

1. Asking for the caller's name

May I ask who is calling, please?
Who's calling, please?
Where are you calling from?
cf. I didn't catch your name.

2. When failing to connect a call

I'm sorry, but the line is busy (engaged).	}	Would you like to leave a message?
I'm sorry, but nobody is answering the phone.		Would you please hold the line?
I'm afraid he's on another line.		Could you call back later?

3. Promising to deliver messages (messenger service)

I'll make sure he gets your message.
I'll have him call you back.
I'll ask him to call you as soon as possible.
I'll give him the message when he comes back.
I'll tell him that you called.

4. Delivering messages

There is a message for you from Mr. White. He asked you to call him back as soon as you returned.

5. Telephone problems

I can't hear you very well.	}	Could you speak up a little, please?
The line is very bad.		

I'm sorry. I didn't catch that (your name). Could you repeat that, please?

Exercises

A Choose the best response to each question or statement.

1 A: Would you like to leave a message?

B: _____

- a. Yes, please.
- b. I can take a message.
- c. It would be my pleasure.

2 A: May I speak to Mr. Kim in the Sales Department?

B: _____

- a. I'll have him call you back.
- b. He just stepped out of the office.
- c. How can I help you?

3 A: I'd like to reserve the limousine pickup service, please.

B: _____

- a. Thank you for calling.
- b. Let me put you through to the Reservation Department.
- c. I'll make sure he gets the message.

4 A: Does your hotel have a business center?

B: _____

- a. I'm glad to hear that.
- b. Don't mention it.
- c. Yes, we do.

B Match each sentence with the best reply.

- 1 Would you wake me up at 7 tomorrow morning? •
- 2 May I ask who is calling, please? •
- 3 Would you like to leave a message? •
- 4 What number are you calling? •
- 5 When do you expect him back? •

- a. Certainly, sir. We will call you at 7 A.M.
- b. Isn't this the Ocean Hotel?
- c. I think he will be back by noon.
- d. No, that's all right. I'll call back later.
- e. Yes, my name is Doris Bell.

C Complete the following conversation with the words in the box.

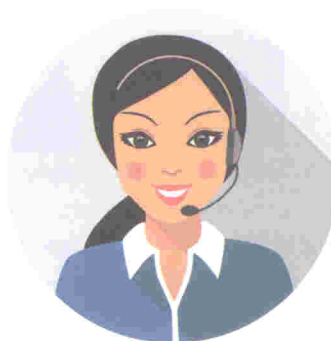
busy hold connect assist speaking

Operator Good morning. This is Lisa ¹ _____.
How may I ² _____ you?

Caller Hi. Can you ³ _____ me to Mr. Shaw's room?

Operator Certainly, ma'am. I'll connect you...
I'm sorry, but the line is ⁴ _____.
Would you ⁵ _____ the line?

Caller No problem.



Role-Playing

A Use the web page below to practice giving information about the hotel. Take turns being an operator and a caller with your partner.

The Sunshine Hotel	
Transportation from the Airport	Taxi (1 hour), Bus (1.5 hours), Subway (2 hours), Hotel Limousine (1 hour)
Hotel Classification	5-Star Hotel
Main Facilities	Business Center (3F), Fitness Center (2F), 5 Bars & Restaurants
Tourist Attractions	Palaces, Traditional Markets, Shopping Centers

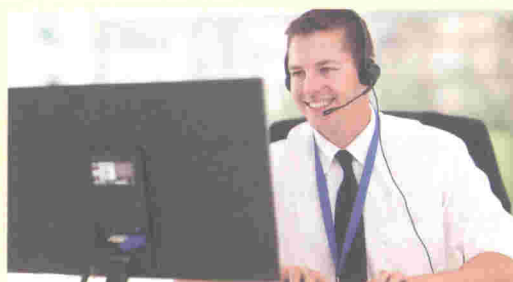
Example

Operator Good morning. Sunshine Hotel. What can I help you with?

