Front Desk and Telephone Etiquette: Visitor Reception, Call Handling and Message Taking

2 – 6 August 2027
London - Central London four-star



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Introduction:

The front desk and telephone etiquette of an organisation shape the first impression of every visitor and caller, yet reception teams often work without agreed greetings, call scripts or visitor procedures. Calls ring out, messages go missing, callers are transferred into silence and walk-in visitors wait unannounced. This Core Concept course gives receptionists and front office staff practical methods for greeting visitors, answering and routing calls, taking accurate messages and staying composed at peak times. Participants build a Front Desk Service Standard with rehearsed call and visitor scripts for their own reception point.

Course Objectives:

- Greet, register and direct visitors using a consistent reception welcome routine, visitor log and badge procedure
- Answer, hold, transfer and close telephone calls using professional call opening and closing scripts
- Record complete telephone messages and route them to the right colleague without delay
- Control voice, tone, pace and wording so callers and walk-ins feel acknowledged and informed
- Give a calm first response to upset callers, demanding walk-ins and early complaints before handing over
- Draft a Front Desk Service Standard with call and visitor scripts for the participant's own reception point

Target Audience:

- Receptionists and front desk staff who welcome visitors and manage the reception counter
- Switchboard operators and call-takers who answer and route incoming telephone lines
- Administrative assistants who cover reception, calls and messages alongside office duties
- Front office staff in hotels, clinics, schools and corporate buildings who register guests and visitors
- Service counter staff who handle walk-in enquiries, appointments and waiting areas

Course Outline:

Day 1: The Reception Role and First Impressions

- Reception Desk Duties Map: Visitors, Calls, Mail and Appointments
- First Impression Checklist: Greeting Time, Eye Contact, Grooming and Posture
- Reception Area Walkthrough: Signage, Seating, Cleanliness and Wayfinding
- Visitor and Caller Journey Map from Arrival to Departure
- Current Front Desk Practice Self-Assessment Scorecard

Day 2: Visitor Handling and Telephone Etiquette Principles

- Ten-Second Welcome Routine for Walk-In Visitors
- Visitor Log, Badge Issue and Escort Rules for Building Security
- Telephone Etiquette Rules: Three-Ring Answer, Hold Requests and Hold Time Limits
- Call Opening Script: Greeting, Organisation Name, Own Name and Offer of Help
- Call Closing Script: Summary, Next Step and Courteous Farewell

Day 3: Call Handling, Message Taking and Voice Control

- Message Pad Template: Who, What, When, Callback Number and Urgency
- Warm Transfer Versus Blind Transfer Procedure on Multi-Line Phone Systems
- Voice Control Drills: Pitch, Pace, Volume and Smile in the Voice
- Positive Wording Swaps for Refusals, Delays and Unavailable Colleagues
- Voicemail Greeting and Out-of-Hours Message Scripts

Day 4: Difficult Callers, Peak Times and Written Courtesy

- Upset Caller First-Response Script: Acknowledge, Clarify and Hand Over
- Demanding Walk-In Visitor Scenarios: Queue Jumpers, No-Appointment Arrivals and Suspicious Behaviour
- Peak-Hour Desk Plan: Call Queue Priority, Visitor Queue and Task Batching
- Email and Live Chat Courtesy Templates for Reception Enquiries
- Front Desk Stress and Workload Tactics: Breathing Reset, Shift Handover Notes and Boundary Phrases

Day 5: Role-Play: Front Desk Service Standard

- Telephone Role-Play: Busy Switchboard with Hold, Transfer and Message
- Visitor Role-Play: Unexpected VIP Arrival While the Phone Rings
- Mixed Role-Play: Upset Caller and Waiting Walk-In at the Same Time
- Front Desk Service Standard Drafting with Call and Visitor Scripts
- Peer Review and Personal Reception Improvement Plan

Skills You Will Gain:

- Visitor Reception
- Visitor Log Management
- Call Opening and Closing
- Accurate Message Taking
- Call Transfer Handling
- Telephone Voice Control
- Upset Caller First Response
- Peak-Time Desk Prioritisation

Why Attend This Course:

- Return to the desk with a Front Desk Service Standard and call and visitor scripts rehearsed in role-play
- Stay composed when the phone rings, a visitor waits and a colleague needs a message at the same moment
- Stop lost messages and silent transfers that frustrate callers and colleagues
- Compare reception practice with front desk staff from offices, hotels, clinics and public service counters

Conclusion:

Every caller and visitor meets the organisation first at the front desk, and a few seconds of greeting, a clean transfer or a complete message decides how that contact is remembered. The week moves from the reception role and first impressions, through welcome routines, visitor logs and telephone etiquette rules, to message taking, transfers and voice control, then difficult callers, peak-hour pressure and written courtesy. The final day rehearses busy desk scenarios in role-play and produces a Front Desk Service Standard ready for use at each participant's reception point.