

## Phone Call Etiquette

Jesus Christ said, “I will make you fishers of men” (Matt. 4:19; Mark 1:17). Effective fishing for prospective members (PMs) is a responsibility we cannot take lightly. We must be aware that whenever we correspond with a prospect, we might be dealing with God’s heritage—a person being called by God.

In this fast-paced society, we often do not have the luxury of time that was present in the WCG, when the ministry was able to visit PMs in their homes. Many Church inquiries live too far from a pastor to personally be visited. Therefore, the next best way is contact via telephone. Effective phone conversation is a skill that we all need to perfect.

There could be some nervousness when first calling a potential member. This can easily be overcome by applying a few effective principles and etiquette:

- If you have set up a call, make sure you do not call before 8 a.m. or after 9 p.m., unless you have arranged to do so.
- When placing a call, after identifying yourself and the Church, and asking how the person is doing, ask, “Do you have some time?” or “Is this a good time to reach you?” before explaining the reason for your call.
- Focus *all* of your attention on the person.
- Smile when making a call. It puts a smile into your voice that the recipient can hear.
- Greet the person as if you have known him or her a long time.
- Do not interrupt the person while he or she is talking, but still be sure to maintain control of the call.
- Never give the impression that you are rushed.
- Do not chew gum, eat or drink while on the phone.
- Never engage in arguments or debates.
- Never be rude, no matter how nasty or argumentative a person might be. Always remember to handle yourself in a professional, Christian-like manner.
- Speak clearly and slowly. Do not slur or mumble your words. Speak with confidence, so the person on the other end has the feeling that you know what you are talking about.
- We are a professional organization, and those who come in contact with the Church should expect to be treated with dignity.
- When leaving a phone message, always state your name, the Church’s name, phone number and reason for calling. Do not stammer or stutter and use up an unreasonable amount of time.
- Remember the “human factor.” Be kind and gentle in your voice—it can make a positive or negative experience for the person on the other side of the call.

Effective fishing involves the spoken word. Be sure that Christ’s sheep, as well as PMs, hear your voice, by using the telephone as a means of communication to fulfill what Jesus Christ taught: “But he that enters in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter opens; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out. And when he puts forth his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him:

for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers" (John 10:2-5).