- **IP.** It corresponds to the acronym for Internet Protocol. This system allows sending and receiving data over the Internet.

Watch out!

We must differentiate between the concepts of Voice over IP (VoIP) and IP telephony.

- **VoIP** is a set of standards, protocols, devices and technologies for the delivery of voice over the IP protocol.
- **IP Network** is the publicly available telephone service with VoIP technology.

PBXs also have **telephone terminals** or **IP telephone terminals;** the latter devices allow communication using an IP network, either through a local area network or through the Internet. Although they look like a regular telephone, this is actually a hardware that uses a data network connection instead of a telephone network connection.

IP phones often have more options and advantages than a conventional telephone. As this system is fully digital and programmable, those terminals usually have special keys; some include a video camera to make videoconferences. The price of these devices is usually the same as traditional phones.

B. Call centres

A **call centre** is a tool aimed at communicating with customers who use the phone as a primary device.

Call centres (Fig. 6.2) manage both incoming calls (**inbound**) and outgoing calls (**outbound**). Today, most call centres are managed with IP PBXs because the cost is much lower than with traditional PBXs, and also offer a greater variety of services.

Fig. 6.2. Call centre.

C. Contact centres

Contact centres are an evolution of call centres aimed at managing a large volume of phone calls, both incoming and outgoing calls.

They can also manage the relationship with customers through other media such as fax, chat or messaging systems, both SMS and multimedia.

Case study 2. Free registration in IP telephony software

Internet provides users with IP telephony software that allows them to call or receive calls at no extra cost on the price of their Internet connection. One of the best known is Skype, which is very easy to install and configure.

In this case study we will download and configure it with the following parameters:

Account name with **Skype**.

- User.
- Password.
- E-mail.
- Add a contact to your Skype account.

Solution:

Creating an account with **Skype** is very easy. The steps are the following:

- Download the program from the web: **http://www.skype.com**
- Click on the file setup.exe
- Follow the installation steps. We must enter: account name, username and password (a combination of letters and numbers).

If the user is available, our Skype account is ready to be used.

Activities

4. Search the Internet for some VoIP service providers and write down the name of three of them at least.

5. List three Spanish companies that have a call centre, and three with a contact centre.

2.3. Mobile devices

Mobile phones have undoubtedly meant one of the **great revolutions** of the twentieth century, as it has provided communications and mobility as no device ever did before. It has been so successful that in some countries like Spain, recent studies indicate that the number of mobile phone devices far exceeds the number of inhabitants.

> A **mobile phone** is a portable device (wireless) that allows access to the mobile phone network in geographic areas where the service provider has coverage.

Apart from making and receiving phone calls, there are many and varied functions that can be performed today through a mobile device: making payments and balancing inquiries from bank accounts, connecting to the Internet, sending and receiving emails, recording videos, taking quality pictures and running many other applications, depending on the phone we have.

The mobile terminals are now grouped into **two types** of devices: PDAs and Smartphones:

- **PDA**. It is virtually a small computer (Fig. 6.4). The acronym goes for Personal Digital Assistant. They allow us to browse the Internet and check our email at any time and anywhere.

- **Smartphone**. Imagine a mobile phone with further functions such as pictures and videos, radio, MP3 player or television: this is a Smartphone (Fig. 6.5). The fundamental reason why these devices have arisen is to try to make it easier for business management over the phone.

The first so-called Smartphone was developed by the company IBM in 1992 and was called SIMON. Its features were very limited (send and receive calls, calendar, address book, and send and receive faxes), especially compared to current devices.

The main services that a Smartphone may provide are:

- Internet, whatever our situation (work, home, etc.).
- E-mail.
- File transmission, mostly images.
- Videoconference.
- Digital camera (for video recording and photography).
- Audio and video quality player.
- Electronic personal agenda.
- GPS (geographical location maps of great accuracy).
- Own operating system.

Fig. 6.3. The first mobile phone. It is the Motorola DynaTAC 8000X. It went on sale in 1983 at a price of $ 3,995. It had a weight of 0.79 kg and its battery took ten hours to charge. For its development, Motorola invested one hundred million dollars and its research lasted almost fifteen years.

Fig. 6.4. PDA model.

Fig. 6.5. Smartphone model.

✎ Activities

6. You probably have a personal mobile phone. Make a short list with the main features of your terminal.

7. Search the Internet to find out the reason why mobile devices always have English names.

8. Do you know the meaning of the following icons displayed on a mobile terminal?


✋ Watch out!

For some of the mentioned services, first we must hire or apply for them to our telephone service provider.

3. Additional services offered by the telephone equipment

The services that telephony equipment can offer are varied, and availability depends on our supplier of these services. In most cases, these services imply an extra charge.

Supplementary services may be grouped into:
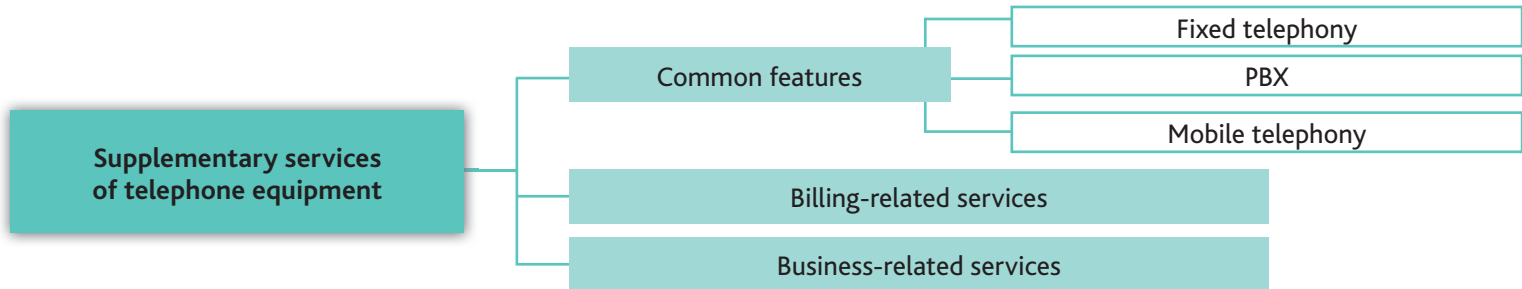
Scheme 6.1. Additional services of telephone equipment.

