

Teleconferences - Apologizing

Discussion

What are some examples of bad teleconference etiquette?

Listening

- A:** Hello. This is Adam. Can I just confirm everyone is here? We should have Bob, Candace, Dave, and Edward on the line.
- B:** Bob here. We're all here except for Edward. He's in an emergency meeting and will join us later.
- A:** I see. Well, I think we can probably -
BEEP [Edward has joined the call.]
- A:** Edward, are you there?
BEEP [Edward has left the call.]
- A:** Ok. Well whenever -
BEEP [Edward has joined the call.]
- A:** Hello. Edward?
- E:** Yes. Hello Adam. Sorry for joining late. I had an emergency meeting.



Apology	Reason
Sorry for being late.	<i>I had another meeting.</i>
My apologies for the noise.	<i>I'm having connection problems.</i>
Very sorry for the interruption.	<i>We can't see your screen.</i>

Exercise

You are the key speaker in the meeting. You are joining late.	
You are leading the meeting. You have to leave early.	
You are presenting information. There are some technical issues.	

Practice

Practice with classmates. Take turns apologizing.



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Discussion

When it comes to teleconferences, do you have any pet peeves?

Listening

- A:** Hello everyone. This is Adam in Wellington. Can I just confirm that everyone who should be here, is here? We should have Bob, Candace, Dave, and Edward on the line.
- B:** Morning Adam. Bob here. Candace, Dave, and I are here in the LA office. We're just missing Edward. He got pulled into an emergency meeting with a client and will join us a little later.
- A:** I see. Edward is the key speaker today so that's a bit of an issue. Well, perhaps we can quickly run down our -
BEEP [Edward has joined the call.]
- A:** Edward, are you there?
BEEP [Edward has left the call.]
- A:** Ok. Well, whenever -
BEEP [Edward has joined the call.]
- A:** Hello. Edward?
- E:** Yes. Hello Adam. I'm very sorry for coming in late. I had an emergency meeting I couldn't get out of.



Apology	Reason
Excuse me for coming in late.	<i>I got pulled into an emergency meeting.</i>
My apologies for the interference.	<i>We're having some connectivity issues.</i>
I'm very sorry to cut you off.	<i>We are just about out of time.</i>

Exercise

Even though you are the key speaker in today's meeting, you are joining late.	
You are chairing today's meeting but have to leave early for an important client visit.	
You are presenting in a video conference but your camera isn't working.	

Practice

Practice with classmates. Take turns apologizing.



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General Lesson Plan

Topical warm-up conversation

What are some examples of bad teleconference etiquette?
When it comes to teleconferences, do you have any pet peeves?

Potential answers:

- joining late / leaving early
- connection issues
- people not using "mute" correctly
- people asking the point of the meeting

5 - 10 min

Needs analysis / Feedback

Teacher notes down key patterns / phrases from the students' speaking and gives brief error correction, drill, or pattern reinforcement.

Thinking

In a one-on-one discussion, in pairs, or small groups, have students think of potential responses to the situations or language they are going to hear in the listening.

5 - 10 min

Listening

Listen to the conversation. Students write down what they hear.

How did the speakers handle the interruptions or issues?

5 - 10 min

Reading

Check the meaning of the conversation. It's not important to understand the whole thing. Make sure students understand the key phrases listed below the conversation.

5 - 10 min

Practice

Have students practice handling the issues by using the suggested text and even better, practice handling their original situations.

5 - 10 min

Helpful hint:

This topic is closely related to troubleshooting and teleconference etiquette. A key discussion point can be how to avoid needing to apologize by making sure we avoid the issues outlined in the stories.