

Business Class

WEEK 4 - PHONE AND VIDEO CALLS



Welcome to Class!

TODAY'S AGENDA

- Surprising statistics
- The future
- The power of phone call
- Difficult calls
- Voice messages
- 1st Q&A session

- Video meetings
- Video meetings manual
- What are we afraid of?
- 2nd Q&A session



Class Objectives

EXPECTATIONS AND OUTCOMES

★ Objectives:

- In today's lesson, you're going to learn how to become more confident in the area of phone and video calls.
- By the end of this lesson today, you'll be ready to create professional dialogues with your clients and coworkers.



Lesson for Today

BRIEF INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed quite a few aspects of all our lives. Most of us have completely switched from company meetings to video conferencing, from working 9 to 5 in purpose built offices to home ones, and from attending seminars to watching webinars.



Surprising statistics

NO OTHER OPTION

While most of those changes were already becoming increasingly popular with each year, the pandemic turned them from “optional” to a “must” overnight.



HOME OFFICE

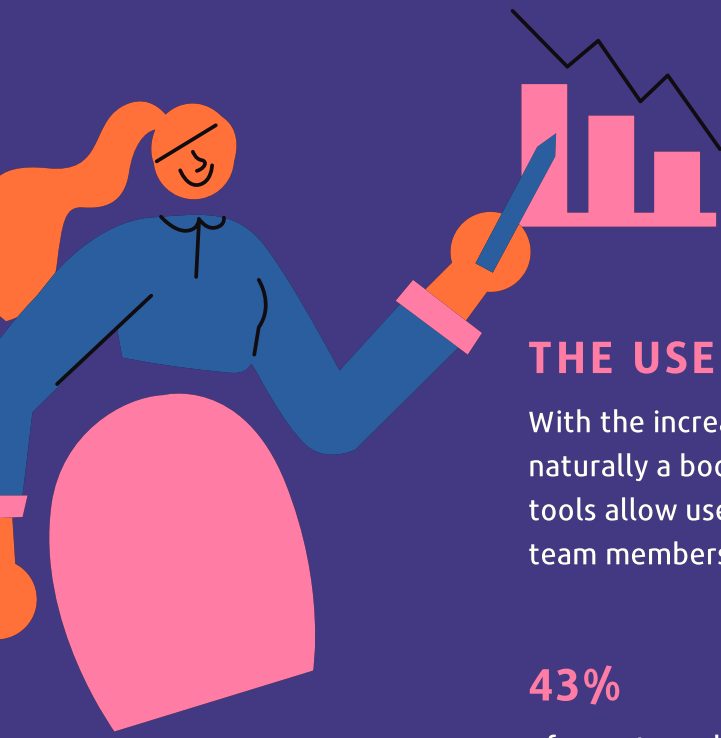
55% of companies allow remote working, with 16% being fully-remote (Source: Owl Labs)

EFFICIENCY

77% of remote workers say they are more productive when working from home, while 52% say they are less likely to take time off (Source: CoSo Cloud)

SATISFACTION

83% of employees say that being able to work from home would increase their job satisfaction (Source: Velocity Global=)



THE USE OF VIDEO CONFERENCING TOOLS

With the increased need for remote contact options, there was naturally a boom in the popularity of video conferencing tools. These tools allow users to quickly and easily set up meetings and allow other team members to join, all from the comfort of their own homes.

43%

of remote and in-house teams use a video conferencing tool (Source: GetVoip)

78%

of corporate companies use video calling software for team meetings (Source: HR Technologist)

45%

of teams use video calling tools daily or weekly (Source: GetVoip)

80%

of employees use video calling for 1:1 meetings (Source: Medium)

The future



WHAT NEXT?

Even if Covid-19 stops being a major threat, our lives are unlikely to ever return to exactly the same as they were before the pandemic began. Companies have finally noticed the benefits (and savings) of remote work. Employees too are generally enjoying working in home-office mode and many aren't as interested in returning to the office as they were at the beginning of the pandemic. Let's have a look at some video conferencing predictions for the future:

HOME OFFICE

48% of employees will probably work at least part time remotely after Covid-19, versus 30% who did before the pandemic (Source: Gartner)

CHOICE

Of employees currently working remotely, 80% would like to continue to work away from the office at least occasionally, and 58% would like this to be their main way of working (Source: Forbes)

SATISFACTION

Of those individuals who are now working remotely full-time, only 10% say they want to return to their workplace exclusively (Source: Forbes)

WHY NOT MAKE THE BEST OUT OF THE SITUATION?

