Tech Support

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Learn key words and expressions for tech support calls in English. Give your opinion and talk about your work. Learn some phrasal verbs. Practice comprehension activities.

Activity 1:Discussion Questions

1. How long have you been working in technical support?
2. What difficulties do you have when answering technical questions?
3. How do you approach difficult or agitated callers?
4. When you don't understand, how do you tell the person you're talking with so that they don't get frustrated?
5. What's the best and worst advice you've received about how to give technical support on the phone?
6. What's the craziest conversation you've had over the phone while giving technical support?

Activity 2: Video

Watch the first 5 minutes 35 seconds of the video (you can follow along with the transcript below for the first 3 and a half minutes) then, answer the questions below.

The Six Steps in a Successful Tech Support Session:

Customer Service Training 101 - Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OiC4gUa3xak

The Greeting: It starts with your greeting. Avoid curt greetings such as just saying "Tech Support" and, conversely, avoid lengthy, canned greetings such as "Thank you for calling Giganticom technical support services. This is John Supportman, CCNA, MCDST. My goal is to provide you with a perfect 10 support experience. How may I provide you with excellent customer service today?" Make it authentic, friendly, professional, and respectful. Something like this, "Tech Support, this is Don. May I help you?"

Active Listening: After the greeting, you go into the active listening phase. This starts when the caller begins to explain the problem. After the initial explanation of the problem, be sure to get a callback phone number just in case you get disconnected. During the active listening phase, give the caller verbal cues so he or she knows you're still there and paying attention. This is also the phase where you gather information such as the software version that's installed and similar information to help ensure you provide the correct solution.

Gain Agreement: After the active listening phase, move into the gain agreement phase. This is where you repeat the problem and get confirmation from the caller that you understand what the problem is. You might say something like, "I'm going to repeat back the problem, just to make sure I understand what it is and to ensure I'm not missing anything." Then repeat it back to the caller and ask if you've got it right.

Apologize/Empathize/Reassure: After the gain agreement phase, you move into the apologize / empathize / reassure phase. In this phase, if an apology is warranted, offer one. Only apologize if the problem was caused by you, your company, or a product or service for which you're responsible. (Of course, a sincere expression of sympathy and

understanding for the user's difficulty is always appropriate, as long as it's authentic.) You can empathize by using empathetic statements such as, "I understand.", "I don't blame you. I'd be upset, too, if that happened to me.", or "Anyone in your situation would be upset." One word of caution here, don't say you understand if you don't. That will only make things worse. Instead, be authentic and say something like, "I've never been in your situation, so I'm not going to pretend I understand. I'm sure if I were in your shoes, I'd feel the same way you do." The reassure part of this equation means you take ownership of the problem and let the user know you're going to see it through to its conclusion. Use phrases such as, "I'm going to take care of this personally." Or, if you have to escalate it, say something like this, "I'm going to escalate your ticket to level two and I'm going to personally monitor it to make sure it's taken care of."

Problem Solving: After you finish the apologize/empathize/reassure phase, you're ready to do the actual problem solving. One comment about handling problem solving. If the user remains on the phone with you while you're working, every 20 to 30 seconds, say something to let her or him know you're still there. Something like, "I haven't forgotten about you. I'm still working on it." Problem solving, however, is not the final phase.

Confirm Resolution: The last phase is confirmation that the problem is indeed resolved. That's where you ask if the problem is resolved to the user's satisfaction. Do not close the ticket until the user confirms that the issue is resolved to her or his satisfaction. If there's time and the user doesn't seem to be in a rush, you can ask the other two questions that go at the end of a support session, which are, "Are you satisfied with the way I handled your problem?" and "Is there anything I could have done better?" If the user seems to be in a hurry, don't ask the last two questions, but you must always, always, always ask the first question to get confirmation of resolution before hanging up and closing the ticket.

Comprehension Questions:

1. What kind of greeting does he recommend?
2. When should you apologize?
3. When you're problem solving, what should you do to let the caller know you're there?
4. What is the most important part of the Confirmation Resolution step?
5. Does the example conversation sound like calls you make?
6. Do you use this formula to answer tech support calls?
7. If so, do you find it works? If not, do you use a different method?

Activity 3: TELEPHONE LANGUAGE

Practice the following scenarios with your teacher or a partner using the expressions on the next page and the advice from the video to help you.