3.1. Common features

There are certain features that are common within each type of service. We will study them in the following sections.

A. Fixed telephony

These are the common features of fixed telephony:

Notice of charge	It allows the user to receive information on the cost of a call during and/or at the end of it.
Call forwarding	It diverts incoming calls to any phone number that has been previously chosen.
Call hold	It keeps a call on hold to attend another incoming call and retrieves it again.
Call waiting	It notifies an incoming call to the subscriber while talking, so that the subscriber may reject, accept or ignore that call.
Call offer	It displays the incoming call on the screen and allows the recipient to accept or reject it.
Identification of the calling line	It identifies the incoming call numbers.
Three-way calling	Three people can talk simultaneously.
Completion of calls	In case of failure to answer a call, or when the user is busy, the call is finished.
Call transfer	It enables a user to connect two incoming calls.
Notice of initiation of multiconference	It allows a communication with more than one recipient at a time.
Recall	It makes a call to the last dialed number, even several times.

Table 6.1. Typical services of fixed telephony.

Activities

9. The services in Table 6.1 are not the only ones. Search the web and explain these two supplementary services:

a) Do not disturb.
b) Multiple subscriber.

B. PBXs

In the case of PBXs, the most common **supplementary features** are:

- **Identification of incoming calls.**
- **Call restrictions.** It limits the number of calls made to the outside.
- **Music on hold**. Through this service, the user hears a musical tune chosen by the company until the operator or the appropriate telephone extension answers that call.
- **Billing information.** Through this feature we are informed about the cost of a service.

In addition to these features, there are others that are specific for **IP PBXs**, including the following:

- Call transfer, both internal and external.
- Call forwarding when the line is busy or the call is not answered.
- Do not disturb.
- Remote extensions out of office (for telecommuters or employees of other offices).
- Call groups.
- Remote call capture.
- Voice mail (general, individual and group) protected by password.
- E-mail.
- Management of blacklists (phone numbers with forbidden access).
- Actions to be taken according to dates and times (working hours, holidays, etc.).
- Conference rooms (two or more terminals simultaneously).
- List of incoming and outgoing calls, with consumption graphics.
- Automatic detection of incoming faxes.
- Queuing of incoming calls (function for call centres).
- Recording of incoming and outgoing calls (function for call centres).
- Videoconferencing, which allows to carry out conversations and see two or more people located in different geographical areas over the Internet.

? Do you know that...?

Telecommuting or **telework** is a method that allows distance work. Today, more and more companies take advantage of the benefits that this system has for employees and for the company.

C. Mobile telephony

The features that mobile terminals can offer will depend on the specific **model** and the **service provider** (telephone company). The most common are:

- **Length of calls:** both incoming and outgoing.
- **Voice mail:** if a call is not answered, a mailbox will collect the messages.
- **Call forwarding.**
- **Call waiting.**
- **Missed calls:** if our phone is off, out of coverage or busy, this feature will notify us the incoming calls that we have received but haven't answered. This notice is usually carried out via SMS.
- **Address book:** the terminal can store the phone numbers of your contacts. Each contact typically includes several types of phone numbers (main, work, home, etc.), as well as other data, such as email or web page.
- **Conference calling:** it allows having conversations with several people at once.
- **Emergency call:** it can communicate with an emergency telephone number, 112 (for Europe), regardless of the mode in which the phone is.

Vocabulary

- **Bluetooth.** Communication tool that allows voice and data transmission via radio.
- **WI-FI.** The term was coined by the "Wi-Fi Alliance". It is a set of standards for wireless networks. It works with radio waves.
- **WAP.** Protocol that uses wireless networks (such as accessing the Internet through a mobile phone). It means "Wireless Application Protocol".
- **UMTS.** It means "Universal Mobile Telecommunications System". It replaces the old GSM and is used in 3G (third generation) terminals.
- **3G.** Abbreviation for third generation. Services related to third generation terminals provide the ability to transfer voce, data and non-voice data (such as downloading programs, exchanging email and instant messaging).
- **Protocol.** Set of rules that are established for two devices to communicate with each other.

- **Voice recognition:** it allows you to call a user number using your voice without typing or selecting the number.

- **Infrared:** it allows data transmission between devices. Now it is being replaced by the Bluetooth system.

- **GPRS:** this technology allows access to various services such as user location, routes and maps checking, online shopping, etc.

- **SMS messages:** service that allows you to send short messages. Each message is often between 160 and 200 characters.

- **Multimedia messaging or MMS:** it allows you to send messages with pictures, videos, voice files, songs, etc.

- **Video calling:** you can see your interlocutor in your terminal screen as you speak.

- **Downloads:** you can perform legal downloads of music, videos, programs, and so on.

- **Email:** you can send and receive e-mails on your terminal, but first you must configure your mobile phone to do so.

- **Internet services:** you can access the web via a modem or Wi-Fi networks.

- **GPS navigation:** it allows you to use your terminal as a navigation system, for example, when driving in cities that you don't know.

3.2. Billing-related services

Both fixed and mobile telephony have billing-related services. Depending on the service provider, they may be offered for free or involve extra costs.

These services can be grouped into three types:

- **Information on bills:** it is the set of data that appears on your bill, such as the user, phone numbers that you call, duration and costs of every call, discount plans, and so on.

- **Consumption control:** if requested, this service sends an alert to the user when a specific billing limit has been exceeded.

- **Flat fee:** it means that we pay a fixed amount in the billing period, regardless of the amount and duration of calls. It is usually applied to fixed telephony users, but currently it is expanding to mobile telephony.

3.3. Business-related services

When talking about telephony services related to business (apart from what has been already discussed in previous sections), we must refer to the set of relationships with suppliers, employees and customers. Thus, in the corporate business world there are two important concepts:

- **M-Business (Mobile Business Development):** it is the use of technology and applications that enables business processes using mobile devices. It includes a number of activities ranging from communications via e-mail to receiving product information via SMS or ordering through the phone. M-business includes the following business types:

  – **B2B (Business to Business):** applications oriented to the sale of goods and services. For example, it happens between a company and one of its customers (which, in turn, is another company).