Looking at the above video conferencing statistics, it's clear that video conferencing and remote work is here to stay. While remote work and online meetings might still feel a little different to a regular day in the office, their numerous benefits can't be overlooked.

The power of phone call

CAN I SEE YOUR FACE OVER THE PHONE?

Did you know that when talking over the phone you should smile as your smile can be “heard” in your voice? This is totally true and one of ground rules we all should follow!! Your first “Hello” on the phone makes your vocal first impression and may impact the rest of your conversation.

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION IS TAKEN OVER BY EMAILS, CHATS, SOCIAL MEDIA

These days, business communication is taken over by emails, chats, social media. World became very impersonal and people start to feel strange when they need to actually call someone on the business case. People are afraid that they won't understand exactly what the other person is saying, or that they will be asked questions they don't know how to answer immediately... So usually, instead of the call, people choose the easy way out - sending email. There are however a few advantages of the phone call over the email:

- IT'S IMMEDIATE,
- IT'S EFFECTIVE
- IT HAS PERSONAL TOUCH



The power of phone call

HOW TO MAKE THE RIGHT PHONE CALL TO MAKE SURE IT'S EFFECTIVE?

Especially when you are stressed as English is not your first language?

PREPARE

Write down the key points and questions you want to cover.

START WITH SMALL TALK ;-)

You already know how it works.

REASON

Clearly explain you caller the reason of your call

BE CONCISE

Do not ask for too many things at one call.

BE CONCISE, REALLY

Keep the call as short as it needs to be – remember it's business call



The power of phone call

ESSENTIAL PARTS OF THE PHONE CALL:

1. Introduction
2. Small talk
3. Reason of the call
4. Discussion
5. Ending

TIPS

- Smile while talking
- Make sure you are fully present and focused on your caller
- Avoid eating, chewing gum or multitasking when talking on the phone
- Be polite and helpful
- Be positive, even if you can't help with the request
- Do not get emotional (even with unpleasant clients)



Phone call manual

ANSWERING THE PHONE

For business phone communication this is important to say your full name as well as company name when answering the call. Of course you don't need to give company name when you answer the internal call from your company, however this is always good to introduce yourself.

You can say:

- Hello/Good morning/Good afternoon. (Company name), (your name) speaking, how may I help you?
- Hello, Company XYZ, Anne speaking, how may I help you?

Or example for internal calls:

- Good morning, Anne speaking, how may I help you?
- Company XYZ, this is Anne
- Company XYZ, Anne speaking.
- Hello, you've reached Company XYZ, this is Anne speaking, how may I help you?

MAKING A CALL

- Hello, this is Anne from Company XYZ
- Hello, my name is Anne and I'm calling from Company XYZ



Phone call manual



ASKING FOR SOMEBODY

- May I speak to John please?
- I would like (I'd like) to speak to John please
- Is John available?
- I would like to talk to Mr Smith please
- Can I talk to Mr Smith please?

EXPLAINING THE REASON FOR THE CALL

- I'm calling to... (check/ask/clarify/explain/discuss/offer...)
- I wanted to... (ask/clarify/explain/discuss/offer...)
- I would like to... (ask/clarify/explain/discuss/offer...)
- I'm calling about...
- I was wondering if...
- I just got your message about...
- I'm returning your call..
- Just a quick call to let you know/to inform you/to say...

Phone call manual



HOW TO ASK FOR CLARIFICATION AND INFORMATION?

- Could you give me your phone number please?
- Can I ask who's calling?
- Could I ask what company you are with?
- Could you spell (your name / your company name) for me please?
- I'm sorry, I didn't catch (your name / the company name). Could you repeat please?
- Could you please clarify ... (what you mean?/the reason of your call?)
- I'm not sure if I understand this correctly, could you please clarify?
- Could you repeat that again?
- Is that the right number for?
- Are you the right person to ask....?
- Is that the (department / team / company...)?