1. • Someone needs help because they can't connect their smartphone to the internet at their store
2. • Someone needs help because they can't get the printer to make a front and back copy
3. • Someone needs help because the internet went out and they can't get the wifi to work again
4. • Someone needs help because the cash register will not open



Answering the phone:

- *Good morning/Good afternoon/ Good evening/ Hello!*
- Ikea Tech Support Services. *(This is) Sarah speaking.*
- *Sarah speaking.*
- *How can/could/may I help you?*

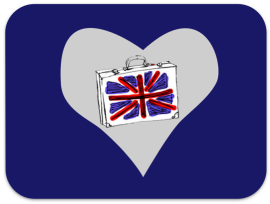
Asking for the caller's name:

- *Who's calling, please?*
- *Could I take your name, please?*
- *Hello, (caller's name). Could/May I have your number, please?*

Introducing yourself:

- *Hello! This is Kevin calling.*
- *Hello, this is Kevin from* Ikea Tech Support Services.
- *My name is Kevin with* Ikea Tech Support Services.

Connecting someone:



- *One moment (Just a second or moment), please.*
- *Could you hold the line, please?*
- *Please, hold the line.*
- *I'll transfer you to my colleague.*

Problems/Making special request:

- *I'm sorry, I don't understand. Could you repeat that, please?*
- *I'm sorry, I can't hear you very well.*
- *Could you speak up a little, please?*
- *I'm afraid you've got the wrong number.*
- *I've tried to get through several times but it's always engaged.*
- *Could you spell that, please?*
- *Sorry, my English is not good. Could you speak a little slower?*
- *Could I ask you to spell your surname for me, please?*
- *I'm so sorry. The line is very bad this end.*
- *Could I ask you to repeat your name, please?*
- *Sorry, I didn't quite catch that. Could you say your name again, please?*

Confirming information:

- *Let me repeat that just to make sure,* (repeat back problem)
- *Now, if I understand,* (repeat back problem)*, is that right?*

Finishing a conversation:

- *Thanks for calling. We will see to it right away.*
- *We will be back in touch as soon as we have a solution.*
- *Thank you for calling, Mr Steven. Good bye.*
- *Thank you for calling* Ikea Tech Support Services.



Activity 4: Reading Comprehension

Read the dialogue below between Tom and Paul. From context, try to guess the meaning of the words/phrases in bold. After that, do the quiz at the end to see if you are right.

Tom:

'Hey! What's happening Paul, you look a bit annoyed?'



Peter:

'My laptop won't **turn on**. It was fine before, I don't know what's happened!'

Tom:

'Are you sure it's **plugged in**?'

Paul:

'Yes, the **plug** is firmly in the wall, but that shouldn't be necessary because the laptop still had a full battery.'

Tom:

'Are you sure that the **socket** in the wall is working properly? Try to plug it into another socket.'

Paul:

'I've tried that already and the socket is working. I thought that there might be a problem with the cable, but it worked fine when I tested it with the other laptop that is here in the office.'

Tom:

'That is a pain. I had a problem with my desktop computer last week, the wires had come loose inside the power cable. So I had to order a new cable. If you want, you can use my laptop to show your presentation - I don't need it!'

Paul:

'Thanks Tom, I appreciate it, but I saved the presentation on my **hard drive**! So I can't show it on your laptop.'

Tom:

'Do you remember when I had that problem with my laptop in August? When suddenly the screen **froze** and the laptop wouldn't respond when **I pressed** any of the buttons on the keyboard or the touchpad. Sometimes it suddenly responded and I could continue using the application, but sometimes it completely **crashed** and I could not use it at all. So, I had to **reboot** the laptop. It was so irritating, because once or twice, I lost all of the work I'd been doing. Then the app didn't **load** at all, so I could not use it. The technician told me it was a software issue with the application. So she **reinstalled** the application, and ever since, it has worked perfectly for me.'

Paul:

'I'm glad she was able to help you, but I don't have any power to the laptop, so it's not a software issue. It seems like it has to be a hardware problem.'

Now, fill in the gaps below.

