

**The University of Toledo**  
**College of Business Administration**  
**Executive Center for Global Competitiveness**

**PROFESSIONAL TELEPHONE TECHNIQUES**

### Program Overview

Even though you may have been using the telephone for years, have you ever stopped and evaluated the image you project? Do you sound professional or ordinary? Do you stay in control of conversations? Do you handle every call efficiently and courteously? Why is this important? Because in making or answering a telephone call, you are representing yourself and everyone in your organization to your customers and clients.

Your callers form an impression of you and your organization from your telephone manner. Based on this impression, they decide whether to do business with you or take their business elsewhere. Think of it this way: You never get a second chance to make a good first impression. That's even more reason to make each call a quality call. You'll learn how to do exactly this—make each call a quality call—at this program.

### Program Objectives

In this information-packed and interactive seminar, participants will learn how to:

- Connect quickly and establish rapport with their callers
- Avoid the voice “turnoffs” and project an upbeat, clear, and natural voice
- Screen with style and stop the transferring merry-go-round
- Put people on hold without irritating them
- Encourage people to “come to the point” and manage multiple calls
- Defuse rather than detonate the telephone time bombs
- Use positive wording rather than emotional trigger words
- Disarm angry callers and control complaining callers
- Deal with challenging callers—abusive, nonstop, indecisive, and hard-to-understand
- Record and leave winning voice mail messages

### Program Agenda

#### Building Rapport: The Tools for Projecting a Professional Telephone Image

- Why a positive attitude is critical for telephone success
- Tips for improving voice tone
- Energy level—How sounding energetic leads to shorter conversations
- The critical ingredients—Speaking rate, volume, enunciation, and diction

#### Back to the Basics: Phone Fundamentals

- Prompt response—When to answer the phone
- First impressions—Greeting the caller
- Who is this? Screening with style
- Encourage patience—Putting the caller on hold
- Make the connection—Transferring the caller
- The total picture—Take a thorough message

#### Staying in Control of the Phone Call

- How to get people to “come to the point” without offending them
- How to manage multiple calls
- How to handle persistent callers
- How to conclude calls

#### Defusing Telephone Time Bombs with the Right Response

- The “She can't take the call” syndrome
- The “He's on vacation” syndrome
- The “No one has called me back” syndrome
- The “Give me the person in charge” syndrome
- The “I've been mishandled” syndrome
- The “I can't tell you why I'm calling” syndrome
- The “Who gets priority” syndrome
- The “Telephone tag” syndrome

#### Tactics for Tough Callers

- Taking charge of nonstop talkers
- Assisting hard-to-understand callers
- Directing indecisive callers
- Controlling complaining callers
- Handling angry callers using the eight-step process
- Stopping the abuse from abusive callers

#### Telephone Technology

- Voice mail etiquette—Recording and leaving winning messages
- Call waiting—Who comes first?
- The do's and don'ts of cellular phones

### About the Instructor

**Debra A. Smith** is a nationally respected consultant, speaker, and seminar leader. Her subject is professionalism—a composite of respect for the organization, respect for the people it serves, and respect for oneself. She develops this professionalism in her listeners, thereby enabling employees to reach their highest potential within the organization. People who attend her seminars gain new insight and direction, reinforced by effective skills that greatly enhance their performance. Every year Debra travels to over 100 cities in the United States and Canada to deliver her seminars on communication, time management, conflict resolution, and customer relations. Her seminars are skillfully designed to meet the needs of managerial, supervisory, and support personnel. She has trained over 450,000 people from organizations in the private sector and government as well as in numerous colleges and universities.

*If you wish to tailor this program for onsite training at your company, please contact Carrie Herr, the Director of ECGC, by calling 419-724-2591 or via email at [carrie.herr@utoledo.edu](mailto:carrie.herr@utoledo.edu).*