HOW TO SAY THERE ARE CONNECTION ISSUES?

- Would you mind speaking up a bit?
- I can't hear you very well. Could you speak up a bit?
- I'm sorry I can't hear you. Could you please repeat?/Could you please repeat last sentence?
- Could you please say that again?
- The line is quite bad, could you please repeat?
- I'm sorry, we have a bad connection, could you please speak louder please?
- I'm sorry I can barely hear you, could you call again in few minutes?
- You're breaking up.

Phone call manual



TAKING THE MESSAGE FOR SOMEONE ELSE

- I'm sorry, (person's name) is not here at the moment. Can I take a message?
- I'm sorry, he/she, is not here today. Can I take a message?
- I'm afraid he/she is not available at the moment. Can I take a message?
- I'm afraid he/she is currently at the meeting. Can I take a message?
- I'm sorry, he/she is out of office today. Would you like to leave a message?

FOLLOWING UP

- I don't have that information right now, can I call you back?
- I'll need to search for that information. Let me call you back
- I need to check if we can provide this information. Could you please hold?

RESPONDING TO A REQUEST

- Sure, let me check that for you
- Let me check if....
- Of course, one moment please, I'll check that for you...
- Sure, I'm sending this to you right now
- No problem, I'll arrange that for you

Phone call manual



SAYING YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO HELP

- I'm afraid I can't help you with that
- I'm afraid I can't give you that information
- I'm sorry, but I'm not allowed to provide such information
- I'm sorry but our company is not providing such service
- I'm sorry, we are not providing such service
- I'm sorry, but I'm not at my desk at the moment, would you mind I call you back?
- I'm afraid I'm at the meeting at the moment, I will call you back as soon as possible.

ENDING THE CALL

- Thank you for your call!
- Thank you, have a nice day!
- Is there anything else I can help with?... OK, thank you for calling, have a nice day!
- I there anything I can do for you?... Have a good day then! Bye!
- Sorry I couldn't help more. Bye!

Difficult calls

One day you may face the situation, when you will need to handle difficult phone conversation – for example with customer who is angry or unpleasant. Here are a few tips and sentences which can help you to handle such calls in best possible way.

DO NOT TAKE IT PERSONALLY

First and most important rule. Customers are angry because they did not receive the order on time or something is not working as expected – but they are not angry at you.

BE POLITE AND LISTEN CAREFULLY

Assure them you are there to help and – apologize when necessary.

BE ASSERTIVE

However, you also need to be assertive and know how to politely say “no” to some offensive words or customers who are yelling at you. Some things are just not accepted.

Difficult calls

USEFUL PHRASES

SAYING “NO” TO INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

- I understand your concern/frustration/anger, but I cannot tolerate the kind of language you are using right now
- You seem very upset, would you like to continue via email or chat?
- I’m sorry you’re so upset. Would you like me to call you back when you are calmer?
- I apologize, however if you continue with this language I will be forced to end this call.
- We can work together to solve this problem, but only if we can discuss this matter calmly

SAYING YOU UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT THE PROBLEM

- We really appreciate your feedback
- Calling us was the right thing to do
- Please feel free to explain the situation and then I will work to find the solution
- I can certainly understand why this is causing a problem/why this is frustrating / why this is stressful
- Thank you for bringing this to my attention
- You’ve come to the right place to get this resolved
- I hear what you are saying and I know how to help you
- I do understand the inconvenience this is causing

Difficult calls

USEFUL PHRASES

CHECKING IF YOU UNDERSTOOD THE PROBLEM CORRECTLY

- Let me check if I got all the details correctly
- Is there anything else about this problem I should know?
- So your problem is that.... Did I get/understand this correctly?
- Let me see if I have this right...

