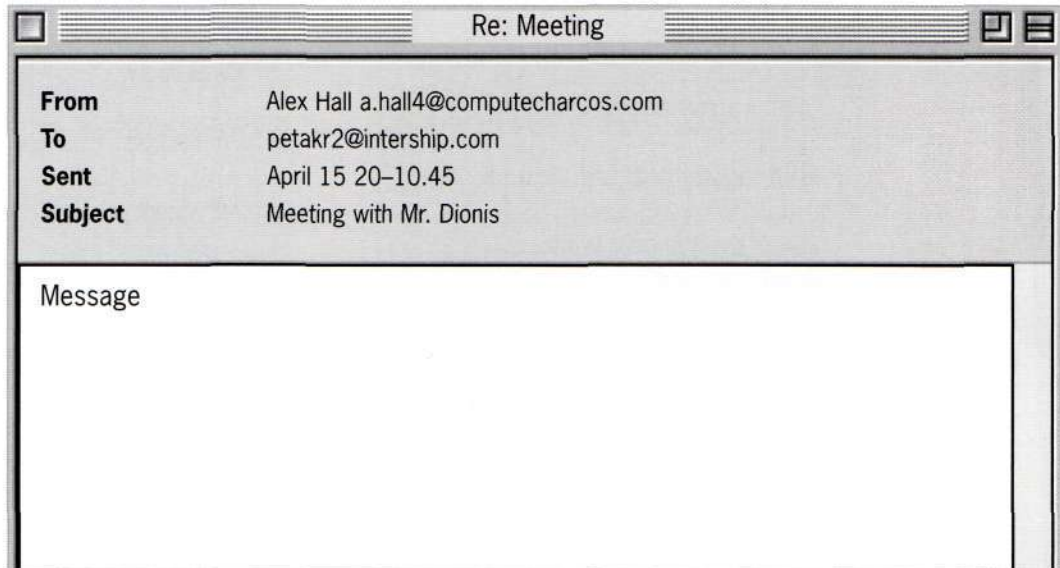


Practice 2

Sending an email after a telephone conversation is an important way to check that there has been no misunderstanding in the conversation. Many companies also like to have written confirmation of things agreed by telephone.

Use the template below to write an email confirming the appointments made in the Computech/Internship conversation.



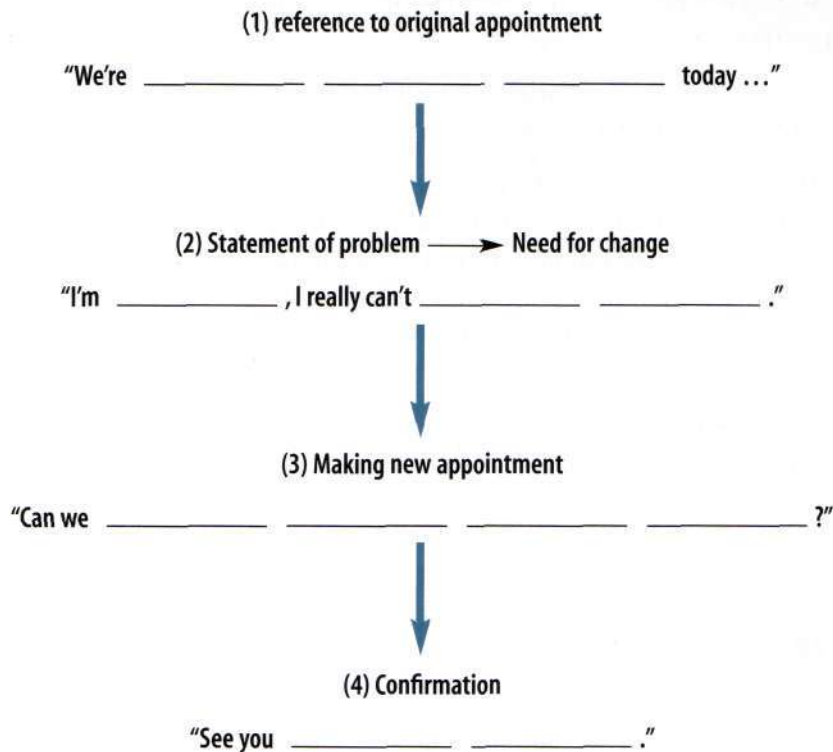
3 Changing appointments



- 1 Listen to a conversation between two colleagues, John and Pamela. Note:
 - a) details of the original appointment
 - b) reasons for change
 - c) the new appointment.
- 2 a) How would you characterize the style of this conversation?
b) Why is it like that?



