# Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

## Telephone and Communication Etiquette Standards

**Purpose:**

This SOP defines **telephone and communication etiquette standards** to ensure professional, clear, and courteous interactions over phone and other communication channels. It covers guidelines for answering calls promptly, using appropriate language and tone, managing hold times, handling difficult callers, and maintaining confidentiality. The objective is to enhance effective communication, project a positive company image, and improve customer satisfaction and internal collaboration.

**Scope:**

This SOP applies to all company employees and contractors involved in business communication via telephone, mobile, or other direct digital channels (e.g., internal chat, email).

**Procedures & Guidelines:**

1. **Answering Calls:**
   - Answer incoming calls within 3 rings whenever possible.
   - Use a polite greeting (e.g., â€œGood morning, [Company Name], this is [Your Name], how may I help you?â€).
   - Speak clearly, with a friendly and professional tone.

2. **During Calls:**
   - Listen actively and avoid interrupting the caller.
   - Address the caller by name if known, and confirm understanding by paraphrasing important information.
   - Use respectful language and refrain from slang or jargon unless appropriate.

3. **Placing Calls on Hold:**
   - Ask for permission before placing a caller on hold, and explain the reason.
   - Check back with callers every 1â€"2 minutes if the hold will be extended.
   - Thank the caller for holding when resuming the conversation.

4. **Taking Messages:**
   - Record the caller's name, contact information, time/date of the call, and the reason for the call.
   - Repeat the information to confirm accuracy.
   - Ensure messages are promptly relayed to the intended recipient.

5. **Handling Difficult or Irate Callers:**
   - Stay calm, courteous, and professional at all times.
   - Listen actively, acknowledge the issue, and avoid taking comments personally.
   - If necessary, escalate to a supervisor following escalation protocols.

6. **Confidentiality:**
   - Never disclose sensitive company or customer information over the phone unless authorized.
   - Be mindful of surroundings when handling confidential matters.

7. **Other Communication Channels:**
   - Maintain professionalism and clear communication in e-mails, chat, and written correspondence.
   - Respond to internal and external inquiries within established timeframes (e.g., within 24 business hours).

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

- **All Staff:** Follow telephone and communication etiquette at all times.
- **Managers/Supervisors:** Ensure team compliance and provide necessary training.
- **HR/Training:** Update and disseminate SOP, and review adherence regularly.

**Review & Revision:**

- This SOP will be reviewed annually or as required to ensure relevance and effectiveness.
- Revisions must be approved by management before implementation.

**Related Documents:**

- Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy
- Customer Service Standards Manual
- Escalation Procedures

**Effective Date:** [Insert Effective Date Here]
**Version:** 1.0