EXPRESSING YOU ARE GOING TO WORK ON SOLUTION IMMEDIATELY

- Thank you for your patience, I'm working right now to solve this problem
- Thank you for understanding, this is going to be solved within 24h
- I'm auctioning this for you right away
- I'll do this for you as quickly as possible
- Let's work together to solve this!
- I'll investigate this right away!
- There are few ways to address this...
- Do you think this solution would work for you?
- As an immediate solution I would like to suggest...
- Let me see how I can fix this

Difficult calls

USEFUL PHRASES

WHEN YOU CAN'T HELP WITH THE PROBLEM

- I completely understand why you would want that, however I'm afraid we are not able to provide this as....
- As much as I would love to help, that's not in our company's service

ENDING THE CALL

- This is the best solution I can offer at this point. Is there anything else I can help you with?
- Thank you for calling and if you have any additional questions, please let us know
- Apologies once more for any inconvenience caused, thank you for your call.
- Happy I could help, if you need additional assistance, please call us.

Voice messages

BE FORCED

Even though today's world has shifted more towards instant messaging, social media communication and emails – leaving a voice mail is something you may still be forced to use. Why “be forced”? Well, this was proven that most people feel very uncomfortable, when they need to leave the voice mail. And this bad feeling is really coming from the fact that once you record your voice mail, there is really no way to change it. So, whatever you say and how you say it, is going to reach the recipient.

IT'S FRUSTRATING

What is more, people don't like getting the voice mails either. It's neither fast nor convenient to reach them over the phone, with all these recorded messages, passwords, selections of the numbers to hear the voicemail nr 1 or 2... frustrating right?

A MUST

However, sometimes this is a must though. What to say then to make sure that your message is not deleted even before being heard?



Voice messages

HERE BELOW FEW RULES THAT CAN HELP YOU BE READY FOR LEAVING BEST VOICE MAIL IN THE BUSINESS WORLD

- When you call someone, be prepared that you may need to leave the voicemail. Don't get surprised if the machine answers instead of the person who you are calling to.
- Introduce yourself – make sure you introduce yourself with details, meaning your first and last name as well as the company you are calling from (if you are calling to someone outside of company you work for). Example: "Hello, this is Jane Smith from Company XYZ". Avoid saying "Hi, it's me!" or "Hi, it's Ann!".
- Tell shortly the reason of your call – explain why you are calling, best in one sentence. Most systems have very limited time for the recorded message. You don't want to be cut in the middle of your sentence. Example: "I'm calling about the sales report"
- Speak clearly – do your best to leave the voice mail that can be easily understood, don't muffle, speak as you would speak to someone in person, do not raise your voice etc.
- Make your request simple and polite – Example: "Could you please call me back as I have few questions on the report you sent me?" or "Could you please send me the report latest today?". If you prefer to actually speak to someone you can also say "I need to ask you few questions so I will try to call you again around 4pm later today"
- If you need to leave the contact details for someone to reach you, make sure you spell them out. You need to clearly spell out email addresses, names or even the phone number for someone to call you back. Example: "My phone number is 1-2-3 (make a pause), 4-5-6 (make a pause), 7-8-9"
- End the voice mail in a professional way. Example: "Looking forward to hearing from you"



Voice messages

OTHER TIPS:

- Don't leave any details on voicemail for things that are confidential
- When recording the voicemail try to avoid any background noises as your message may be difficult to understand
- Also listen to the recorded greeting message from the person you are calling to – it may actually say they prefer to receive the email rather than a voice mail ;)

PRACTISE

As for everything, practice makes routine so the anxiety you feel when leaving the voice mail will disappear very soon.

EXAMPLES:

- Hello, this is Anne calling. Could you please return my call as soon as possible? My number is 333 444 555. Thank you.
- Hi John. This is Anne from the doctor's Smith office calling. I just wanted to confirm your visit next week. Please call us to confirm an appointment at your earliest convenience.



Video meetings

ANNE JUST JOINED ;-)

Online meetings become one of the most common ways to communicate, meet colleagues and clients or make formal business presentations. Due to corona virus, where so many of us remained home or moved to home based type of work, online meetings are our possibility to actually see people we are talking to. For some more convenient form of communication than just phone call, for others – probably more stressful.

SO, WHETHER YOU LIKE VIDEO CONVERSATIONS OR NOT, THERE ARE STILL SOME RULES YOU NEED TO FOLLOW.

1. SETUP YOUR BACKGROUND

- Make sure the light is correct
- Your background may be great thing for starting the small talk, make sure this looks professional (professional books, nice pictures are OK)
- If you can't set yourself at home at good background, check if your online meeting app allows to setup "fake" background from the app directly.

