

# THE VOICE OF YOUR BUSINESS

A GUIDE TO BETTER TELEPHONE USAGE

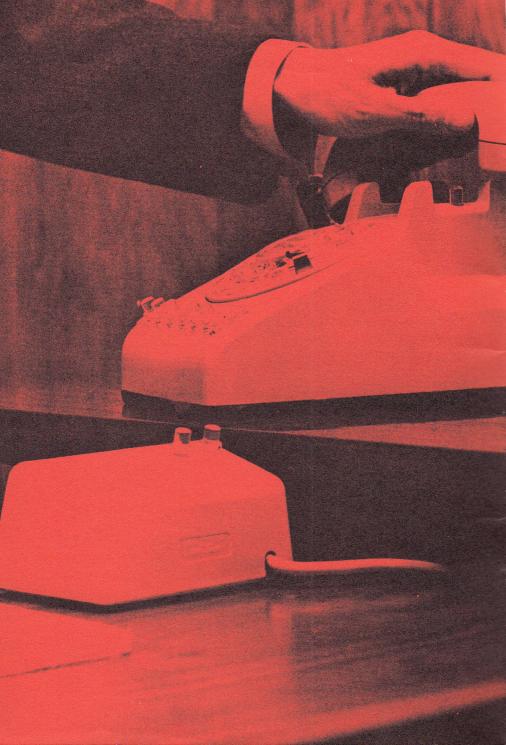
# FOREWORD...

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The telephone is a quick and convenient means of communication. It is a door into your establishment and into those of your customers and prospects. Through it you buy and sell, and conduct various business transactions. But more than that, the telephone is *the voice of your business*. Through the telephone, the stranger at the other end of the line receives his first impression of your organization, and frequently this impression remains for a long while.

The telephone can be a potent builder of good will. Used with thoughtfulness and reason, it creates and builds friendship between you and your customers, and improves departmental efficiency within your own office.

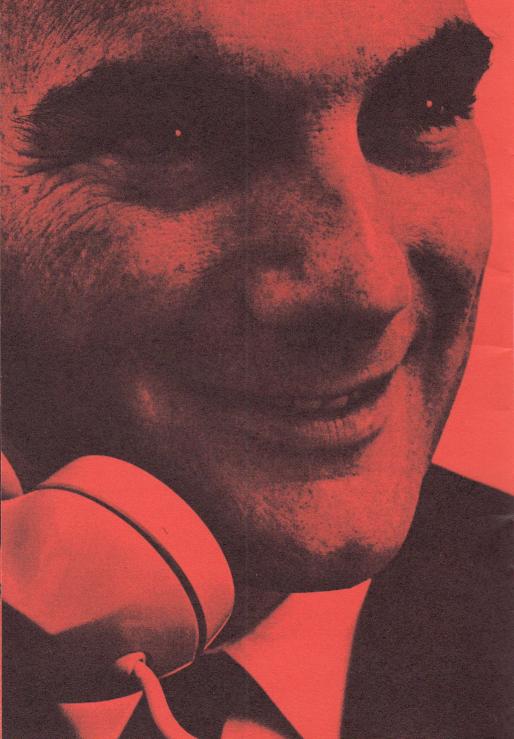
The suggestions in this booklet are tested and proved builders of good will and good business. They are based on the actual experience of many business telephone users, and have been gathered from many organizations — some with one or two employees, some with thousands. They are offered to you in the hope that they may prove helpful in *your* business.





### when your telephone rings ANSWER PROMPTLY

When your telephone rings, someone at the other end is waiting for attention. It may be an old customer with an order; a new customer with a problem, looking for help; a prospective customer seeking information. Whatever the reason for the call, a prompt answer gets the conversation off on the right foot — the first step toward good will, orders and profits. When the caller, after talking with the switchboard attendant, has to wait more than a few seconds for another telephone to answer, he grows irritated. He begins to think that the person he's calling doesn't consider either him or his call very important. So the conversation gets off to a bad start, and just so much good will, or potential good will, is lost.





