



**English for
Telephoning; Your Key
to Success on the
Telephone by Johanna
Stirling**

CD-ROM

DELTA Publishing

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Are you looking for a CD-Rom that

- “teaches authentic language that professionals hear and need on the telephone
- provides plenty of listening practice
- is learner friendly and allows students to work independently
- gives information feedback and provides practice and revision via a wide range of engaging tasks
- can be used for self access or as part of a taught business course”?

If you are, then *English for Telephoning* has much to recommend it.

The Main Menu offers five sections – Before you call; Making Contact; Letters, Numbers and Symbols; Checking and Correcting; telephone maze.

Each section offers the students a variety of activities and so, for example, in *Before you call* there are sub-sections entitled Useful Phrases; Giving Yourself Time; Taking Messages; Checking Understanding, and Ending the Call. Students are required to match items, to form sentences by dragging words, or complete messages by filling gaps, but little room is left for the negotiation of meaning.

This reviewer had no success with the first item in Taking Messages. The recording says “Hi. Janet. It’s Peter here. Just to say Friday’s meeting has been cancelled. I’ll talk to you about it later. OK. Bye.”

The program accepts “Peter Friday’s meeting cancelled”, which implies that the message is FOR Peter, not from him. Students who key in “Friday’s meeting cancelled. Peter”, however, will receive an “incorrect” message. and attempts will be made to steer them towards the “correct” answer.

Similarly, when sentences have to be formed by dragging words into place, then four words on the first line and three words on the second will not be accepted if the program demands a 5:2 formation.

These flaws, of course, are the result of programming, and are not the fault of the writer. They can also be excused, because they are comparatively minor. Certainly the claim that this CD “provides plenty of listening practice” is justified. Arabic, British, Rumanian, Spanish and Turkish accents all feature, and there is a good mixture of male/female speakers.

So far as learner friendliness is concerned, this CD demands fairly high keyboarding skills. Beyond that, it provides absolutely endless practice for the student who is prepared to work through it, watching to see if scores improve.

In this respect it contradicts Harrison’s (2005; 25) claim that “Business English materials are much more fun”, because the “fun” element barely features here. As a teaching aid for “working professionals”, however, that may be a bonus.

English for Telephoning concentrates on one aspect of Business English. In that respect it is limited, but it concentrates on an aspect that is frequently neglected, and it manages to do so very well.

Reference

- Harrison, Tony. 2005. “Response to ‘Designing an ESP Course: Some Recommendations’ by Mona El Samaty in *Perspectives*, October 2004. *Perspectives* 12/2 Pp. 25-26.