- 3 Listen again to the conversation between John and Pamela. Note the four part structure of a conversation about changing appointments. Complete the missing words from the key phrases below:



Role play 1

Work in pairs. Student A should turn to File card 9A. Student B should use File card 9B.

Role play 2

Keep to the same A or B. Student A should turn to File card 10A. Student B should look at File card 10B.

4 Ending a call

- 1 You will hear a recording of Catherine Welsh, a Communications Consultant, talking about using the telephone and, in particular, ending phone calls.



Before you listen, suggest what she *might* say about the following:

- a) ways to avoid misunderstandings
- b) a way to check that there's nothing left to say
- c) the importance of small talk
- d) ways to get off the phone when the other person keeps talking and you are very busy.



2 Now listen to what Catherine actually says. Compare her suggestions with what you suggested above. Discuss these and other suggestions.



3 Hank Rossler is an Export Manager for an American company in San Francisco. A sales representative, Paolo Arione from Brazil, is planning to visit him. You will hear two versions of how Hans ends a phone conversation with Paolo. Notice how they are different.

- a) What is wrong in the first version?
- b) Which key phrase is in the second ending that was not in the first one?



4 Listen to the next recording of a conversation between two colleagues, Celia Walton and Gerd Hoffmann, who work for a Swiss toy manufacturer.

- a) What is Celia's problem?
- b) How does she resolve it?

Practice 3

Sit back-to-back with a colleague and have a telephone conversation about any small talk topic. One of you should try hard to keep the conversation going. The other should politely try to get off the phone.

Reverse roles and repeat the exercise.

TRANSFER

Work in pairs, A and B, to devise and practice two role plays. First, each of you should think about your own work or real life situation. Choose a situation where you need to call someone to set up a meeting. Explain the situation to your partner. Then practice first one conversation, then the other. Remember to end the call appropriately.

TRANSFER

Next time you have to set up a real meeting by telephone, use the language and recommendations made in this unit. Prepare the call, think about the call structure (see Skills Checklist) and think about how to end the call.

Language Checklist

Using the Telephone (2)

Stating reason for a call

I'm calling to ...

I'd like to ...

I need some information about ...

Setting up appointments

Could we meet some time next month?

When would be a good time?

Would Thursday at 5 o'clock be good for you?

What about July 21st?

That would be fine.

No, sorry, I can't make it then.

Sorry, I'm too busy next week.

Changing appointments

We have an appointment for next month, but ...

I'm afraid I can't come on that day.

Could we re-schedule it?

Confirming information

So ...

Can I check that? You said ...

To confirm that ...

Can you / Can I confirm that by fax?

Ending a call

O.K. I think that's all.

Thanks very much for your help.

Please call if you need anything else.

I look forward to ... seeing you / your call / your
letter / your fax / our meeting.

Goodbye and thanks.

Bye.

Skills Checklist

Using the Telephone (2)

Voice

- speed
- clarity
- volume

Structure

- background information
- key information
- repetition, emphasis and confirmation
- possible confirmation by fax

Style

- formal / informal
- cold call / new contact / established contact
- in-company vs. customer
supplier
outside agent
- colleague / friend / business associate /
public
- company image

Structure of a call

Beginning

introduce yourself

get who you want

small talk

state problem / reason for call

|

Middle

ask questions

get / give information

confirm information

|

End

signal end

thank other person

small talk

refer to next contact

close call

check that there's nothing else to say

Quick Communication Check

1 Making arrangements

Complete the dialogue below.

- A I'd like to (a) v_____ you some time next month, to meet Mr. Lomas.
 B That's (b) f_____. I could give you an (c) a_____ next week.
 A No, unfortunately I'm (d) a_____ next week. The (e) f_____ week would be okay.
 B Yes, well (f) h_____ a_____ Thursday morning at 10 o'clock?
 A That's good. Please can you (g) c_____ by email?
 B Yes, of course.

