

Independent Living Program Activity Card

Category: CAREER

Activity: Leave a Professional Phone Message

**Proficiency
Certificate
Eligible**

Description: Trying to reach a person who isn't immediately available can be pretty frustrating at times! However, a well planned message could be a good opportunity to enhance your reputation and even help build relationships.

Start leaving a good impression today! Paying attention to something as simple as your phone message strategies can help you project the professional image you want your coworkers, clients, and supervisors to see.

You may earn \$4.00 OF Dollars for leaving a professional message with a staff member, and if you have a phone with voicemail, you can earn \$4.00 OF Dollars for showing a staff member your formal voicemail greeting.

WRITE NAME OF STAFF YOU LEFT MESSAGE FOR BELOW:

Total Dollars Earned:

<p>\$</p>
<p>(ILP Use Only)</p>

<p>Notes:</p>

Date: _____

<p>_____</p>	
<p>Youth Signature</p>	<p>Date of Birth</p>
<p>Print Name (Youth)</p>	<p>Group Home (If Applicable)</p>

<p>Receipt</p>
<p>(ILP Use Only)</p>

Leave a Professional Phone Message/Greeting

Leaving a Message

Preparing to Leave a Message

Irritating phone messages are those that are fumbling and hesitating, those where the caller doesn't plan ahead, speaks too quickly, sounds bored, and is rambling. The better way to handle this is to consider each call you make as one where you'll have to leave a message. This helps to prepare in the event you do need to leave a message and helps keep you from being caught off guard. Here are some pointers to help you prepare:

- *Know before you call the reason for the call*
- *Start by saying your full name and company*
- *State the reason for the call*
- *State clearly what you want (a call back, a message left for you, to have them send you an email, etc.)*
- *Leave your phone number clearly and slowly*

The Incorrect Way to Leave a Message

Make sure that you leave your name and phone number when you call. Too many people simply say, *"Hi, it's me. Call me back."* What if the person you called doesn't recognize your voice?

Leaving Your Phone Number

A simple strategy for leaving your phone number is to write it as you speak it. Consider those messages you've had to listen to three or four times just to get the phone number. Pause for a breath between each set of numbers. For instance, say: *"My number is ...775...544...84...79."* Another simple strategy is to give your number, in the same fashion, twice. This again helps prevent the person from having to re-listen to the message.

Use Voice Mail to Get What You Need

When leaving messages, whether you initiate the call or are responding to someone else's, always leave a time when you can be reached. Leave a window of time when you know you'll be by your phone (*"I'm in the office today from 11:30 a.m. till 2 p.m. You can reach me then."*). If you have to leave a message, ask those you call to leave you a message telling you a good time to reach them. That helps eliminate playing telephone tag and its accompanying frustration. Leaving a time frame is especially important if the matter needs attention right away. Most people give up calling after 3 or 4 unsuccessful attempts to reach a person. If the topic of the conversation needs to be dealt with in a timely manner, we don't want to run the risk of the caller giving up.

Write Your Message Below:

VoiceMail Greeting

Establish Your Credibility in a Snippet

While on the topic of phone messages, another thing to consider is yours-the one you have on your voice mail right now. Some people become very irritated when they have to listen to lengthy, nearly minute-long phone message just to leave their message. If their phone rolls to voice mail, it is obvious that they are "either away from [their] desks or on another call." Callers prefer to hear brief messages that identify you and what information you need in order to get back to them. For example, your phone message can be as simple as this: *"Hi, This is John Smith. Please leave your name and phone number, and I'll return your call within 24 hours."* Anything longer than that (introducing your message with music, leaving website addresses, personal philosophies of life, bits of wisdom for the day, etc.) is irritating and time consuming.

Return Calls Within 24 Hours

It's a matter of courtesy and respect to return phone calls-all that request and require it-and to return those calls in a timely manner. Never make callers wait more than 24 hours for your call back.

Write Your Greeting Below:
