



Handling The Telephone

Learn about your telephone ahead of time. Familiarize yourself with all the features and avoid practicing on the callers.

- Hold the transmitter in front of your mouth and articulate more clearly than you do in face to face conversation. If the transmitter is held away from your mouth you risk not being understood.
- Locate the telephone on your desk so the receiver can be easily picked up without banging into anything.
- Give callers your full attention and avoid side conversations.
- Make sure you place the caller on hold before discussing the particulars of the call with anyone.
- Never eat or drink while talking. If you have food in your mouth when the phone rings, swallow first before answering.
- Answer in as few rings as possible. A maximum of three rings is a good standard.
- Before placing a caller on hold, ask for permission and wait for an answer. Give your caller the name of the person you are transferring them to. "May I put you on hold while I transfer you to Sally Smith in the accounting department?"
- If you have more than one caller on hold, remember the priority of each call. If necessary make notes - who is holding in which line and for how long.

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are aged 65 and over has increased from 10.5 million to 13.5 million (19.5% of the population).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the needs of older people, and the Government has set out a strategy for the 21st century in the White Paper on *Ageing Better: The Government's Strategy for Older People* (Department of Health, 2000). This strategy is based on the following principles:

- Older people should be able to live independently and actively in their own homes.
- Older people should be able to live in their own communities.
- Older people should be able to live in their own homes and communities for as long as possible.

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