2 Changing arrangements

You have an appointment to see Ms. Keppel at 11:30 today. Unfortunately your train is delayed. You will not arrive until 12:30. Telephone Ms. Keppel's secretary, John Cousins, to explain the problem. Complete the conversation with words from the box.

- A Hello, Mr. Cousins. This is (your name). I (a) _____ at 11:30, with Ms. Keppel.
 But unfortunately the train (b) _____. I'm going to be (c) _____ .
 B I understand. What time do you think you'll arrive?
 A About 12:30. Is that a (d) _____ ?
 B No, no problem at all.
 A Thank you. I am (e) _____ about the (f) _____ .
 B It's okay. It's not your fault. See you soon. Thanks for
 (g) _____ .
 A Thank you. Bye for now.

late
delay
have an appointment
problem
sorry
calling
is delayed

3 The structure of a call

Put these sentences in the correct order.

- A I understand. That's very kind of you. Thank you very much.
 B Can I confirm that? The date is December 4th and it's at the Clyde Hotel.
 C Excellent. I look forward to seeing you there.
 D I'm calling to find out some information about the Direct Line Conference in December.
 E Hello, my name is Patrick / Patricia Lefèvre. I'm calling from Paris.
 F Could you tell me the date and location of the conference?

1	(a) visit, (b) fine, (c) appointment (d) away, (e) following, (f) how about, (g) confirm
2	(a) have an appointment, (b) is delayed, (c) late, (d) problem, (e) sorry, (f) delay, (g) calling
3	E, D, F, B, A, C

5 Unfortunately there's a problem ...

AIMS

- Cross-cultural communication on the telephone [2]
- Problem solving on the telephone
- Complaints

1 Cross-cultural communication on the telephone [2]

1 The following text gives some advice about using the telephone between different cultures. Before you read it, quickly answer these questions about the organization of the text:

- a) What is the picture about?
- b) How many paragraphs are there?
- c) How many main points are probably in the article?

2 Read the text, then mark the sentences that follow as True (T) or False (F).

In some countries, like Italy and Britain, conversation is a form of entertainment. There is an endless flow of talk and if you break the flow for a second someone else will pick it up. In other countries there is a higher value placed on listening – it is not only impolite to break in but listeners will consider what has been said in silence before responding. Finland and Japan are examples.

If you are talking to people who are also speaking English as a foreign language, they are likely to leave gaps and silences while they search for words or try to make sense of what you have just said. So be patient and try not to interrupt, as you would hope they would be patient with you.

Every country has its own codes of etiquette. For example it is common for North Americans and the British to use first names very quickly, even in a letter or fax or telephone call. Such instant familiarity is much less acceptable in the rest of Europe and Asia where even business partners and colleagues of many years' acquaintance address each other by the equivalent of Mr. or Mrs. and the last name or job title.

So stick to last names unless you specifically agree to do otherwise. Don't interpret the other person's formality as stiffness or unfriendliness. On the other hand, if business partners with a North American or British background get on to first name terms right away, don't be surprised.



Above all, one should remember that people do not usually mind if their own codes are broken by foreigners as long as they sense consideration and goodwill. This is much more important than a set of rules of etiquette.

Adapted from *Faxes, phones and foreigners* with kind permission of British Telecommunications plc.

- a) For the British and the Italians it is normal to interrupt the other speaker during the conversation.
- b) A special importance is attached to listening in Japanese and Finnish cultures.
- c) One should interrupt and try to help speakers who may have difficulty in saying what they want to say.
- d) It is unusual for Americans and British to use first names early in a business relationship.
- e) It doesn't matter if you break certain social rules if it is clear that you are sensitive to other people.
- f) Etiquette is the critical point in using the telephone between different cultures.