# identify yourself **IMMEDIATELY**

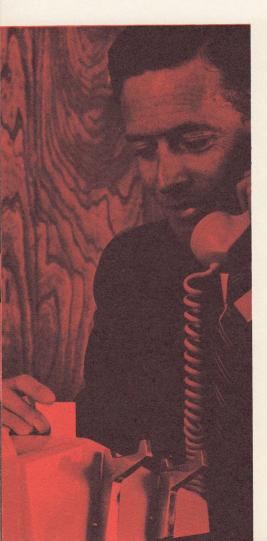
Naturally your caller isn't going to start conversation till he knows to whom he's talking. So the quicker you identify yourself, the quicker the conversation can begin. When answering for a company it's best to use the company or office name. Or, if several names are in the title, simply the telephone number: "This is 555-1234," for example; or "KL 5-1234."

When you're answering your own telephone, a simple "hello" has disadvantages unless the caller is sure to recognize your voice. It's clearer to say "Wilson speaking" or "this is Mr. Wilson" or "Bookkeeping Department."

When you're answering someone else's telephone, the usual identification is: "Mr. Johnson's office — Mr. Blake speaking."

The three "A's" of answering a telephone often are referred to as: Answer promptly; answer clearly; answer helpfully (identification).

#### when you're making a call be SURE of the NUMBER



How often have you said to vourself "Let's see, I think the number is 743-2368," and dialed it, when it was really 743-2638? It's well to be sure of the number before you call. If you can't find it in the book, call Information. Calling a wrong number wastes your time and someone else's time it's somewhat irritating, too. But a simple apology will usually make the person called in error feel much better about it.

# PLAN

what you're going to say beforehand



Planned conversations make for shorter calls — assure discussions that are orderly and complete — prevent callbacks to cover points missed in the original talk.



### PAD AND PENCIL a helpful habit



Many business telephone users find that it's a good idea to have a pad and pencil handy. It wastes time to stop a conversation to go and get them. And this habit of taking notes permits concentration on what's being said. The whole story is obtained without interruptions, and without having to rely on memory for important details. This all adds up, these users say, to smoother and more efficient operation.

# "I'LL CALL YOU BACK"



When you must look for information — and it's going to take time — it's a good idea to say "I'll call you back." That avoids irritation at the other end of the line the thought that "I've got better things to do than hold this line all day. Don't they think my time is worth anything?" It also frees the line for someone else's call.

#### the HOLD THE LINE HABIT

it's probably happened to you - often



• Your telephone rings. You answer. An operator's voice says, "Is this Mr. Brown?" "Yes," you say, "This is Mr. Brown."



• "Please hold the line," she replies, "Mr. Jones is calling." You hold the line.



• Another voice speaks. "Mr. Brown?" "Yes," you say, "this is Mr. Brown." One moment, please," says she. "Mr. Jones calling." You hold the line.



• Finally: "Mr. Brown?" "Yes," you say. "Oh, hello, Mr. Brown — this is Mr. Jones."

Few business practices are more irritating than the "hold the line" habit. A far better approach, when *you* call someone, is simply to ask your operator to get Mr. Jones and to remain on the line, or even to make the call yourself. The conversation gets off on the right note, and the time you've lost is negligible.

It's a good idea to ask oneself: "Am I telephoning in the way that I like to have people telephone to me?"



#### handle OTHER PEOPLE'S CALLS with tact



When you're taking a call for someone else, it's best to say: "Mr. Jones is not here just now. May I take a message?" If the answer is "No," then ask who is calling. You may have felt slightly irritated when someone answering your call says first: "Who's calling?" and next: "He's not in." It somehow seems unfriendly. Be sure to note the caller's name, the time of the call, and the message, if any, and see that the information is delivered as promptly as possible.



### BE BRIEF

No business telephone conversation should be prolonged unnecessarily. It's a good practice — to save time all around — to be as brief as courtesy and the nature of your conversation will permit.