1. Another way to say to 'touch' or 'push' a button= _____
2. The section of a computer where you save your applications and documents, is called the _____

3. Another way to say 'switch on' or 'start up' a computer= _____

4. Another way to say 'restart' a computer, is _____

5. A phrasal verb that means to connect a 'cable' to a computer or to an electrical power supply= _____ _____

6. When you can't move the arrow/cursor on the screen, it means the screen is _____

7. Another way to say that an application 'doesn't start', is that it doesn't _____

8. The hole/panel in a wall where a cable is connected to , is called a _____

9. The part that you insert into this hole, at the end of the cable, is called a _____.

10. When a computer program is damaged or else not working correctly, it usually has to be _____

11. When a computer or application stops working, it _____

Activity 5: - IT key vocabulary.

Fill in the gaps with the correct vocabulary words. One or two might have other possibilities - but aim to choose the best one!

_____ can gather important data from a user's system without the user being aware of it.
Spyware
Software
Shareware

It is _____ to download these files- these are all torrents for new movies! (= You are not allowed to download these files.)
illegal
illogical
legal

I have to install the newest _____ of your anti-virus.
release
version
layout

The cable was _____ from the socket. (= not connected)
clean
disengaged
unplugged



Your computer is _____ with a virus.
sick
infected
diseased

It's not a major _____. = It's not a big problem.
topic
difficulty
issue

If you have any problems _____ (= setting up, customizing) the settings, you can let me know.
confusing
comprehending
configuring



Please _____ (= restart) your computer.
reboot
re-initiate
re turn on

I've _____ the problem. (= I have found the source of the problem.)
named
identified
inspected

Activity 6 - technical phrasal verbs

Read the phrasal verb and the example. Then, create a new sample sentence using the phrasal verb given.

hook up	to connect wires from machines to a power source or other machines	Would you please help me **hook up** the Internet cable? New example:
boot up	begin running a computer system	Wait a second, my computer **is booting up.** New example:

scroll up scroll down	to move slowly to the top or bottom of a text	The news story was so long I had to **scroll down** a lot to read it all. New example:
sign up	register with a service	She **signed up** for an online training module. New example:
filter out	remove unwanted email messages	Can we **filter out** all the spam on this account? New example:
opt in / out	choose to receive advertising or messages	The company asked me to **opt in** to get special offers by email. New example:
turn off shut down	end a session on the computer by closing an application or removing power	I'm tired, so I'm going to **shut down** the computer for today. New example:
go down	when something stops operating or working properly	the server must have **went down**. New example:
go online	to use the Internet	I will send it as soon as I can **go online-** i'm away from my desk New example:
go offline	to disconnect from the Internet	He seems to have gone offline, I cannot contact him. New example:

Activity 7- Comprehension and Discussion.

Read the article below, and after, discuss your opinion on this new software.

Source: https://www.cnbc.com/2020/06/24/new-tech-tools-employers-are-using-to-keep-watch-on-remote-workers.html

Here's how employers are using tech tools to keep a close watch on their remote workers

· Companies such as ActiveTrak, Hivedesk, Teramind, Time Doctor and WorkExaminer enable companies to track the activities of their employees by installing software on their computers.

· Monitoring software can track keystrokes, email, file transfers, applications used and how much time the employee spends on each task. It can even take periodic screenshots to let managers know what is on the employee's screen.

· CNBC's Q2 Technology Executive Council survey released Wednesday found that remote work has not had a negative impact on employee productivity at most companies.

Keeping tabs on the untethered

Technology has made working from home easier, with widely adopted applications like Zoom and Slack enabling cooperation with co-workers and clients. Technology has also enabled managers to overcome their greatest objection to not having their employees in the office. "One of the biggest holdbacks of remote work is trust — managers simply don't trust their people to work untethered," said Lister. "They're used to managing by counting butts in seats rather than by results. "

Companies such as ActiveTrak, Hivedesk, Teramind, Time Doctor and WorkExaminer enable companies to track the activities of their employees by installing software on their computers. Most monitoring software will track keystrokes, email, file transfers, applications used and how much time the employee spends on each task. Most will take periodic screenshots to let managers know what is on the employee's screen.

1. Can you explain what this software does?
2. In your experience, have you ever worked for a company that used similar technology?
3. What is your opinion on companies that use this type of technology?
4. Do you think this type of technology can have some positive consequences for workers?
5. In future, do you think the use of such technology will become common?