  – **B2C (Business to Consumer):** the process that occurs between a company and a consumer. For example, it happens between a company and a person buying something through a mobile phone.

    – **B2E (Business to Employee):** set of activities aimed at providing products or services to a company's own employees.

    – **B2G (Business to Government):** it is focused on business activities between business and governments (either locally, regionally or nationally and even internationally).

• **M-Commerce (Mobile Commerce):** this concept includes any transaction carried out through a telecommunications network (such as those made through a mobile phone or through PBXs). Buying a movie ticket using the mobile phone is an M-Commerce situation. In turn, there are three types of service within M-Commerce:

    – **Mobile-ticketing:** a customer can order, pay for, obtain and confirm tickets from anywhere and anytime with a mobile device.

    – **Mobile-banking:** it is the use of mobile devices for transactions, payments or any other kind of operation with a financial institution. It is performed via SMS or online.

    – **Mobile payments:** it is the charge to customers through mobile devices.

Case study 3. Services through mobile phone

We need to make a telephone appointment at a health care service, which is provided through a call centre.

Let's see what kind of services are produced when we call from a mobile phone and:

    a) We call a 902 number and we are informed about its cost.

    b) They invite us to choose an extension (such as when we hear: "For consultations, please press 1; for outpatients, please press 2; otherwise, please hold the line"). A tune plays while we wait.

    c) An operator tells us that the conversation will be recorded for security reasons.

    d) We are told that the date and time of the appointment will be sent to us via a text message (SMS) to our mobile phone.

Solution:

The types of services that we have been offered are:

    a) Call to a premium-rate phone number (information on costs).

    b) Call transfer with music on hold.

    c) Queuing for incoming calls and recording of incoming calls.

    d) SMS message service.

Activities

10. Indicate what type of business is occurring in each of the following cases:

    a) A car company sends an SMS about a new car model.

    b) A bank offers insurance for a client company through an MMS.

11. Imagine you have a mobile terminal and you receive the following messages:

    a) "Sudinero Bank informs you that a charge of € 150 has been made on your card 4546.XXXX.XXXX.8796 on 12.12.2012. Concept: purchase made on Amazon. More info: 909.11.22.33".

    b) "Entradasdirectas.com: confirmation is requested for purchases on 12.12.2012 at 19:30. Concept: 3 tickets. Send an SMS to 600.56.89.75. SMS cost: 0.09 cents + VAT".

4. Rules for a good telephone communication

Achieving a smooth and effective communication when we hold a telephone conversation is essential, as we anticipated. Therefore, we have to follow certain rules such as those provided below.

4.1. Basic rules

Today, the phone has become an essential element in the normal life of any company.

In section 2.5 of the previous unit we studied some techniques for establishing effective telephone communication from the point of view of the channel; in this section we will see other techniques not only to achieve effective communication, but also to generate a positive image of ourselves and the company and achieve business and professional goals.

A phone call is often the first contact that our interlocutor has with our company, so this call has to be perfect in order to **transmit a good image**. Similarly, when we make personal calls, we must also act in an appropriate way, because what we pass on will create an image of ourselves in our interlocutor.

Stages of a phone call

When making a phone call, we can distinguish **four stages** in the process:

Introduction	At this stage, whether we call or receive a call, we must greet, identify ourselves (by name and surname), identify the company and include the reason for the call. For example: "Hello, my name is Josefa Martín, from the company Metalplus, S. A. I want to talk with the head of works, please".
Development	Once we have contacted the person we want, the conversation starts. For example, if we want to introduce new products or services, we must explain the advantages and the features that differentiate them from similar options; we may name some customers who have already purchased some of them, and so on.
	During the course of the conversation, we must assess the interlocutor in order to adjust to adjust the vocabulary we use to his or her level, because if we use technical terms they might not understand us.
	We will also pay special attention to fillers, such as: "Eeehhh...", "um...", because the perception about our intelligence or security in the interlocutor may be damaged. Instead we can use a pause, as it will only last a few seconds and the caller won't notice.
Closure	It is the turning point of the conversation, as we must have achieved the goal of the call before hanging up. For example, if you want the interlocutor to give you an appointment to introduce your products, you can say: "If it's OK with you, Mr. Díaz, we could meet in your office next week and would show you some samples. Could you make it on Tuesday?".
	If you don't reach the goal in the first call, try to arrange another phone call for a more convenient time for the interlocutor. In that call you will repeat the process.
Farewell	It is time to finish the communication with our interlocutor. To say goodbye properly, we must thank the interlocutor for the attention and use a polite set expression such as: "Thank you for your time, Mr. Díaz. Have a nice day".

Table 6.2. Stages of a phone call.

! Spanish assistant

Aunque en esta unidad hay varios ejemplos de frases que suelen utilizarse al teléfono en inglés, aquí tienes algunas más para que puedas afrontar la difícil tarea de comunicarte a través de este canal:

- *Hello, this is María Gutiérrez. How can I help you?:* como verás, al presentarnos no decimos I am, sino *this is.*

- *May I speak to the HR manager, please?:* fíjate en que es más correcto usar *may* que can cuando queremos expresar el motivo de la llamada. Sin embargo, otra forma muy común de expresar los mismo es: *Can I have the HR manager, please?*

- *Please hold (the line):* esta es la forma de pedir a quien llama que se mantenga a la espera mientras pasamos la llamada o consultamos que la persona que puede solventar el problema.

4.2. Rules for answering a call

Now, we will study certain rules that will allow us to answer a phone call properly and to transmit a good image of our company. Table 6.3 groups them into two types: those associated with non-verbal communication and those concerning verbal communication.

