

Unit 4:

Using the Telephone

Calling Ahead

1. What does the customer want to buy?
 2. What department does she need?
 3. What is the customer's name?
-
4. What is the fabric content of the sheets?
 5. What is the brand name?
 6. What size sheets does the customer need?
-
7. How much is the discount?
 8. What else does she need?
 9. Are the sheets available?
 10. What is her telephone number?

Telephone Language

Listen to the conversation again. The sales associates need to greet the customer. What do they say? Fill in the blanks.

Sales Associate 1: Good morning! _____ Smith's
Department Store. How can I _____?

Sales Associate 2: _____ Department. _____ you?

The customer didn't understand. She needs to hear the information again. What does she say?

Customer: I'm sorry. _____.

The sales associate can't spell the customer's name. She needs to know how to spell it. What does she say?

Sales Associate: _____.

How does the sales associate end the call?

Sales Associate: _____.

What other phrases can you use for the following workplace telephone tasks?

Answer the call

Putting on hold/Transfer the call

Ask for repetition

Ask for spelling

Ending the call

A Retail Conversation

Sales Associate: Good morning. _____.

How can I help you?

Customer: Hi. I'd like to get a Washington Nationals sweater. Do you
Have any in stock?

Sales Associate: I'm not sure, but I can find out for you.

_____.

Customer: No problem.

Sales Associate: _____ . We have plenty
of Washington Nationals sweaters in stock, in all sizes.

Customer: Great! Thanks a lot for checking for me.

Sales Associate: _____.

Thank you for holding.

Would you mind holding for a moment?

Thank you for your call. Have a nice day!

This is Wheaton Department Store.

Spelling It Out

Read and practice the dialogue with a partner. Then, use the dialogue as a guide to practice new conversations. Every time you play the customer, take one of the name cards your teacher gives you. Replace the underlined parts of the conversation with new information.

Sales Associate: Hello! Smith's Department Store. Daniel speaking. How may I help you?

Customer: Hi. Can I speak to Emily Stevenson, please?

Sales Associate: Certainly. May I ask who is calling?

Customer: This is Ravi Massumi.

Sales Associate: Could you spell your first and last name, please?

Customer: Yes. My first name is Ravi: R-A-V-I. My last name is Massumi: M-A-S-S-U-M-I.

Sales Associate: Thank you, Mr. Massumi. Would you please hold while I transfer your call?

Customer: Sure.

Sales Associate: Thank you.

Mystery Shopper 3

Instructions: Call a store and ask them for their hours of operation. What does the sales associate say to greet you? What did you learn?

Name: _____

Store: _____

Date: _____

Greeting: _____

Hours of operation: _____

What did the sales associate do well? _____

How could the sales associate improve the way he or she speaks on the telephone?

Message Pad

Message for:	Date:
	Time:
Message from:	
Phone number:	
Message:	

Message for:	Date:
	Time:
Message from:	
Phone number:	
Message:	

Message for:	Date:
	Time:
Message from:	
Phone number:	
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Message Pad

Message for:	Date:
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Message for:	Date:
	Time:
Message from:	
Phone number:	
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Blah Blah Blah

Practice saying the expressions.

I'm sorry. I didn't catch that.

Could you repeat that , please?

I'm sorry. What kind of sheets?

Excuse me. What are you looking for?

Excuse me. Which department?

Which expression can you use?

1. I'd like to speak to *blah blah*.

2. *Blah blah blah blah blah*.

3. Can I speak to someone in the *blah blah* department?

4. I'd like to buy some *blah blah* sheets.

5. *Blah blah blah blah blah*.

Serving Two Customers At Once Role Play Peer Evaluation

Instructions: Read the following lists of appropriate behavior for the Sales Associate in the Observing the Customer role play. Then, watch your classmates perform the role play. Use the lists to guide your comments and suggestions. You **do not need to write** your comments.