2. CLEANUP YOUR DESK

- Remove all items which would not be proper (dirty, empty cups, plates etc)
- Piles of documents are not good as well



Video meetings

ANNE JUST JOINED ;-)

3. PREPARE YOUR COMPUTER AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE VIDEO CALL APPLICATION

- Test your camera and microphone
- Make sure your online meeting app is up to date and working
- You may need to share files during the meeting, so make sure you close all unnecessary files/websites upfront. Also check your desktop wallpaper if this is proper for business.
- Learn how to mute the microphone just in case you need it.
- Make sure your camera is at the level of your eyes - then you look straight on it and this helps with conversation as it's like you look directly at someone.

4. DRESS PROPERLY (AS FOR THE OFFICE)

- Some people tend to dress up just from their waist up. You need to be fully dressed as it may happen you need to stand up due to any reason, so showing your home sweatpants may not be something you want.

5. AVOID DISTRACTIONS

- Turn off all email and instant messaging notifications
- Put your mobile on silent mode
- No radio or TV in the background



Video meetings

ANNE JUST JOINED ;-)

6. BE MINDFUL OF YOUR BODY LANGUAGE

- Smile, sit straight, show you are focused (as you were on the face to face meeting)

7. IF YOU ARE THE HOST

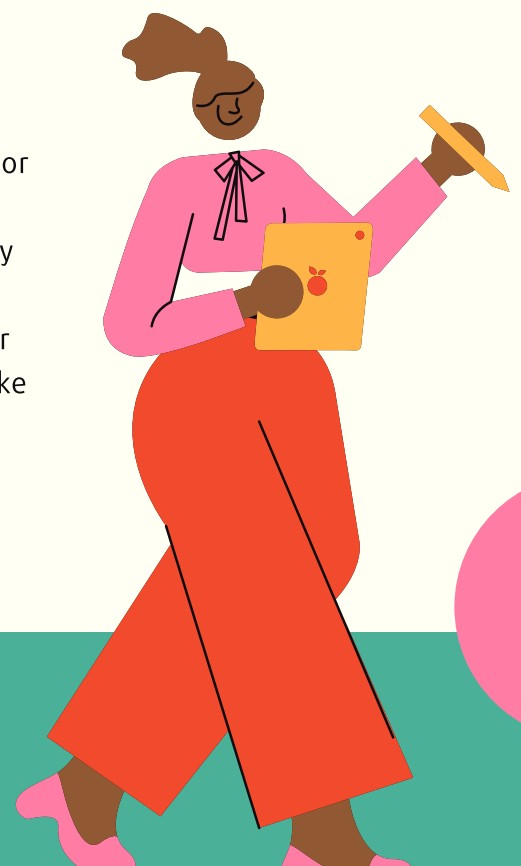
- Welcome everybody who's joining
- Check if everyone is there before you start
- Check if you are well seen and heard
- Start with small talk before going to business

8. MAKE SURE YOU ARE TRULY DISCONNECTED AT THE END

- It happens, quite often for people who don't know the app well, forget to disconnect the camera or microphone and still can be seen/heard after the meeting ended.

9. EATING AND DRINKING

- Definitely you should not eat anything while on online meeting. In most cases this is OK to have cup of coffee, tea or glass of water during such meetings, especially when they take long time. Try to avoid it however if the meeting is very formal, with top management. Though this is good to have glass of water at hand, especially if you are speaking a lot or presenting (when stressed your mouth may get dry and make it uneasy to speak with confidence).



