

The Basics of Professional Telephone Communication

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Talking Points

Characteristics of Professionalism
when speaking on the phone

Components of a professional message

Strategies for difficult situations





Chicken or Egg?

- Do I allow a speaker to express their complete thoughts without interrupting?
- Do I briefly write down the most important details of the message?
- Do I refrain from tuning out the speaker because the message is dull or I don't like her?
- Do I ignore or block out distractions when listening?
- Do I avoid becoming hostile or excited when the speaker's views differ from my own?

Non-verbals




You cannot NOT communicate

Always Error on the Side of Professionalism

- Speech (speed, volume, word choice)
- Non-verbals (facial expressions, physical distance, tone)
- Attitude (smile, anticipate the best intent, solution-finder)





Characteristics of Professionalism When Speaking on the Phone

Taking That Call



Consider the Caller

Manners Matter (politeness, use name, no sniffing or gum chewing, no jargon, etc.)

Stay on to introduce. Don't send caller on a roller coaster ride!

Answering

FQAs

Respecting

Placing on Hold

Transferring

Keep Cheat Sheet of Acronyms, Common Phone Numbers, etc.

Ask first. Call-back Number.



Review of Goal One: Characteristics of Professionalism When Speaking on Phone

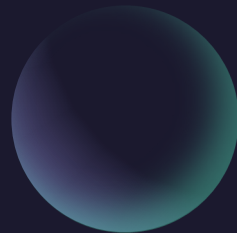
- Be an active listener to be a good communicator
- Remember, you cannot NOT communicate (non-verbals)
- Error on the side of professionalism; keep a cheat-sheet
- Focus on the customer; modify volume/speed as needed
- Show respect; ask permission before transferring; thank
- Ditch the crutch words; swap *and* for *but*



Components of a Complete Professional Message

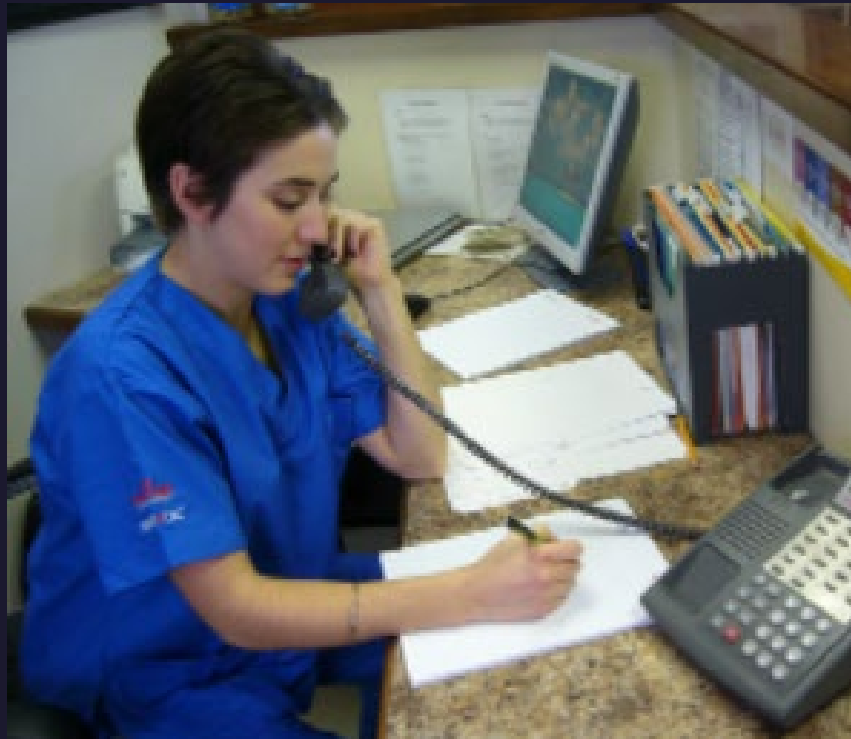
“Listen with curiosity.
Speak with honesty.
Act with integrity.”