Caller How can I get to the hotel from the airport?

Operator You may take a taxi, a bus, a subway, or a hotel limousine.

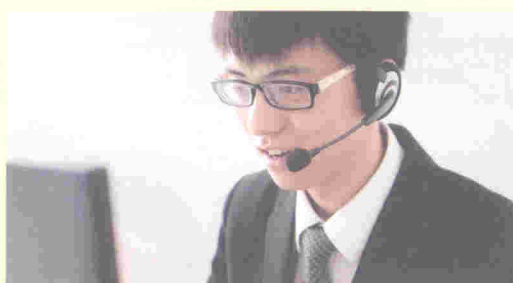
B Practice handling the following situations. Take turns being an operator and a caller with your partner.



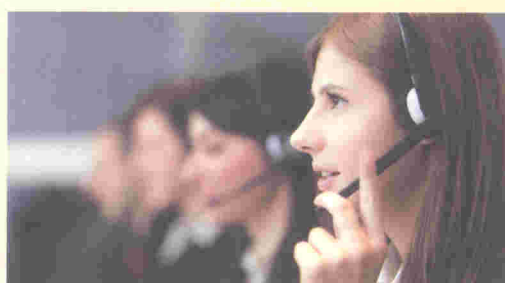
Situation 1 | Connecting a call to a guest's room



Situation 2 | Connecting a guest's call to an employee in a hotel department



Situation 3 | Taking a request for a wakeup call



Situation 4 | Handling a wrong number

Example

Operator Good morning. Castle Hotel. How may I assist you?

Caller Can I speak to Mr. Han in room 1030?

Operator _____

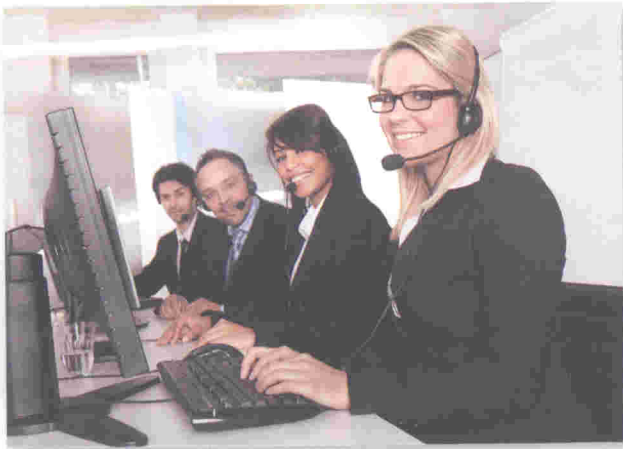


Looking into the Hotel

Read the following passage that describes what the hotel switchboard does.

01-09

Switchboard



The switchboard (PBX) at a hotel is the department which provides one of the most important services for guests. The switchboard employees are called operators, and they are ready to answer the phone around the clock. They not only connect all the phone calls at the hotel, but they also often greet hotel guests for the very first time when they call the hotel. Thus, it is important for them to make a good impression of the hotel on the guests. These operators work in the “back of the house,” which is a hotel term that refers to a hidden

office in a hotel that guests cannot see. They perform various tasks such as connecting phone calls, making wakeup calls, giving information and directions, and handling call charges.

Nowadays at some hotels, the switchboard functions as a one-call service or one-stop service department for the convenience of hotel guests. The operator takes orders from guests and distributes them to room service, the bell desk, housekeeping, and the front desk. Guests can therefore place all of their orders with operators at the switchboard, so there is no need to call different departments to make different orders.

Words & Phrases

around the clock for 24 hours without stopping

convenience the condition of being useful or suitable for a particular person

department a section in an organization such as a government, a business, or a university

distribute to give or deliver things to a number of people

function to serve

greet to welcome someone with polite words or actions

impression the feeling you have about someone or something, usually after having seen or heard that person or thing

perform to do a task

place an order to order