

# Guide to a successful conference call

Make sure all your conference call participants can hear you clearly. These tips will go a long way to ensuring your message comes across clearly.



## Select a Quiet Environment for Your Conference Call

Speakerphones can be highly sensitive, transmitting everything from the sounds of overhead air ducts to whispered side conversations. Participate in a quiet setting where you can concentrate on your teleconference and the participants can hear you. Closing your office door will minimize these distractions during your conference call. Office equipment and loud talking can disrupt your conference call. Press \* 6 to mute your line during noisy situations, then press \*7 again to 'un-mute' your line when you are ready to communicate.



## Test Your Speakerphone

If you are using a speakerphone, set it up before your conference call begins. Some speakerphones with the volume set too high create feedback. In addition, many conference room speakerphones need to be adjusted according to the room's dynamics. Ensuring proper speakerphone setup before your meeting start time will save the group time and aggravation.



## Know Your Microphone Location

Make sure you know where the microphone is located on your speakerphone unit, and speak directly into it. There is a tendency for people to speak into the speaker because that is where voices are heard. The microphone (especially on larger, more sophisticated units) may be located a significant distance from the speaker. If you talk in the direction of the speaker instead of the microphone, you may not be heard clearly.



## Use Your Mute Button

Locate the mute button. Test it to make sure it works properly in case you need to use it. Press your mute button to eliminate background noise during conference calls. When you need to speak, disengage the mute function. When you finish talking, press your mute button again to keep background noises from disrupting your teleconference.



## Turn Off Call Waiting During Your Conference Call

Prior to your conference call, you may be able to temporarily deactivate your call waiting to ensure an uninterrupted discussion.



## Do Not Place Your Line On Hold

If you need to step away from the audio conference, do not place your line on hold. On-hold music or recordings will feed into the teleconference and will disrupt the group's discussion. If you must step away, hang up and dial in again when you are able to rejoin the conference call.



## International date line & Time zone

Calling across borders and time zones can be tricky. Be sure to cover these essentials before you launch your call with international participants.



## Be On Time to Your Conference Call

If you are late to your conference call, be sure to apologize and briefly explain your tardiness, but the best rule of thumb is to be on the teleconference ahead of your guests.



## Check for Complete Phone Numbers

An international telephone number will look different than a local number. It will have an international code, a country code and a city code before the local number. These codes vary in length, so accuracy is difficult to determine at first glance.



## E-mail It

Prior to a conference call, e-mail relevant presentations or notes, as it helps teleconference participants with language barriers to have something to read ahead of time. It will also help them prepare and give them more confidence to ask questions.



## Provide Alternate Access

Sometimes no matter how much planning is done, it is impossible to arrange a convenient time for all international parties to meet on a conference call. International teleconference participants can access a recorded conference at their convenience and even leave messages for all parties to respond to at a later time.



## Teleconference Assistance is Always Available

If you need help during your automated audio conference, press \*0 or 00 to reach an operator assistant.