Rules relating to aspects of non-verbal communication	Rules relating to aspects of verbal communication
Answer calls as soon as possible: the first or second ring.	Answer politely and courteously. For example: "Tadami Muebles, good morning", "Tadami Muebles, this is María speaking, how I can help you?".
Speak in a relaxed and soft tone.	Pay attention to your diction and pronunciation. You must take special care if you have a very strong regional accent that may prevent our interlocutor from understanding.
Voice volume must also be moderate.	Be very careful with words that we don't want the interlocutor to hear, as covering the handset may not be enough. If your interlocutor hears what you say, you will create a very bad impression.
Do not keep the caller on hold for long. A maximum of 30 seconds.	Do not forget the rules of courtesy and always treat your interlocutor with the word "usted", unless he or she tells you not to do so.
If we know that it will take a long time until we assist the caller or if the person he or she wants to talk is not available, it is best to inform the caller, ask him or her to call some other time or give the chance of leaving the name and/or a message.	You must give time to say goodbye and wait for the caller to hang up before we do.
Stop what you are doing and pay attention to the call.	If you notice that the interlocutor is a foreigner, you will speak slowly and vocalizing, but never shout.

Table 6.3. Rules to answer a phone call properly.

4.3. Rules for making a call

The rules that allow us to make successful telephone calls and to create a good image of our company and ourselves are the following:

Rules relating to aspects of non-verbal communication	Rules relating to aspects of verbal communication
When greeting, you will use a voice tone transmitting strength and confidence, avoiding hesitation.	When making a call, we must greet the interlocutor and identify ourselves with our name and surname and the name of the company we work for. For example: "Good morning. I'm José Pedrosa, from the company Complete Consulting. May I speak with Mr. Juanes, please?". If we are not calling for professional reasons we can simply say: "It's personal".
You must vary the tone throughout the conversation. There is no need to exaggerate, but using a monotone tone bothers the interlocutor, as it shows a lack of enthusiasm or boredom.	If we ask for a specific person, the right thing is to use "Don" or "Doña" before the name, or "Señor" or "Señora" before the surname. Never use family names or nicknames.
	If the person you want to talk to is not available at this time, we may ask what time is best to reach him or her.
	If you have already contacted the right person, you should ask whether it is good time for him or her to talk, as this person may be busy. If the interlocutor can talk at that time, we will continue with the conversation; if he or she cannot, we will arrange another time to make the call.
	If you leave a message with the reason for the call, the message must be clear and concise and should reflect the reason for the call, as well as our name and phone number for future contact.
	If you are calling somebody back, you must state when you were called.
	If we have agreed day and time to call, we will respect the agreement.

Table 6.4. Rules to make a phone call properly.

4.4. Skills to act as a filter

When one of your tasks in your job is answering the phone, you must develop several skills, such as acting as a filter.

> **Acting as a filter** is to select those calls that we must pass to our superiors among all the calls we receive in the company.

The filter function also involves trying to find out the **reasons** for the calls and knowing who is the **right person** to answer every call.

Techniques to act as a filter

- **Act naturally:** you must keep a kind and gentle tone in all circumstances, especially when you have to lie, a situation that we will often face when answering the phone at the company.
- **Find out the relationship** that the caller has with the organization and if this person is already known in the company. In many cases, the right question is: "Could you please tell me the reason for your call?".
- **Check** exactly who the caller wants to talk to. This is particularly relevant in the case of **sales calls**: the sales agent or representative usually asks for the manager or the head of a department, but they may not be the right persons to answer the call properly.
- If we don't know whether the caller can be assisted or not, we will leave the **call on hold** for a reasonable time to find out.
- If our interlocutor cannot be assisted at that time, we will apologise and give the reason, whether real or invented, why the person the caller wants to talk to cannot answer the phone at that time. In addition, we will offer the possibility to leave a message.

4.5. Skills for dealing with complaints over the phone

More and more medium and large companies are providing a department or a person responsible for handling the complaints that customers usually make.

However, many other companies are too small to afford the specific coverage of this service, and then any employee must be ready to meet any customer and/or supplier complaint, which are mainly communicated over the phone. Therefore, we must take into account a number of techniques that allow us to properly address these calls.

Techniques for dealing with complaints over the phone

- Greet and identify ourselves: we will transmit security to the caller.
- Stay calm, with a soft voice tone and an average volume, although the interlocutor -as it usually happens- is nervous, raises the tone and even screams.
- Let the caller explain the whole situation that causes the complaint. This is better than trying to interrupt with explanations.
- Show that you are listening by using brief statements such as "I understand", "I see" and the like.
- Take notes of key points of the complaint so that you can answer them one by one without forgetting any. If you have questions or you are not sure whether the caller understood everything correctly, we may ask. This will also help us to maintain control over the conversation.
- Don't underestimate the problem, even though the customer is exaggerating.
- Agree that the caller is right only if he or she is, but not just to end the call.
- Don't promise things that you cannot keep. If we have doubts about how to solve the situation, take note of everything you have talked about, write down the name and telephone number of the caller and promise to call back as soon as you have made some inquiries
- about the problem. This call back shouldn't take more than 24 hours.

4.6. Job search with the phone

Although the use of the phone is not a very common method for active job search, it can be **very effective**, particularly in SMEs, where it is relatively easy to contact the person responsible for recruitment (and it often coincides with the figure of the manager or owner).

To use this method properly and effectively, we must follow a series of steps that we will study now.

A. Preparation

First of all, we must know the appropriate place to call. For this purpose, we have to select the companies that might be offering a job position that fits our training and expectations.

Once the companies have been selected, we should collect information about them and about the sectors to which they belong (Fig. 6.6).

If possible, we should also obtain the **name of the person** we want to contact: the head of HR, the head of the department, the manager of the company... Another useful technique is to find a possible contact within the company who can open doors when we call.

We must prepare what we want to communicate, so that there is nothing left to mention after the call. To do this, it is advisable to have our professional and academic profile available, allowing us to answer any questions that we might be asked during the call.

Finally, we must bear in mind the **ultimate goal**: to obtain an interview or to find out the name of the person we can send our written information (CV, cover letter...).

Fig. 6.6. Before calling the company offering the position, we should be informed about it as much as we can. Visiting its website may be really useful.

B. Calling process

Once prepared, we should make sure if we are calling at an **appropriate time**; thus, we will avoid peak hours and the moments right before the departure time of the company.

Then, we will make calls in the order that we have established, and will take note of each one of them to know where we have to call back and when we have agreed to do it, who we will talk to and other issues of interest that they have provided.

