

Training Topic: Receptionist Principles and Procedures

Any company relies on its receptionists to handle its inbound calls quickly, professionally, and effectively. At ABC Collections, where large numbers of inbound calls translate directly into revenue opportunities, the proper handling of these calls is absolutely critical. That means that you, the receptionist, are doing a very, very important job. To do it well, you will have to know and practice the ABC Receptionist Principles and Procedures.

ABIGAIL ADAMS: Learning is not attained by chance; it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence.

Who calls in to ABC Collections?

Many, many different kinds of people have occasion to call our main number. A few are listed below:

- Debtors – people who owe money – may find our main number on their credit reports and call in to resolve their debts.
- Former debtors – people who have paid what they owe – may call in with requests, concerns, or questions.
- Clients – the people we work for – may call in looking for service.
- Potential clients – people we *want* to work for – may call in to get information about us.
- Loan officers – people trying to make a loan to debtors – may call looking for verification of a debt.
- Creditors – people who are trying to lend to one of our debtors – may call for verification of a debt or for repayment of the debt.
- Attorneys – people who are representing our debtors — may call to discuss a debt or a bankruptcy.
- Credit bureaus – agencies that collect and distribute credit information about consumers – may call in looking for more information about a debt we've reported to them.
- Third parties – people who don't have a debt or other business with us – may call with questions, requests, or complaints.

That's a fairly broad spectrum of folks. Each of these must be handled in a different way. Knowing what to do with each of these types of callers isn't always easy. Knowing and adhering to these Principles and Procedures will help you perform the reception function quickly, professionally, and effectively.

There are certain general principles by which all good receptionists operate. Every time you speak with someone on the telephone, you should keep them in the forefront of your mind:

Receptionist General Principles:

1. You are the first person the caller will speak with at ABC Collections. S/he will judge the company by the impression you make. You must speak clearly, seem alert, use professional language, and be courteous. In other words, you must sound professional. A good receptionist uses 'please' and 'thank you,' addresses people as 'sir' or 'ma'am,' speaks in complete sentences, and informs a caller when she's about to transfer a call.