



# In Form

Our newsletter, **In Form**, keeps you up-to-date with our training services and new initiatives.

**In Form no. 30**

## **Fifty Ways to Improve your Telephoning and Teleconferencing Skills**

*In Form* is pleased to reprint the following review of Ken Taylor's new book from the prestigious journal *English Teaching Professional*:

### **Fifty Ways to Improve your Telephoning and Teleconferencing Skills**

by Ken Taylor Summertown Publishing 2008 978-1-905992-065.

This self-help manual for business people tackles head-on the new dimension to telephone calls which has been brought about both by the development of sophisticated digital telephony technologies and the pressure not to travel unnecessarily for environmental reasons. Students now not only require skills for dealing with one-to-one telephone calls, but also need to learn techniques for being involved in teleconferencing. This book covers both types of call. It teaches and practises basic telephoning techniques but also includes three modules on the specific requirements of teleconference calls. Here it goes into the technicalities of making teleconference calls, as well as the protocol and 'rules', together with tips on acting as the chair of the discussion or just getting your voice heard as one of several participants. Self-study materials need to be very clear and easy to follow and the structure and layout of this book are impressive. Beginning sensibly with a self-assessment sheet so students can establish where they are at present and where they hope to be, the book progresses in clear logical steps from preparation for making a phone call, through the basic practicalities of getting through, to the actual phone call itself. Where the book scores highly for me is in the little extras: students are not just taught how to be polite on the phone, they are given techniques for managing the atmosphere, including presenting negative information in a 'good news sandwich'; they are not just taught what to say when making small talk, they are shown how to find opportunities for making small talk by listening to and picking up on what other people say. 'Top tips' and 'Test yourself' boxes are scattered throughout the ten modules. The tips are helpful and well thought-out and the tests give students a chance to check their progress as they work through the material. Module summaries at the end of each one

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draw the most important points together as a final reminder. The final module is a language summary, which brings together all the most useful phrases and expressions which have been introduced in the book. These are clearly categorised by function. This section provides a very useful reference, almost a language bank, which students can refer to quickly when they need a particular expression for a particular occasion. The book comes with an audio CD attached to the inside back cover and the tapescripts are all printed at the back.

If you'd like to improve your telephoning and teleconferencing skills - and get your hands on a copy of Ken's book - just sign up for our new course *Connecting People: Effective Telephoning & Teleconferencing Skills*. All participants on the course will receive a free copy of **Fifty Ways to Improve your Telephoning and Teleconferencing Skills**. More information at [www.readmatthews.com/opencourses/telephone.php](http://www.readmatthews.com/opencourses/telephone.php).