

How to get through to the right person

28

In this lesson you will learn telephone phrases for finding someone who can help.

Starter

- 1 How would you go about finding the following items? What means of searching would you use (e.g. the Internet, telephone, friends, colleagues, an online auction, online shops, a flea-market)?
 - a second-hand digital piano
 - an interpreter to translate to a rare language, e.g. Gujarati or Latvian
 - a samovar
 - someone to assess costs on installing solar panels at your office
 - a marquee
- 2 Have you ever had to find something unusual? How did you go about it?

Expressions

- 1 Canners, an advertising agency, is putting together a series of internet advertisements for Fame Foods, which has recently opened a branch in Prague. Alison Hill, an account manager at the agency, is phoning casting agencies to try to find a native speaker of Czech with good English. Listen to three short dialogues. What response does each person give?



Speaking

- 1 Choose one of the items from Starter. Phone around to try to get hold of it using phrases from Expressions and the Language box to help. You may need to make several phone calls! Your teacher will play the other roles.

Language box

Short adverbs of time usually come before the main verb:

The meetings invariably take much more than an hour. (= always)

I can rarely cross the bridge easily in rush-hour. (= not very often)

Adverbial phrases are usually placed at the beginning or end:

Try to get hold of James. In the meantime, I'll phone Alex. (= while you do that, usually front position)

We get enquiries from abroad every so often. (= sometimes)

Once in a while I get home before 6. (= not very often)

Hint

The following phrases help establish contact with someone you're phoning for the first time:

- I got your number from Smith Casting.
- I was put on to you by a colleague of mine.
- I gather you deal in wines from South America.

Hint

Actually is a 'false friend' in some languages and means in fact, or is used to introduce disagreement. It does not mean now or currently. Actually, if I can correct you there – I'm based in Boston, not New York.

28.1

2 Listen again to the dialogues. Write down the phrases which include the following pairs of words.

- 1 understand / specialize
I understand you specialize in accents.
- 2 wonder / help _____
- 3 trouble / find _____
- 4 number / Smith casting _____
- 5 you / bear _____
- 6 sure / right _____
- 7 try / hold _____
- 8 advise / else _____
- 9 suggest / phone _____
- 10 hope / help _____
- 11 right / think _____

3 Now match each expression in 2 with its function below.

introducing and clarifying what you want

asking for help politely / indirectly

explaining where you got the contact from

encouraging the other person to listen

Writing

- 1 You have been trying to get hold of a laptop battery for your boss. He needs it before his trip this weekend. You have already phoned a number of places, including two shops, the manufacturer, and a private dealer, but without success. Write an email to your boss to explain your progress so far.



Look

Look at listening script 28.1 on pages 133–134. Underline examples of adverbial phrases. In each case, check the position of the adverb. Could it be placed elsewhere in the sentence?

Expectation adverbs and phrases – *as yet* and *so far*, *not any more* / *not any longer* – are used to relate something within a time period. Notice the position in each case. *As yet* is usually used in negative sentences:

They haven't got back to me as yet.
(= up until now)

As yet, there are only two applicants.

We haven't as yet told her the details.

So far no one has applied. (= up until now)

Ten colleagues have signed up so far.

Only Carol so far has filled in the form.

I don't work here any more / any longer.

Lesson record

3 new words 3 useful phrases
from this lesson from this lesson

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| 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 2 |
| 3 | 3 |

Things to remember

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