

## Recognising poor telephone manner

Think of someone you know who, in your opinion, has the *worst* telephone manner of anyone you have encountered. Think about what makes their manner so bad. Here are some prompts – use the spaces below them to write your answers.

- How do they open calls?
  - When phoning you/others
  
  - When taking a call
  
- What do they do to establish rapport or reduce the social distance between themselves and the caller, eg through humour, use of first names, personal conversation about family, holidays etc?
  
- How do they conduct the business side of the call?
  - Is there structure to the conversation?
  
  - Have they planned the structure of the call? If so, how?
  
  - What enables them to maintain the structure of the call?
  
- What do they do if the conversation does not seem to be going as planned, eg abusive callers or refusal to cooperate?
  
- What action do they take to ensure that what has been discussed/agreed will be remembered after the call has finished?
  
- How do they terminate calls?

Review your notes and consider how whether you currently conduct your own calls in any of these ways. Monitor the next 10 calls you make or receive and draw up a list of your strengths and weaknesses. Identify at least 3 of the weaknesses you have identified that you will commit to improving.

- When will you make your next call incorporating these improvements?