

Cold Calling & Phone Etiquette

Rules for Making Job Related Phone Calls



- Have a clear understanding of your call and be able to articulate your motivations politely and concisely. Are you calling for a job, internship, informational interview etc.?
- Do your research. Know as much as possible about the organization before you call. Do online research, ask friends, family, faculty or Career Center staff for information.
- If possible, have a contact name within the organization for whom you can ask. Don't have a name? Then explain to the individual answering the phone the purpose of your call and ask who would be the best person to whom you should speak.
- Be courteous, enthusiastic and appreciative. Keep your responses short and to the point. Be friendly, yet professional. Be kind and upbeat not only with the person you're trying to reach but also with secretaries/receptionists/staff. These individuals maintain control of access to management. If one of these individuals becomes your ally, you have a better chance of speaking to a manager or hiring personnel.
- Be prepared! Practice your introduction and have questions prepared.
- Avoid background noise and disruptions. Plan your call ahead and be sure you are in a quiet room. If you get another call, do not answer it. Give the person you just called your total attention.
- Take notes. Be sure to get the proper spelling of their name and their contact information (i.e. phone number, email address, mailing address).
- Follow up. Send materials they may have asked for (i.e. resume). SEND A THANK YOU NOTE and let them know you appreciate the time they took to educate you on their organization or job/internship opportunities.
- If you called and the person was unavailable, leave a message briefly stating who you are and your purpose for calling. Be sure you have a PROFESSIONAL sounding voicemail message. Answer the phone enthusiastically and politely as any incoming call could be the one for which you are waiting.
- If they don't call back, call once more asking the secretary or receptionist what may be a better time to reach the individual and try again. Or, ask if he/she could schedule you a phone appointment. KNOW YOUR LIMITS. If you are trying to reach a contact and they are repeatedly NOT returning your call, please stop calling and begin researching other organizations that may be of interest to you. Perhaps call upon the company again in the future if they are a top choice or try another method such as email or sending a letter.
- Please remember that cold calling can go either way. You may reach someone willing to take the time to help you and discuss possible opportunities or you may experience someone less helpful who's quick to end the call. Be patient and polite no matter what type of call you experience.

Sample Phone Introduction:

Receptionist: "Hello, ABC Engineering Incorporated. How may I direct your call?"

Student: "Good morning. My name is David Jones and I'm a junior math major at Saint Vincent College. I'd like to speak to a hiring manager if possible about summer internship availability. Could I be connected to the appropriate person please?"