Video meetings manual

USEFUL PHRASES FOR ONLINE MEETINGS AND CONFERENCE CALLS

INTRODUCING YOURSELF

- Hi, Anne here!
- Hi, Anne just joined
- Hello, this is Anne speaking
- Hi everyone, this is Anne from Sales department
- Anne Smith from Sales Department has just joined

CHECKING IF OTHER'S JOINED THE CALL

- Do we have John on the call?
- Are we waiting for anyone else?
- Is John on the line?
- Is everyone here and we can start?
- I'm afraid John is absent today, we will have to start without him

STARTING THE CALL

- Welcome to the call. As you know today we are going to discuss....
- I would like to welcome everybody here today
- First of all I would like to thank everybody for joining today
- I would like to start by welcoming everybody ..
- Hello everybody and welcome



Video meetings manual

USEFUL PHRASES FOR ONLINE MEETINGS AND CONFERENCE CALLS

EXPLAINING THE REASON OF THE CALL AND AGENDA

- Let me go through the agenda quickly, so we all know what the call is going to be about.
- The purpose of today's call is to....
- The aim/the objective of today's meeting is
- The main points we are going to discuss are highlighted in the agenda

DEALING WITH SOUND OR VIDEO ISSUES

- If you are not speaking, please put yourself on mute
- I can't hear John, can anyone hear him?
- Anne, I hear some background noises, could you please put yourself on mute if you are not speaking?
- Sorry, could you repeat please, the sound quality is not very good
- Please remember you need to switch off your mute button if you want to speak

SHARING YOUR SCREEN/DOCUMENT

- Let me share my screen. Can everyone see it?
- I'm sharing the file xyz now, let me know if you can't see it



Video meetings manual

USEFUL PHRASES FOR ONLINE MEETINGS AND CONFERENCE CALLS

ENDING THE CALL/SUMMARY

- Let me briefly summarize what we've discussed today
- Before we finish let me summarize....
- Thank you for your participation today, I will share the agreed action points via email
- Let's finish the call then, thank you all for joining
- Thank you for your time today, let's speak again next week
- We've run out of time, so let's wrap up.
- Would anyone like to add anything before we finish the call?
- So, to summarize before we end.....
- Shall we schedule a follow up call next month?
- That bring us to the end of the call

FOLLOW UP

- Remember, in most cases every conference call or vide meeting requires some sum up or meeting minutes, usually sent to all participants via email. It should summarize what was discussed during the call as well as any action points (with assigned name) to follow up.



What are we afraid of?

I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER.

- It's really ok. On the other side there is a person not a robot. He/she also doesn't know everything.
- You can always come back to the questions later.
- Nobody knows everything.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

- Me too! Really!
- Sometimes I don't understand in Polish so in the second language it is even more difficult.
- The tip here is to be prepared for such situation.
- Learn the phrases or even write them down before the call.
- If you say: "English is my second language so I would need some more clarification" is really ok.

PAUSES ARE OK

- Pauses are a normal part of conversation.
- They don't last as long as you feel. Record yourself and check it!
- The "awkward pause" is usually awkward only for you. Practice and you will get used to it.

I WILL MESS IT UP

- You're not expected do be perfect.
- Prepare the bullet points (not script) with the things you want to get during the call
- If you panic you just come back to your points



Summary of Today's Class

RECAP 1

Phone/video call is sometimes the most effective communication.

RECAP 2

Learn the structure of a call and use our manual.

RECAP 3

You will have difficult calls and will have to leave a message.

RECAP 4

It's ok to be afraid. There are also tips that help with this.



Tasks for you

I HAVE DONE MY JOB, SO IT IS TIME FOR YOU ;-)

★ Zadanie 1

Zachęcam do obejrzenia filmu Dereka Callana o rozmowach telefonicznych

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8az2C76BQ5Q&list=PL2fUZ7TZy_xe21LWpNa50plnhC4VEb0yk)

[v=8az2C76BQ5Q&list=PL2fUZ7TZy_xe21LWpNa50plnhC4VEb0yk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8az2C76BQ5Q&list=PL2fUZ7TZy_xe21LWpNa50plnhC4VEb0yk)



★ Zadanie 2

Z naszego podręcznika strony 126-129 :-)

Koniecznle skorzystaj z plików audio - odsłuchaj i powtarzaj na głos.

★ Zadanie 3

Ciąg dalszy naszego podręcznika. Na stronach 128 i 129 znajduje się 6 poleceń.

Wybierz co najmniej 2 i wykonaj.

★ Zadanie 4

You are at the video meeting with your team – explain the host you can't hear him well as well as that you are not able to see the document he is sharing.

Thank You

FOR JOINING TODAY'S CLASS

Please have a look at the tasks I have prepared for you.
See you next week!



Sources

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