

# **THE TELEPHONE SKILLS POCKETBOOK**

*2nd Edition*

By Mary Richards

*Drawings by Phil Hailstone*

“Excellent! Master these essential techniques, take control of all your phone calls and get more out of each day.”

**Mike Richards, Sales and Marketing Director, Liquid Drop Ltd**

“A powerful message for anyone who needs to project a professional and dynamic image over the telephone. I certainly want to be a super-user.”

**Samantha Reynolds, Helpdesk Supervisor, Canon Helpdesk, Canon (UK) Ltd**

# CONTENTS



## INTRODUCTION

1

A business asset, a business liability, your relationship with the telephone, introducing the Super-User and the Casual-User, consider your telephone skills



## YOU AS A COMMUNICATOR

15

An explanation of the principles and practice of communication



## YOU AS THE CALLER'S CONTACT

35

10 easy ways to give your caller a bad experience, know what your caller wants, 10 easy ways to give your caller a good experience, answering, taking messages and transferring calls, complaints



## YOU AS THE CALLER

63

Preparing for and making calls, getting through to people, obtaining information and getting what you want, making complaints, negotiating



## YOU AS A RAPPORT BUILDER

77

Ways to alienate, ways to build and use rapport



## YOU AS A SUPER-USER

85

The Super-User's Oath: "I will be in charge and make the phone work for me. I will seek out time-eaters and destroy them. I will use Super-User control techniques at all times."

## YOU AS THE CALLER'S CONTACT

### YOU CHOOSE



You can boost the business of your competitors:

- 9 out of 10 customers who experience a badly handled call would prefer to stop dealing with the offending organisation

Or you can boost your own:

- Each year, millions of people recommend companies to other prospective customers because they experience good telephone service



## YOU AS THE CALLER'S CONTACT

### 10 WAYS TO GIVE CALLERS A **BAD** EXPERIENCE



- ✘ Make it difficult for them to find your number
- ✘ Be constantly engaged
- ✘ Pass them from department to department
- ✘ Make them repeat their story each time you transfer them
- ✘ Put them on hold and force them to listen to music they dislike
- ✘ Treat them as a 'nobody'
- ✘ Tell them it's not your job/fault/policy/problem
- ✘ Make them feel as though they're being 'processed'
- ✘ Don't give them a satisfactory solution
- ✘ Forget to do what you said you would do

## YOU AS THE CALLER'S CONTACT

# KNOW WHAT YOUR CALLER WANTS



As 'junk' mail increases, as adverts become more interactive and as marketing techniques become more sophisticated, we become more aware of our rights as customers. Consequently, our expectations have risen.

We know we have choice and we become more demanding. We develop a philosophy which says that if you don't meet our needs, we'll find someone who does.

So what do they want? **All** callers want **C.A.S.H.**

**C**onvenience

**A**ction

**S**peed

**H**assle-free



## YOU AS THE CALLER'S CONTACT

### CALLERS WANT C.A.S.H.



- C**onvenience
  - Minimum effort
  - Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- A**ction
  - Results are required (people don't often make calls out of idle curiosity; they generally need something; they expect action)
- S**peed
  - The call is answered promptly
  - They get through to the right person easily
  - Their call is treated with urgency
  - The call results in immediate action
- H**assle-free
  - Calls are often made because there is a problem; the caller wants you to take responsibility and to deliver results in a hassle-free manner

## YOU AS THE CALLER'S CONTACT

### 10 WAYS TO GIVE CALLERS A GOOD EXPERIENCE



- ✓ Treat them as an individual
- ✓ Listen to them
- ✓ Show understanding and empathy
- ✓ Make them feel they're important to you
- ✓ Deal with their call efficiently
- ✓ Accept responsibility
- ✓ Respond promptly and act immediately
- ✓ Give them the result they want
- ✓ Make a follow-up call
- ✓ Exceed their expectations

In short, treat your callers as you'd like to be treated!

YOU AS THE CALLER'S CONTACT

## EXCEED THEIR EXPECTATIONS



### **Add value**

- Go one step further; make a special effort; do something extra - “While you’re on the line would you like me to...”

### **Under promise, over deliver**

- Allow for it to get to them by the end of the week and then make sure it gets to them by Wednesday

### **Call them**

- Check that everything went according to plan; find out if there’s anything else you can do

## About the Author

**Mary Richards** has a background in education, international marketing and general management. Many years of designing and delivering training to public and private sector organisations, the old and the young, the willing and the resistant have provided Mary with a wealth of experience which she now uses to create business skills publications and resource materials for trainers. In parallel, Mary actively explores the links between the mind, the emotions, and the body's structure and energy systems. She is the author of *'The Stress Pocketbook'* in this series.

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