Sales Associate	
<p><i>It is appropriate to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smile Be polite and friendly Be professional Speak clearly Make eye contact Use open-ended questions to find out more information. Politely take leave of the first customer before helping the second Thank the first customer before waiting. <hr style="width: 30%; margin-left: 0;"/>	<p><i>It is inappropriate to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stand too close to the customer Touch the customer Speak unclearly, too fast, or too quietly Be pushy Chew gum, eat, or drink Say things that are too personal, casual, or rude Use too many dead-end questions. Respond impolitely to an interrupting customer Forget to take leave of the first customer politely <hr style="width: 30%; margin-left: 0;"/>
<p>What did the sales associate do well?</p> <p>What could the sales associate improve?</p> <p>What did the customers do well?</p> <p>What could the customers improve?</p>	

Providing Balanced Service

1. You have spent some time greeting a new customer and asking a few questions to get to know her. This customer is being somewhat vague about her needs and seems to just want to look around. Suddenly the phone rings and the phone customer would like some detailed information about a specific item in the store.

You should:

- Offer to call the phone customer back so you can continue asking the in-store customer more questions.
- Ask to put the phone customer on hold and then go back to the in-store customer to see if she needs any help yet.
- Help the phone customer now, allowing the in-store customer to browse on her own for a while.

2. You are in the process of ringing up a sale and there are several other customers waiting in line to pay for their items. The phone rings and the caller says, “I need a gift for my son’s birthday dinner tonight. I am really busy today, so I was wondering if you could check whether you have it in stock before I drive all the way down there.”

You should:

- Ask to put the caller on hold and check on her request as soon as you are done with your current customer.
- Explain that you’re really busy with other customers at the moment and offer to call her back. This would require stopping what you’re doing and writing down her name and phone number.
- Stop what you’re doing and go check on her item immediately, since it won’t take long and the phone customer sounds stressed.

3. You are helping a customer who has spent a long time in your department, comparing options and asking you questions about a high-priced item. You are in the middle of reading the warranty statement with this customer when the phone rings and someone wants to check on the availability of a sale item advertised in the newspaper.

You should:

- Offer to call back and discuss the sale item as soon as you are done helping the in-store customer.
- Ask to put the caller on hold while you check on the sale item, stopping on the way to assure the in-store customer you will be back with him in a moment.
- Focus on the phone customer; the in-store customer has already taken up enough of your time!

Serving Two Customers – Language

You are the only sales associate working in your store today. You are serving a customer when the telephone rings.

What do you say to the in-store customer? How do you greet the phone customer? What do you say to the phone customer that lets her know that you care but are busy at the moment?

Write your ideas below.

To the store customer: _____

To the phone customer: _____

To the store customer when you return to him: _____

Reading a Job Ad

Part 1. Read the job ad. What do the abbreviations mean? Fill out the chart below.

Customer Service
 PT/FT avail. immed. at
 national grocery chain.
 Exp. req. Call for appt.
 Jane Grey, HR Office,
 Superfoods Warehouse.
 202.566.8888. No
 walk-ins.

PT		exp. req.	
FT		appt.	
avail. immed.		HR	

Part 2. Work with another student. Find some job ads in the Classifieds section of a newspaper. Cut and paste them here. Find new abbreviations or expressions. Write them and their meanings in the grid below.

Resource List

From the perspective of a sales associate in a particular store, write the appropriate responses to each of the questions below.

Your store: _____

Where are the nearest restrooms?

Where is the nearest public telephone?

Is there a good restaurant around here?

Where is the nearest ATM?

Are there elevators that I can use?

What are the hours of this store?

Where is the mall office?

GIVING DIRECTIONS

Note to Instructor: This activity is available as a free download from www.bogglesworldesl.com.

Telephone Skills & Ending the Call Role Play Peer Evaluation

Instructions: Read the following lists of appropriate behavior for the Sales Associate in the Observing the Customer role play. Then, watch your classmates perform the role play. Use the lists to guide your comments and suggestions. You **do not need to write** your comments.

