



**CAPRICORN**

*...it's just easier!™*

Other resources in step 3a:

- **Sample – customer makes a battery enquiry**
- **Sample – customer makes a brake enquiry**
- **Sample – customer makes a diagnostic enquiry**
- **Sample – customer makes a service enquiry**
- **Lost enquiry sheet**
- **Phone enquiry note pad**

## When the phone rings, nothing else matters

When Alexander Graham Bell invented the first practical telephone, he presented it to US President Ulysses S. Grant, who commented ‘What a great invention, but who in the world would ever want to use one’.

He couldn’t possibly know that about 140 years later, everyone would not only want to use one, but in the world of business, to be without one would be corporate suicide.

Even today, many small business operators still regard the telephone purely as an emergency communication device: to order parts quickly, to phone home, to chase up a customer.

A phone is a lot more than a communication convenience. Every phone on the desk of a business is a lifeline to money and profit. For most people, the first contact with a vehicle workshop will be through a telephone conversation and what they hear on the phone will determine whether they do business with that workshop. The tone of the first conversation will establish the customer’s first set of expectations about the workshop and the standard of service they will receive.

It’s not enough to be able to answer the telephone. Without a telephone handling procedure, clearly understood by everyone capable of picking up the phone, this communication device will not pay its way.

This might seem far-fetched, but it would be possible for a business to be sent to the wall in a very short time if phone calls were handled badly, with rudeness or disinterest. The reputation of the business rests largely on how the phone is answered.

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It doesn't matter how good the technicians are, how great the location, how brilliant the website – if a phone call can't be converted into a loyal customer, paying the phone bill would seem to be a waste of money.

So if the intention of a business is to generate and improve sales, everyone who works in the business must be trained in a well structured telephone procedure, and then be able to carry it off with confidence.

There's a simple six-step phone procedure which all businesses need to adopt to get the best out of Mr Bell's great invention.

The six steps are fully explained at [www.tatbiz.net.au/capricorn](http://www.tatbiz.net.au/capricorn) but in brief, they are:

1. The greeting
2. Ask questions, listen and take notes
3. Build value and prescribe a course of action
4. Assume the sale and book them in
5. Get their details
6. Thank them and confirm

Even if all six points are studied and carried out to the letter, the phone call can still turn sour if the person answering the phone is having a bad day.

So the first and most essential step in all phone handling is to slow down and smile just before you pick up the receiver. Believe it or not, the smile will travel through the copper wire and will be felt at the other end.

Use the templates and samples provided at [www.tatbiz.net.au/capricorn](http://www.tatbiz.net.au/capricorn) to develop your own telephone answering procedure.

So here's the challenge. In the next four weeks, give yourself a target to develop your phone handling program to help attract and retain customers.

The place to start is [www.tatbiz.net.au/capricorn](http://www.tatbiz.net.au/capricorn).

*Just go for it!*