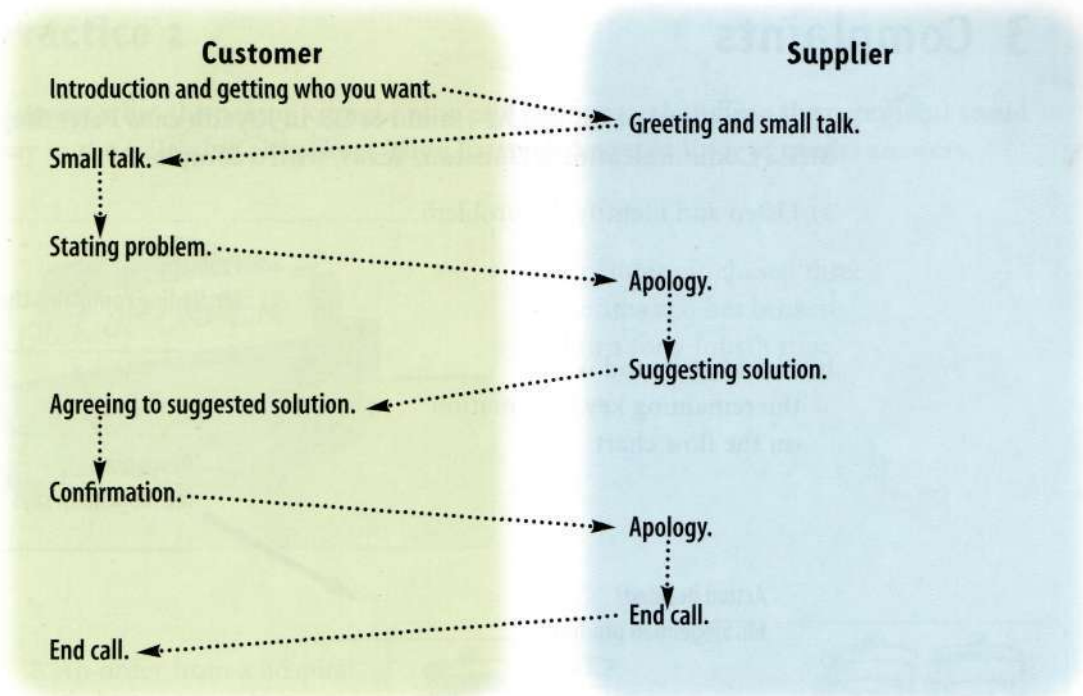
3 Which do you think is the most important point?

2 Problem solving on the telephone



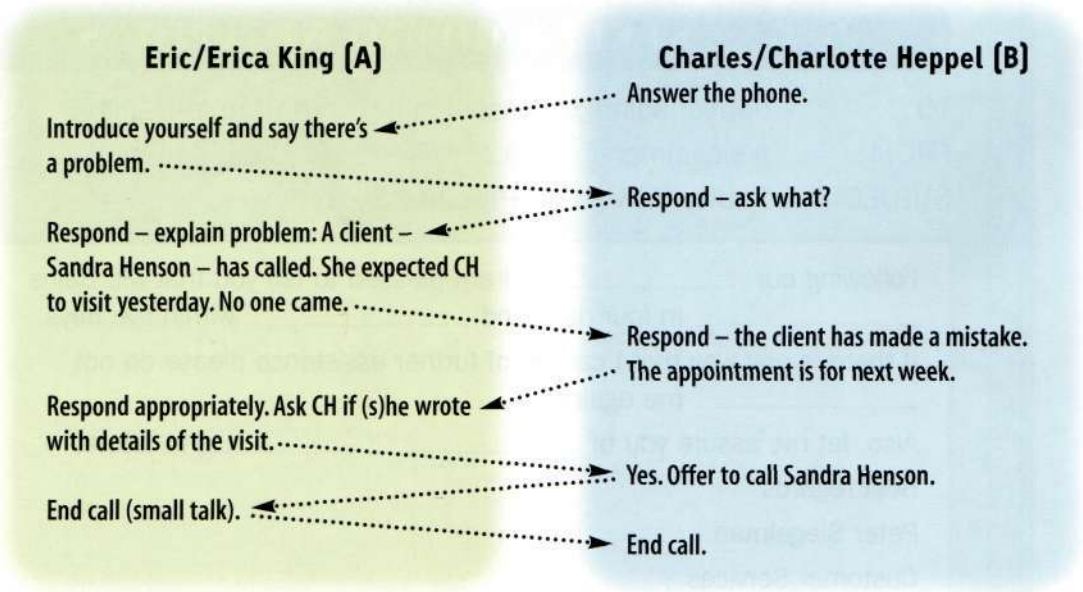
1 Lee Santana is a telecommunications equipment retailer from Los Angeles. Listen to the recording of a conversation he has with a supplier, Yoshinaga Takafumi. He works for AKA Company, a Japanese telephone systems manufacturer.