Roy Bennett



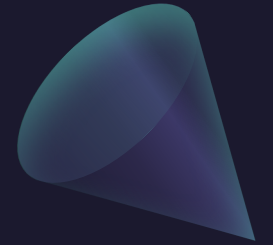
Taking a Message

- Think of yourself as a reporter
- Be patient; Don't assume; Up-manage



The 7 Cs of Communication


1. Clear
2. Concise
3. Concrete
4. Correct
5. Coherent
6. Complete
7. Courteous
8. Confirm



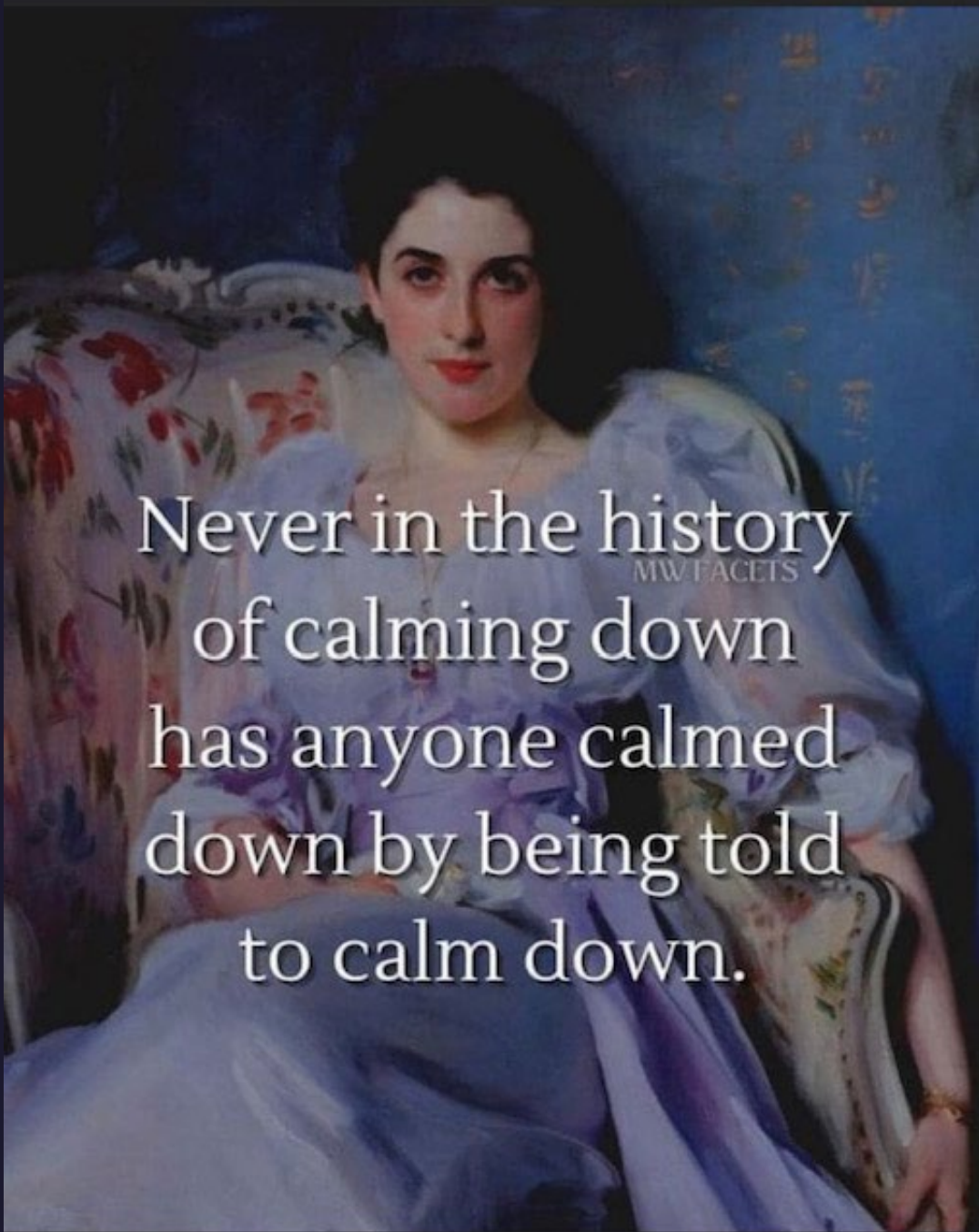
Review of Goal Two: Components of a Complete, Professional Message

- Be a Reporter - Who, What, When, Where, Why, How
- Be a Margie - Leave a detailed message
- Don't be a Kelly – Don't assume you know; listen!
- Sail the Seven Seas... I mean, Use the 7Cs of Communication!



The background of the slide features a complex network diagram. It consists of numerous white circular nodes of varying sizes, interconnected by thin white lines. The nodes are scattered across the frame, with some appearing more prominent than others. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern, with a strong emphasis on connectivity and structure. The dark blue background provides a high contrast for the white elements.

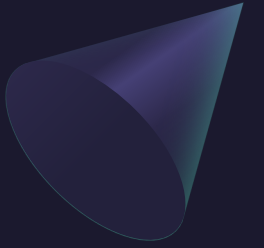
Effective Communication Strategies in Difficult Situations

A painting of a woman with dark hair, wearing a light blue, long-sleeved dress, sitting in a chair with a floral pattern. The background is a textured blue wall. The text is overlaid on the painting.

Never in the history
MW FACETS
of calming down
has anyone calmed
down by being told
to calm down.



Understanding Communication Skills



BARRIERS

- Defensiveness
- Low Self-esteem
- Inarticulateness
- Hidden Agendas
- Communication Styles
- Assumptions
- Physical Barriers

UNSKILLED

- Does not listen well
- Cuts off people
- Interrupts
- Thinks of response before listening
- Paraphrases inaccurately

EMPATHY

- Builds trust, respect, safe space

SKILLED ACTIONS

- Hear
- Focus
- Comprehend
- Evaluate
- Paraphrase
- Respond
- Remember



Slow Down...



Your Speech

For listener to
hear you



Your expectation

For listener to
process



Your response

For listener to
share story



Your emotions

For listener to be
heard

Review of Goal Three: Review effective communication strategies in difficult situations, i.e., angry, rude, confused clients

- Use winning words
- Lose unhelpful words
- Practice emotional intelligence
- Remove barriers to communication
- Display empathy; Slow down



“Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.”

Benjamin Franklin





Between stimulus and response there is a space.
In that space is our power to choose our response.
In our response lies our growth and our freedom.

~ Viktor E. Frankl

Thank You

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