Keep in mind that the call may be initially answered by an employee that will act as a filter, so we must be prepared to pass this filter and to insist. In the event that the person you want to talk to is not available, ask what time is good to locate and talk to him or her.

C. Reaching the goal

If we have succeeded in contacting the right person, we must speak **without a plaintive tone, and briefly** and calmly explain who we are and what we believe we can provide to that particular company.

In our communication we will use the following keys, creating a good impression over the phone:

Aspects of non-verbal communication	Aspects of verbal communication
Show a positive and optimistic attitude.	Speak slowly and vocalize. Don't let nerves affect you.
Use a strong and assertive tone.	When we are asked about the reason for our call to the company, we will clearly explain it, indicating the position or the responsible person we want to talk to.

Table 6.5. Keys to give a good impression over the phone.

Finally, if we have an appointment for an interview, we will make sure the day, time and person we have the interview with, and we will write it all down to remember it.
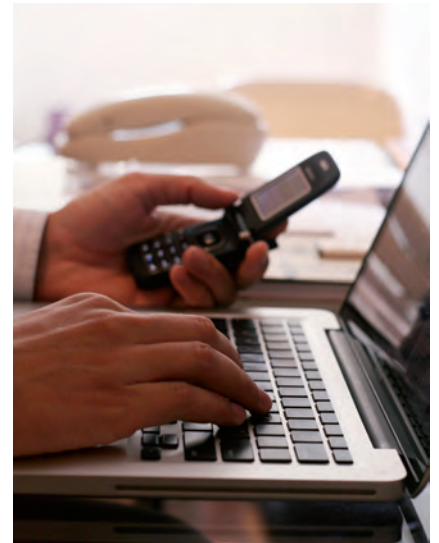
Case study 4. How to establish telephone contact with someone

Julia Martín works for a company that sells office supplies, Caperplush. She wants to introduce these products to the responsible person for purchasing office supplies in the consulting company Cachón y Asociados, but she doesn't know the name of the person she has to speak with. Let's study the development of the conversation.

Solution:

INTRODUCTION

— **Recepcionist (R):** Cachón y Asociados, good morning. This is María López speaking. How I can help?
— **Caperplush (C):** Good morning. My name is Julia Martín, from the company Caperplush. May I speak with the person responsible for purchasing office supplies, please?

— **R:** Hold on a second, please. I'll check if he's available. *(Pause)*

— **R:** Mr. Gómez is not available at this time. Do you want to leave a message?
— **C:** Yes, please. Tell him Julia Martín called, from the company Caperplush, to introduce our new range of products and services. *(Write down the name: Mr. Gómez)*

— **R:** Ms. Martín, I'll put you through to Mr. Gómez.
— **C:** Thank you.

DEVELOPMENT

— **Mr. Gómez (G):** Good morning. Antonio Gomez speaking. What I can do for you?
— **C:** Good morning, Mr. Gómez. My name is Julia Martín, from the company Caperplush. My company sells office supplies and the reason for my call was to arrange an interview to introduce our new product catalogue.

Repeat the call

— **G:** Well, we're very satisfied with our current provider and have no plans to change.

— **G:** This isn't really a good time to talk. We are closing the fiscal year and don't have much time.
— **C:** I can call any other time. What about in two weeks? Could you make it on Tuesday 19?
— **G:** That would be perfect. I'll be waiting for your call.

CLOSURE

— **C:** I understand, I'm sure the company you work with has a good service. But we can offer exceptional prices because we are manufacturers and don't work with intermediaries.
— **G:** I didn't know you were manufacturers.
— **C:** Yes, we have twenty years of experience in the sector. Do you think we could meet this week? Could you make it on Thursday?
— **G:** Yes, Thursday is a good day. Is that OK at half past three?

FAREWELL

— **C:** On Thursday at half past three I'll be there. Thank you very much for your time, Mr. Gómez.
— **G:** Thank you. Have a nice day.
— **C:** You too.

— **C:** Thank you for your time, Mr. Gómez. Have a nice day.
— **G:** Thank you too.

Activities

12. Divide the class in pairs and prepare the following situations. For some situations you can ask a third student to play the role of receptionist, if necessary.

- **Situation 1.** Student A has just obtained a degree in Administration and Finance and is looking for a company to provide some training. Student B will be responsible for the Human Resources department.

- **Situation 2.** Student A is the sales agent of a telephone company that wants the company Pandehoy to hire its services. Student B is responsible for the provision of these services in the company and is very satisfied with the service of the company they have right now.

13. Following the pattern presented in the previous case study, develop at least three possibilities for this conversation.

Marcos Gutiérrez owns a repair shop. Juan is responsible for accounting and also handles phone calls. Alfredo López is a young man searching for his first job as a mechanic; he has made a three-month training period in another repair shop and has studied a course on vehicle electrics during the last six months.

Alfredo makes a phone call to Marcos' repair shop, but he doesn't know the person he has to talk to in order to arrange a possible job interview.

5. Telemarketing

Telemarketing is a marketing action in which the telephone is used as the communication channel; it is directly aimed at contacting customers or potential customers for commercial purposes (for example, sales) or at improving corporate image (for example, technical support), among other things.

Telemarketing itself is not a comprehensive sales strategy, **but a sales or supporting method** for the company within its overall sales strategy, and it has specific characteristics. Thus, mobile phone companies, for example, often use telemarketing to increase sales, but they also use other complementary tools such as e-mail communication, conventional advertising campaigns, etc. as well as their conventional stores (Fig. 6.7).

The **two functions** performed by this tool are: firstly, as a means of communication, and secondly, as a marketing channel.

- **As a means of communication,** it allows us to select and customize each contact, assisting every client or potential client individually. It also allows for interactivity, since we can obtain the recipient's response at the same time that we issue the message.

- **As a marketing channel,** it allows us to schedule a sales visit at once in order to make the sale of a product or service, and even to perform a direct sale (teleshopping), if that is the goal of the call.

5.1. Telemarketing applications

Telemarketing applications are very diverse, but most of them are commercial and marketing applications.