Sales Associate	
<p><i>It is appropriate to:</i></p> <p>Smile.</p> <p>Be polite and friendly.</p> <p>Be professional.</p> <p>Speak clearly.</p> <p>Make eye contact.</p> <p>Use open-ended questions to find out more information.</p> <p>Give store or product information clearly.</p> <p>End the call appropriately and politely.</p> <p>Other? _____</p>	<p><i>It is inappropriate to:</i></p> <p>Stand too close to the customer.</p> <p>Touch the customer.</p> <p>Speak unclearly, too fast, or too quietly.</p> <p>Be pushy.</p> <p>Chew gum, eat, or drink.</p> <p>Say things that are too personal, casual, or rude.</p> <p>Use too many dead-end questions.</p> <p>Forget to give important information.</p> <p>End the call rudely.</p> <p>Other? _____</p>
<p>What did the sales associate do well?</p> <p>What could the sales associate improve?</p> <p>What did the customers do well?</p> <p>What could the customers improve?</p>	

Job Application

By Linda Blake Smith

Note to Instructor: This reading is available for free download at the following URL: <http://a4esl.org/q/h/employ/applic.htm>

Could You Hold?

Instructions: Listen to the telephone conversation between the sales associate and the customer. Fill in the blanks with the words and phrases that you hear.

Sales Associate: Good morning. Guitars-R-Us. This is Amy (1.) _____.

How may I help you?

Customer: Hi. I'm calling to find out if you (2.) _____ classical guitars made by Yamaha.

Sales Associate: I'm sorry. Could you repeat that (3.) _____?

Customer: Yamaha.

Sales Associate: Ok – Yamaha. I know we carry (4.) _____ Yamaha instruments, but I'm not sure if we have one of their classical guitars (5.) _____. (6.) _____?

Customer: Sure.

Sales Associate: Thank you. (7.) _____.

[brief pause]

Sales Associate: (8.) _____. We have three Yamaha Classical guitars in stock.

Customer: Great – thanks.

Sales Associate: (9.) _____. Would you like me to (10.) _____ one for you?

Customer: No, that's not necessary. I'll be there (11.) _____
_____.

Sales Associate: Alright Sir. (12.) _____.

We'll see you soon.

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Note to Instructor: The restaurant guide and map that accompany this activity are available for free download at the following URL: <http://bogglesworldesl.com/directions.htm>

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Need Information (Part 1)

Instructions: Fill in the blanks below with the requested information.

1. A number (1, 6, 108, etc.) _____
2. Which do you like better, a birthday party or a wedding? _____
3. The name of a person you know (not yourself) _____
4. Your favorite color _____
5. A method of payment (cash, check, etc.) _____
6. A date in the future (example: October 17, 2009) _____

I Need Information (Part 2)

First, write the appropriate question for each of the things you need to know.

Then, take turns playing the telephone customer and the sales associate.

Instructions for sales associate: You are the sales associate in Gary's Gift Shop. Your customer calls you and wants to order some balloons. Take the customer's order.

Instructions for telephone customer: Call the gift shop. Tell the sales associate you would like to order some balloons. Answer the sales associate's questions with the answers you gave in Part 1.

Get started:

Sales Associate: Hello. Gary's Gift Shop. _____ speaking. How may I help you?

Customer: Yes. I need to order some balloons.

	Need to know...	Question	Response
1.	Number of balloons needed		
2.	The special occasion		
3.	Who the party is for		
4.	What colors the customer prefers		
5.	The way the customer wants to pay		
6.	When the customer needs the balloons		

Telephone Scenarios

Instructions: Choose a scenario to work on together. Then, write down some notes about what you want to say. What do you need to know about your store before you give information to customers? What information do you have to check on before you answer the customer's question?

Scenario 1:

A customer calls your store to find out whether you have any camping tents in stock. When you tell him what types of tents are still available, he asks what hours and days the store is open and where it is located.

Scenario 2:

You work in a flower shop. A customer calls to find out if you currently have red roses for sale. If so, he wants to know how much they are and if your store will deliver them to his girlfriend's house.

Scenario 3:

You work in a toy store. A customer calls to see if you have any Barbie dolls in stock. She wants to know how much they cost and what types of doll accessories are also available.

Write your notes here: