

Reception & Support Staff

Telephone Answering “Do’s” & “Don’ts”:

DO:

- Remember you are the first point of contact and first impressions matter. You are the firm’s representative.
- Remember the caller will often be anxious and apprehensive. Talk to them in a way that is appropriate.
- Be welcoming – greet them with a ‘good morning / afternoon’ using the firm’s name – your tone of voice should be friendly and bright.
- You need to know - Why they are calling? Who they would like to speak to? How they can be helped?
- Politely ask them their name – jot the name down, so you don’t forget or need to ask again – it is okay to ask them to spell it.
- If possible tell them to whom you are going to put them through to.
- If that is not possible, apologise to them and offer another alternative.
- If there is nobody else available offer the caller a choice: “would you like to leave a message, or can I have X call you back?”
- If you are arranging a call back, try to find good times for a colleague to try, or times to avoid.

- If you take a message, or promise a call back, repeat the message or number back to the caller to check it is correct. This also gives the caller confidence.
- When you transfer the caller though to a colleague, ideally announce the call telling your colleague who is calling and why: “I have Mr Smith on the line ... he wants a quote for conveyancing”.
- Ensure you understand the various services the firm offers and who in the firm deals with the relevant issues. Knowledge of your own firm is important.
- Do make sure you listen carefully and properly.

DON'T:

- Don't give away too much personal information as to why you can't put someone through. For example ... “He's opening his post” or “just popped out to lunch”.
- Don't ask, “how did you hear about our firm?” ... this is a question to be asked by someone else.
- Don't use someone's first name, unless that is how they introduce themselves.
- Don't put someone on hold without their consent.
- Try to avoid asking the same question twice.
- Don't let the caller hear you talking to other colleagues in the office.

- Don't eat whilst you are on the phone.
- Don't be territorial over office locations. You are representing the firm, not just one office.