- a) Identify the problem and the suggested solution.
- b) Listen again. Do you think Yoshinaga Takafumi provided good customer service? In what ways?
- c) Notice how the conversation follows the structure shown here:



Practice 1

Work in pairs, A and B.
 Create a dialogue based on the cues below. A is the Client Services Manager of Keene Investments who calls B, a financial adviser. A is B's boss.



Now listen to a recording of a model answer.

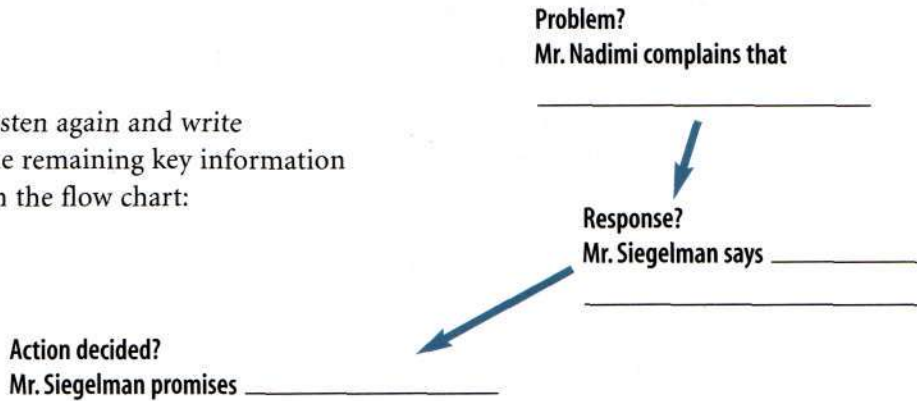
3 Complaints



1 Hamid Nadimi of Ahmed Al-Hamid & Co. in Riyadh calls Peter Siegelman, from Stella Communications, Houston, Texas, with a complaint.

a) Listen and identify the problem.

b) Listen again and write the remaining key information on the flow chart:



Discuss how Peter Siegelman handles the call. Do you think he said the right things?

- 2 Work in pairs to create a new version of the above conversation beginning with the same basic problem. Provide better customer service in your version.
- 3 Imagine you are Peter Siegelman. Following the above phone call and then a conversation with Mr. Bains, write an email to Mr. Nadimi. Tell him Mr. Bains will return in four days with the parts and the system will be repaired within five days. Use the email template below:

STELLA COMMUNICATIONS

TO hamidnadimi@ahmedalhamid.com (Hamid Nadimi)
 FROM p.siegelman@stella.com
 SUBJECT **Faulty Valves on Pipeline System**

Following our I am pleased to tell you that Mr. Bains
 in four days and within five days.
 If there is any way that I can be of further assistance please do not
 me again.

Also, let me assure you of in future.

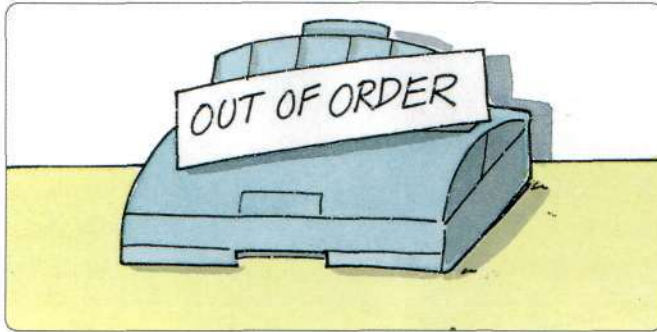
Best regards
 Peter Siegelman
 Customer Services

100% Page: 1

Practice 2



Suggest what the person complaining and the person handling the complaint could say in the following situations. Then listen to the recordings of model answers.



- 1 A printer purchased three months ago has broken down for a fourth time.

- 2 An order from a hospital for 500 × 100 ml of medicated gel has not arrived.



- 3 A travel agent promised to send out an airline ticket for departure tomorrow. It has not arrived.

