

QUICK TIPS – TELEPHONE MESSAGES

Have you ever received a telephone message that sounded something like this?

“Hi. It’s me. I’m leaving in an hour. Call me.”

There are a number of deficiencies inherent in this message.

The caller has assumed that you will recognize their voice and that you know their telephone number. In addition, *“leaving in an hour”* lacks a reference point, so its meaning and relevance are lost.

Leaving Messages

A more effective telephone message is:

“Hi. It’s Bill Fields calling. I’ll be in my office until 11:30 and, then again, after 2 p.m. Please call me at 905-820-8308. I’m looking forward to speaking with you.”

Clearly, this message contains all the pertinent information required to enable and facilitate the recipient returning the call. An important technique is to not race through the phone number. Speak slowly, so that the recipient can write it down.

Returning Messages

By when should a telephone message be returned?

Yes, everyone seems very busy and on over-load, and that often becomes the rationale for the delay in returning a telephone call.

A general rule, however, is that telephone messages should be returned within 24 hours – even if the answer is *“No”* or if there’s a need to schedule an actual time to have a full conversation.

Clearing up telephone messages cuts through your growing workload and diminishes the invisible stress one experiences when unfinished business is deferred. Furthermore, it signals your professionalism and the *“value”* that you have for the other person.

These are two simple practices that will make conducting business more efficient, more effective and much less frustrating.

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