- **Commercial applications.** Their goal is to make a sale, either during the call itself or arranging an appointment to make that sale. Examples of such applications are:

  - Locating potential customers.

  - Arranging interviews for the sales team.

  - Keeping track of previous contacts. For example, to confirm the interest shown in a previous call, to sell or to confirm an order.

  - Teleshopping. That is to say, closing the sale of a product or service in the very act of the call.

  - Generating new sales of a product that has been previously purchased or sell another related product to the same customer.

  - Renewing subscriptions to services, publications, etc.

  - Communicating new offers and custom offers.

  - Attracting new customers or recover former ones.

  - Reactivating "silent" customers, that is to say, to work again on inactive user accounts.

- **Marketing applications.** Their main objective is to gather information on actual or potential customers. Their needs, customs, traditions, ideologies... This type of telemarketing doesn't have a clear sales purpose. These applications are:

  - Conducting customer satisfaction surveys.

  - Creating or updating customer databases, whether real or potential.

Fig. 6.7. Telemarketing workers must develop for optimal listening and customer care with each client.

! Important

There are two different activities within telemarketing, depending on the direction of calls:
- In **outbound telemarketing** the company gets in touch with customers or potential customers according to a contacts database that has been previously developed.
- In **inbound telemarketing** the company receives calls from customers or potential customers. These contacts result from a previous action of the company. For example, a company launches a newspaper, e-mail or SMS campaign, in which it invites customers to call in order to obtain some product or service in return.

A Vocabulary

- **Upgrading.** Generating another purchase of the same product.
- **Cross-selling.** Make the sale of a product that is related to another that the customer has previously purchased.
- **Follow-up.** Keeping track of commercial offers that have been previously provided by postal mail, e-mail or visit.

– Market research. This section includes multiple applications: surveys on consumption habits, on brand awareness or positioning and on immediate response to an advertising campaign, among others.

– Launching and keeping loyalty programs.

– Customer service centres.

– Surveys on voting intentions.

5.2. Advantages and disadvantages of telemarketing

Like other advertising tools, telemarketing has certain advantages but also some disadvantages, which must be assessed to decide whether or not it is appropriate to apply this technique in our business strategy.

Advantages	Disadvantages
There is a direct and immediate contact with the actual or potential customer. By establishing a feedback channel we may know the customer questions and clarify any doubts on the spot, preventing potential uncertainty in the purchase decision and encouraging the final purchase.	There is no visual information, so that people who make or answer calls must be aware of all the recommendations we have mentioned above in the process of telephone communication.
The cost is lower than making personal visits, as these require more time and travel costs.	If our company has no database of potential contacts, the acquisition or creation of a custom database is very expensive. If we buy an existing database, many contacts might not match our potential customers. And if our company already has one, we must consider the costs of maintaining and updating it so that can be effective and useful.
It allows the task of finding potential customers quickly.	
We can keep in touch with customers even when we cannot visit them personally.	
The sales territory may be expanded without creating branches or hiring representatives in other regions or countries.	This tool is often regarded as an intrusion, and many companies don't make a proper use of it; thus, this type of communication has become a nuisance to many phone users, who reject any telemarketing action as soon as they know the purpose of the call.
It provides immediate results on the benefits of the action or its acceptance.	

Table 6.6. Advantages and disadvantages of telemarketing.

5.3. Skills to develop a telemarketing professional

To make a successful telemarketing campaign we must consider **three aspects**:

1. The **contact file or database of potential customers** must be properly updated and consistent with the objectives of the service or campaign. For example, if we want to offer an Internet connection via optical fiber, it doesn't make much sense to have contacts in our database who already have this type of connection or who live in areas where this type of connection is not possible.

2. We must have the **appropriate technical and technological means**. For example, if we want to make five thousand contacts a day we have to calculate how many phone lines we will use, how many computers, what is the quickest way to fill in the forms, and so on.

3. Finally, we must have a sufficient **workforce** that is trained and skilled enough to meet the objectives. For example, if we want to extend our sales network, we must have team available to move to the client's office to close the sale if necessary. Furthermore, when the telemarketing team is large, or in massive campaigns, we must hire a supervisor for every eight or ten workers to monitor both quantitative (for example, the number of calls) and qualitative aspects (for example, if phone assistance is being polite, correct, etc.).

@ Web

If you want to learn more about telemarketing applications, read this article:

http://www.puromarketing. com/23/6979/maneras-utilizar- llamadas-masivas.html

Let's have a look at the stages that we must follow:

Before the call

- We will carefully **prepare it**: we must test our voice tone, the words that we will use to say hello or goodbye, and even how to react to situations of rejection or verbal aggressiveness by the interlocutor.

- We must **believe in our work**. If we sell a product, we believe in its quality, and if we work in customer service, we must want to help those who call.

During the call

Aspects of non-verbal communication	Aspects of verbal communication	
The voice tone must always be soft and gentle.	Always use proper and polite language.	
Check your voice volume. Use an average tone or raise it just a bit if the caller doesn't hear you properly.	Speak slowly and clearly so that the caller can understand you.	
Maintain an upright body position, a kind gesture and even a smile, as the attitude is also perceived through the voice.	When greeting, always mention your name and the company you work for. If we are calling, we will also explain our purpose.	
Speak with confidence and professionalism so that the caller can also feel safe.	Develop strategies to pass the filters and reach the right person.	
	During the conversation always try to keep everything under control. For example, use questions to guide the conversation.	
	Keep a collaborative attitude with the caller, answering questions politely and checking if he or she understands your explanations.	
	Let the speaker talk without interrupting until the end of his or her explanation.	When finishing the conversation, always thank the caller for their attention before ending the communication.
		Always wait for the caller to hang up.

Table 6.7. Aspects of verbal and non-verbal communication to be considered during the call.

After the call

- If the call was successful, we will review the key points of the conversation: how we kept everything under control, the strategy that we used to avoid a negative response, and so on. These points will be analysed and used for future calls.

- If the conversation was not successful, we will review our weak points and assess our mistakes to avoid making them again.

- If the caller always gives the same excuses, doubts or objections to a question or about a feature of the product or service we offer, we must change our arguments or notify our supervisor, because there might be a mistake in the planning of the campaign or service.

