

Call Me (business English lesson)

level: pre-intermediate (A2)

class: one-to-one

time: 45 min

skills: speaking, listening

Warm up

1. Ask your student the following questions about phone calls: *'How do you feel about making phone calls? How many calls a day do you make? Who do you usually call? Who calls you? What about? And how do you feel about making phone calls in English?'*

Me and phone calls

2. Together, try to make a list of *reasons* why English phone calls are so *challenging*.
(possible answers: you can't see the person's mouth, facial expression, gestures; there is a lot of background noise, the line is bad; in a nutshell, you rely just on one of your senses rather than a combination of more)
3. Ask your student if they can remember *the last phone call* they had. Let them prepare a short monologue about it covering the following points:
 - who with?
 - when?
 - what about?
 - how long?
 - any problems?
 - how did you feel?
 - follow-up action?
4. Explain that now you're going to look at a short phone call between two businesspeople. Cut the lines from worksheet 1 and let your student *put them into correct order*. For higher-level/fast students, you may wish to cut out the characters' names at the beginning of the lines to make the exercise more difficult.
5. After the correction, double-check your student understands all the phrases by asking: *'What do you say if you don't understand what I'm saying? How do you say your name on the phone?'* etc.

Role-play

6. Let your students draw one of the cards from worksheet 2, take the appropriate pair card and *role-play* the call together.
7. Repeat the procedure with the other cards, but this time make it *more challenging* by sitting with your backs to each other and playing this <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pgwsx-D4meE> as a background noise. In other words, make it more lifelike with all the problems listed in point 2!

Cooler

8. Ask your student to tell you 3 sentences they have learnt today and that they will use next time they have to handle an English phone call.

<i>Rachel:</i>	ABC Promotion, Marketing Department, Rachel speaking.
<i>Michael:</i>	Hello, can I speak to Dan Chard, please?
<i>Rachel:</i>	I' ll have a look if he' s available. Who' s calling, please?
<i>Michael:</i>	This is Michael Fang.
<i>Rachel:</i>	I' m sorry, could you repeat that?
<i>Michael:</i>	Sure, it' s Michael Fang, from Logitechs Systems.
<i>Rachel:</i>	Thank you. Just a moment, Mr Fang. (...) Hello? I' m very sorry, but Dan is in a meeting at the moment.
<i>Michael:</i>	Do you know when he' ll be available?
<i>Rachel:</i>	I' m not quite sure. Can I take a message?
<i>Michael:</i>	Yes, can you tell him I called and ask him to call me back?
<i>Rachel:</i>	Of course, I will. Can I have your phone number?
<i>Michael:</i>	It' s 562-365-223.
<i>Rachel:</i>	I' m afraid I can' t hear you... Can you say it again?
<i>Michael:</i>	No problem, it' s 562-365-223.
<i>Rachel:</i>	Thank you. I' ll pass on the message as soon as Dan' s back.
<i>Michael:</i>	Thank you, good bye.
<i>Rachel:</i>	Good bye.

Call 1 – Student A



You are calling a customer, Sarah Bersy about an invoice she hasn't paid. It's been 65 days now and your boss is getting angry.

Call 1 – Student B



You work for a start-up company and the budget's tight. Your manager, Sarah Bersy is at lunch at the moment. Answer the phone.

Call 2 – Student A

You are calling your son Steve and want to speak about a birthday present for your husband. He's 60 next week!



Call 2 – Student B

You work in the office with Steve. He's just left for a three-day business trip abroad. Answer the phone.



Call 3 – Student A

You are calling a supplier, Nancy Berrett, who you haven't been in contact with for over a year. You'd like to order some more goods from her. You need the order delivered in 3 days.



Call 3 – Student B

You work for Nancy Berrett, the head of Paperoffice Ltd., a stationery supplier. Nancy is off sick and won't be back until next week. Answer the phone.

