CONDUCTING AN EFFECTIVE CONFERENCE CALL

Are you ready to make your next conference call as effective and professional as possible? Take a look at the following helpful tips and hints and become a conferencing pro.

BEFORE THE CALL

- Notify your participants of the date and time of the call in advance.
- Communicate any items that need to be prepared in advance of the call.
- Set an agenda for the call to keep your meeting focused and on track.
- If possible, send the agenda to the participants prior to the call.
- Make sure you are in a quiet location where you will not be disturbed. Try to minimize background noise such as air conditioners, background conversation, construction, etc.
- Turn off call waiting, pagers and cell phones.

STARTING THE CALL

- Be on time or early.
- Introduce yourself when you speak and encourage others to do the same.
- Conduct a roll call so you know who is on the conference call.
- Briefly state the agenda.
- Do not put your phone on hold. This may put music into the conference and prevent others from continuing the meeting.

DURING THE CALL

- Ask for feedback from specific participants instead of the entire group.
- Table any discussions that are not relevant to the agenda for a later time and place.
- Try to involve all of the participants in the discussion.
- Promptly deal with any noise or distractions. Press "*0" to summon the call operator if necessary.
- Summarize the issues discussed and recap any action items resulting from the call.
- Establish the day and time for the next conference call.

TIPS FOR IMPROVED LINE QUALITY

- Electronic devices (such as Blackberries or cell phones and associated hands-free devices, laptops, etc) can interfere with line quality if located too near the phone. If possible, place such items a good distance away from the phone you are using for the conference call.
- If you are conducting back-to-back calls on your Reservationless-Plus℠ or Reservationless-Express account, make sure to disconnect your initial conference call line prior to dialing back in for the next call. (Failing to do so could produce a “flash hook” scenario, which feeds a loud signal into the call.)
- When entering your Conference Code, Leader PIN or passcode for the call, do not press the keys too quickly – this will enable the system to ‘read’ the DTMF tones most effectively.
- During an Operator Assisted Q&A session, participants should pick up their handsets to ask questions. This will ensure the best possible audio quality and volume from their lines.
- If you are conducting a call using a conference room phone, microphone or speakerphone, be aware of the location of the phone/microphone at all times and speak directly into the device to ensure the best possible audio quality and volume.
- If you are conducting an Operator Assisted call using a conference room phone, microphone or speakerphone, test the volume and line clarity with the operator prior to starting the call.

Sources: SellingPower.com, West Corporation, InterCall Quality Assurance