✏️ **Activities**

14. Divide the class in pairs and prepare the following telemarketing campaigns. Then perform them using your classmates as real or potential customers.

    a) **Outbound.** You work for a natural gas company. You're going to call your current customers to persuade them to also hire household electricity. Prepare the business strategy in terms of: customer benefits, advantages of having a single supplier... You must be ready to answer any questions that may arise.

    b) **Inbound.** You work for a company that sells breakfast cereal and you have set a phone line for customers to call and ask the questions they have about the new range of cereal: fiber and vegetables, puffed rice with cheese and red-wine-flavoured corn flakes. Develop the features of each product, such as nutritional values, possible counter-indications, etc. You must be ready to answer any questions that customers may ask.

Case study 5. Telemarketing calls

The NGO Niños en el Mundo is performing an action to attract new members through a telemarketing campaign. María Llopis is one of the telephone operators working in this campaign; she likes her job and performs it with kindness and professionalism.

Let's have a look at the following telephone conversation between María and a potential member. Pay attention to the friendly and gentle tone of María, to the knowledge she has about the NGO she represents and to the use of questions to keep the conversation under control.

— X: Hello, good morning.

— ML: Good morning. My name is María Llopis, from the NGO Niños en el Mundo. What's your name, please?

— X: José Fernández.

— ML: Good morning, Mr. Fernández. I was wondering if maybe we could talk two minutes about something that will make you think...

— X: I'm kind of busy right now.

— ML: I understand, but did you know that 25,000 children around the world starve to death every day? And that this could be avoided with a small contribution of each one of us?

— X: Well, I didn't know that.

— ML: Our NGO, Niños en el Mundo, has worked for over twenty years with communities in third world countries to develop self-sufficiency projects for these communities, so that they can supply themselves and eradicate this problem. Don't you think this is a very important job?

— X: Of course I do.

— ML: It is. But we need people like you, Mr. Fernández, to help us develop these projects. More and more members are joining our NGO, because with only € 10 per month, not a big deal for us, you can save the lives of many children. I'm sure you want to help us with this.

— X: Sure.

— ML: Thank you, José. Would you be so kind to give me your address and your ID card number?

— X: Yes, I live in...

— ML: Thank you very much. Now I need your bank account number. Take your time, I'll be holding on.

— X: Here it is. Take note...

— ML: Thank you very much for your time, José. In a few days you will receive your membership by postal mail. With this action you are helping us save many lives.

— X: Thank you.

— ML: Have a nice day.

— X: You too.

Activities

15. Give five existing examples of phone numbers of inbound telemarketing. Search the web if you need it.

16. In pairs, think of three examples of commercial applications, and other three examples of marketing applications. Once listed, explain the reasons why these phones are included in either group.

17. Work in pairs and perform the following telemarketing conversations. When preparing the conversations, remember that the telemarketer must know the product or service, so you will have to provide the product or sevice with history, characteristics, advantages for the consumer, and so on. A piece of the teething ring Dientitos2000 got stuck in the mouth of a 10-month old baby. The toy company reacts by withdrawing the product from the shops; then it makes an advertising campaign warning consumers of the danger and inviting them to return the teether. It also provides consumers with a phone number to solve any doubts.

a) Student A is a worried father or mother who doesn't understand the composition of a baby food jar that has just given to his or her son, who is allergic to lactose. He or she also wants to confirm the production process. Student B is part of the telemarketing company Bebesanote and must answer these questions.

b) Student A belongs to the team of a telemarketing campaign of the company FoodExpress, aimed at home delivery service of food. The company wants to set up in the city of Cádiz, but first it will perform a survey of potential customers to assess the acceptance. Student B is a young bachelor, aged 30, who works full-time: the ideal consumer of FoodExpress menus.

Summary

| Telephone communication | Importance of telephone communication within the company. |

Telephone means and equipment	Fixed telephony devices.	
	PBXs.	IP PBXs. Call centres. Contact centers.
	Mobile devices.	PDA. Smartphone.

Additional services provided by the telephone equipment	Common features.	Fixed telephony.
		PBXs.
		Mobile telephony.
	Billing-related services.	
	Business-related services.	M-Business. M-Commerce.

Rules for a good telephone communication	Basic rules.	Stages of a phone call: introduction/development/closure/farewell.
	Rules for answering a call.	Aspects of non-verbal communication. Aspects of verbal communication.
	Rules for making a call.	Aspects of non-verbal communication Aspects of verbal communication.
	Skills to act as a filter.	Techniques to select the calls that must be passed to our superiors.
	Skills to handle telephone complaints.	
	Job search over the phone.	Preparation/Process/Reaching the target Keys to create a good impression over the phone.

Telemarketing	Communication tool that uses the phone as the main communication method in a systematic and planned way.	
	Telemarketing applications.	Commercial applications. Marketing applications.
	Advantages and disadvantages of telemarketing.	
	Skills to develop a professional telemarketing.	Before the call / During the call / After the call → Aspects of verbal and non-verbal communication.

Test review

1. A fixed phone is:

a) A mobile device.

b) A portable device.

c) A non-portable device.

d) None of the above.

2. Call centres today are:

a) Digital.

b) Analogue.

c) Analogue and digital.

d) None of the above.

3. An IP PBX:

a) Sends calls through packet data.

b) Uses IP telephone terminals.

c) Sends data over a network (for example, Internet).

d) All of the above.

4. The first mobile phone was a:

a) Motorola.

b) Nokia.

c) Samsung.

d) None of the above.

5. The Personal Digital Assistant is:

a) A smartphone.

b) A type of IP phone.

c) A PDA.

d) All of the above.

6. With a Smartphone you cannot:

a) Send an email.

b) Make a video call.

c) Play music.

d) None of the above.

7. When a user receives information on the cost of a call, this service is:

a) Call forwarding.

b) Completed call.

c) Recall.

d) Notice of charge.

8. What are the stages of a phone call?

a) Introduction, development, closure and farewell.

b) Greeting, presentation, development and farewell.

c) Presentation, development and closure.

d) Greeting, development, closure and farewell.

