

# HOW NOT TO ANSWER THE PHONE!

Right now, I've got the number of a good plumber so I'll give him a quick call to see when he can come out to quote for my job.

## Ring, ring!

**“What? Can't talk now, I'm in the pub. Call me back, yeah?”**

**Well actually, “no.” I'll try somebody else.**

Very often the first impressions a client will have of you and your business is a phone call. Adapting a friendly, professional phone manner is very easy - unfortunately, so is coming over as rude and unhelpful.

You need to master a few simple methods to give your clients the right impression when they talk to you on the phone. Always be polite, using “please” and “thank you” where appropriate, don't interrupt the caller, speak clearly and listen carefully. Bear in mind what you would be thinking if you were on the client's end of the phone.

## Answering calls:

- Pick up within three rings - too soon and the client may be caught off guard, too long and you risk annoying them.
- Put on your friendly voice eg “Good morning, Dynamic, Clive speaking. How can I help?”
- Smile. Yes, I know the client won't see it, but they will feel it in your voice. Trust me, it works.
- If you are going up a ladder or into a meeting, switch voicemail on. Otherwise you risk embarrassing yourself or missing what could potentially be an important call.

## Making calls:

- When calling a client, identify yourself straight away eg “This is Clive at Dynamic Sales Solutions. Is that Melanie?” (or (“Who am I talking to?” as appropriate).
- Understand why you are making the call (eg to arrange an appointment to visit and quote for a job) and have pen and paper handy to make notes.
- If you said you would ring a client at a certain time, do so. If you can't, let them know as soon as possible and make another appointment to call.
- If you get an answer-phone or voicemail message, speak clearly and remember to leave your name and number. They won't be able to call you back otherwise!

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