#### leave your COMPLETE telephone address

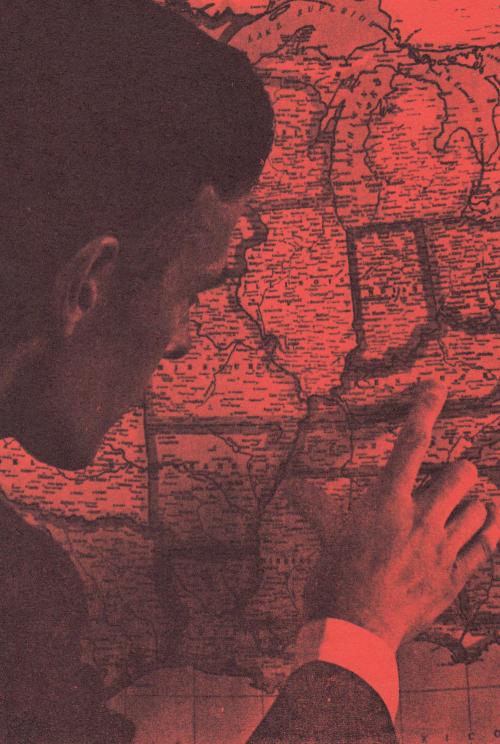
When the percent you have called is out, and you with to be called back leave your complete telephone dress. This means your telephone number, consisting either of seven figures or of five figures and a Central Office name, plus (on long distance calls) your area only if it differs from the one associated of the figures phone ou are alling

#### hang up GENTLY

First, be sure that the conversation is finished; then, a courteous habit is to allow the caller to hang up first. In any event, always replace the receiver gently — if the caller is still on the line, a receiver banged down is like slamming a door in his face.







#### some suggestions for making OUT-OF-TOWN CALLS

When making long distance calls, remember that most rates are lower after 6 p.m. every night and all day on Sundays. On station-to-station interstate calls between points more than 220 miles apart, still lower rates are in effect between 9 p.m. and 4:30 a.m.

The list of places throughout the country for which calls may now be dialed direct is increasing steadily. Your local directory lists many of these places with their area codes, and contains complete information on all types of long distance calls. When telephoning across country, keep in mind the time zones, with differences of from one to three hours.

Station-to-station calls are made to a telephone number. You talk with whoever answers. This type of call has the lowest rates, and is the type to use when you are reasonably sure that the person you want will be there. Charges begin when the called number answers.

Person-to-person calls are made to a particular person, extension or department. The initial charge is more than for a station-to-station call, but begins only when you reach the individual you wish.

When your call is handled by an operator, it will be completed faster if you can give her the number of the person you are calling, including the area code if it differs from the one associated with the telephone you are using. Also, if you identify yourself to the operator, delays will be avoided if the person who answers needs to know who is calling before completing the call.

## **OBSERVE THE NICETIES**

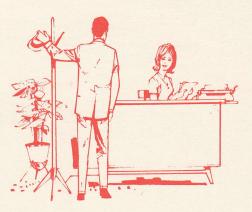
In a telephone conversation your listener can't see you can't watch your gestures or see you smile. Therefore it's important to emphasize little courtesies. Observe the niceties of conversation — in short, develop a "telephone personality."

For example: Be attentive — Speak to the person, not at the telephone — Remember the "thank you's" and the "you're welcome's" — Use the person's name at suitable opportunities — and keep your voice animated, as though you were talking face to face.

# IN GENERAL

#### When you're going out

always tell someone the time that you expect to be back, and if necessary, how you can be reached at the place you're going. Such information often prevents messages from going astray.



#### Be Careful

when transferring a call to someone else. If you can't complete the call yourself, tell the person calling that you are transferring it, and to whom. Then move the receiver-rest down and up slowly until the attendant answers.



#### Don't Shout

Your telephone is designed to carry natural conversational voices. A loud voice is difficult to understand. It's best to speak naturally, directly *into* the telephone.



## **TELEPHONE INFORMATION**



The introductory pages of your telephone directory contain much detailed information about local and long distance rates, different kinds of service, and the methods of making various types of calls.

Each directory lists addresses and telephone numbers of Business Offices where Managers and Service Representatives will be glad to answer questions pertaining to telephone service.



