

Phone Skills

1. Get permission to use phones. It might sound routine, but it's important.
2. Write down who you're calling, and the questions that you will be asking. Reference the attached form. Write down a detailed message that you will leave in case you get an answering machine.
3. When someone answers your call, state your name, grade, and school or organization. Even if you're doing a project on your own, you'll probably get better service if you mention your school name.
4. If you don't know the name of a contact, ask for someone in public relations or public information. This will usually land you in the right department.
5. If your contact isn't there, ask when he will be there. Write down the time. Call back at that time. Or leave your name, grade, school or organization, a phone number, a time when he can reach you, and a brief message about why you're calling. Most professionals will return calls.
6. What if your contact doesn't call you back? Bug him! Call again and again. Persist until you get the information you need, but always be polite. Never speak rudely. It will only hurt your cause. Remember, it's not your problem if someone else is rude.
7. When your contact does answer the phone, tell him your name, grade, and school or organization again, and then move on to the purpose of your call – what you want to say or ask.
8. Write down exactly what your contact tells you. You might have to ask him to repeat things. Most people talk faster than you can write.
9. While you have your contact on the phone, get his correct name, title, address, Zip code, phone extension, and email.
10. Leave your name, address, email, and phone number with your contact so he can get in touch with you again.
11. When you have the information you need, thank your contact, then hang up.
12. File the phone form where you can find it again.