9. Which is the most appropriate greeting?

a) "Corrella company. Good morning".

b) "Corrella speaking".

c) "Corrella company, Julia speaking. How can I help you?"

d) "Corrella company, what do you want?"

10. Which of these statements is not true?

a) We can use "tú" with the interlocutor if he or she gives us permission.

b) If the interlocutor is a foreigner, we must speak slowly and clearly.

c) We must answer the phone before the third ring.

d) The interlocutor must hang up before we do.

11. Which is the best way to introduce oneself?

a) Good morning, my name is Juan Peláez. May I talk to Tito, please?

b) Hello, may I talk to Javier Casares, from the Contracts Department, please?

c) Good afternoon, my name is Nerea Terán, from the company Marcola. May I speak with Mr. Gutiérrez, please?

d) Good afternoon, may I have the manager, please?

12. Which of these statements regarding telemarketing is not true?

a) The team that makes telemarketing campaigns should receive specific training.

b) The customer databases are revised while the campaign is conducted.

c) Telemarketing allows contact with customers in remote areas.

d) A good telemarketer should practice before making calls.

13. Which of these statements regarding the development of a telemarketing call is not true?

a) You must keep an upright body position when you talk on the phone.

b) You must maintain the conversation under control, for example, using questions to lead the interlocutor.

c) You must speak with confidence and professionalism.

d) At the end of the call you must apologise for having wasted the interlocutor's time.

Check your learning

Assess the importance of telephone communication within the company

1. Explain in your own words why telephone communication is important for the company.

Phone media that are currently used

2. List the classification of existing telephony media.

3. What kind of wiring network is used to connect fixed telephony equipment?

4. What is the function of the classic telephone exchange?

5. Indicate what type of PBX is used in most companies today.

6. What kind of network do IP phones use to connect?

7. Define:

   a) An IP PBX.

   b) A call centre.

   c) A contact centre.

8. Today mobile phones are of two types, which are...

Most common features of fixed and mobile devices and PBXs

9. List some of the services offered by mobile telephony.

10. Mention three features that fixed telephony usually offers.

11. List four features that are usually performed by IP PBXs.

12. Identify seven features of mobile phones.

13. What billing-related services are usually provided over the phone?

14. Define:

   a) M-Business.

   b) M-Commerce.

   c) Mobile-banking.

   d) Business to business.

15. What concept does the following definition refer to?

    "Charge to customers made through mobile devices".

16. The set of business processes occurring between a company and its customers though mobile devices is called...

17. What is the call forwarding service?

18. What telephone service allows you talk to three people at once?

19. Match the concepts in these two columns:

B2B
Mobile ticketing
Business to Government
B2E
Mobile payments

M-Commerce
M-Business

Making and receiving effective corporate calls

20. Explain with your own words the different stages of a phone call and give examples of each.

21. Imagine that you have finished your Vocational Training and that you want to start a job search in your area. What are the previous steps before starting to call? Find the name of three companies in your area and try to find the name of the person responsible for human resources.

22. Rewrite the following conversations following the patterns and recommendations that we have studied in this unit.

Conversation 1

— X: Gómez y Asociados speaking.

— Y: Good morning, miss. My name is Justino Paz, from the company MTX. May I speak with Mr. Rodríguez?

— X: Do you want to speak with Lalito Rodríguez or Paco Rodríguez?

Conversation 2

— X: Fresnadillo company. Good morning.

— Y: Hi. I'm Luis Pol. Give me Don Armando.

— X: Yes, hold on a sec.

Pause

— X: Don Armando is not available right now. Do you want to leave a message?

— Y: Yes, tell him that his brother-in-law called and that I need him to call me back.

— X: Okay, I'll tell him. Bye!

Check your learning

Conversation 3

— X: Good afternoon. Zapatines, S.L. This is Pedro Lores speaking, how I can help?

— Y: Good afternoon. May I speak to Mr. Méndez, please?

— X: Yes, hold on a sec. Who's calling?

— Y: I'm Mario Torre, from Megacord.

— X: Mm... I think Mr. Méndez has just started a meeting.

23. If you have to take a call from an unhappy customer, what techniques would you apply to handle it?

Properly apply verbal and non-verbal communication techniques

24. Explain briefly the importance of tone, volume and body position in telephone communications.Also indicate the tone that you would use in the following situations:

a) When answering a call.

b) When calling a company because you are looking for a job.

c) When dealing with a complaint.

25. Indicate whether the following statements are true or false:

a) If the person you talk to on the phone sounds younger than you, you may use "tú".

b) If we call back, we must state the day and the approximate time when we called.

c) If the caller is a foreigner, we will speak slowly, vocalizing and raising our voice so that the caller can understand.

d) Regional accents are not a problem in communication. We must use our own accent instead of trying to correct it.

e) If we call a company and we have a close relation with the person we want to speak with, we may use a nickname to refer to that person.

f) If we make a mistake while dialling a phone number we have to apologize before hanging up.

Use the phone as a tool for commercial and marketing purposes

26. Indicate whether the following statements are true or false. If they are false, explain why.

a) Telemarketing allows you to have direct contact with the customer.

b) Many users feel an immediate rejection before any telemarketing action.

c) The consumer helpline is not telemarketing.

d) The cost of one telemarketing action is lower than the cost of visiting clients at home or in their office.

e) In telemarketing actions, it takes between a week and a fortnight to get the results on the profitability of the action.

f) A database must be updated to be truly effective and useful.

g) The immediate feedback we obtain with telemarketing doesn't help in any purchasing decision.

27. What are the applications of telemarketing? Explain them with your own words and give at least three examples of each.

28. Explain in which of these actions would you use telemarketing. Justify your answer.

a) You want to sell a new range of household items to distributors; your product is characterized by modern and contemporary design.

b) You want to arrange meetings with potential customers to introduce a training company and its services.

c) You want to inform your customers that the billing procedure of the company will change in the near future.

d) You want to set up a helpline for customers so that they can solve their doubts about the new highway code.

e) You want to create a helpline for customers to call and give their views on a new horseradish-flavoured yogurt that you have just launched.