

2 Customer support

- ▶ expressions for giving instructions
- ▶ handling a technical problem


2.4 Speaking Dealing with problems by telephone

Giving instructions

1 With a partner, practise giving instructions by describing a symbol so that your partner can draw it. Do not look at each other's pages during the exercise.

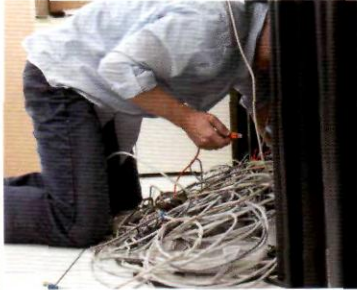
Student A: turn to page 114.
Student B: turn to page 119.

Listening

2  1:25 Listen to a software helpline conversation and answer the questions.

- 1 What is the customer's problem? 2 What help does the operator give?

3 With a partner, decide which expressions in the telephone language checklist below were in the conversation, a or b. Then listen again and check your answers.



Telephone language

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 a) I'm just putting you on hold for a moment. | b) Please hold the line. |
| 2 a) Dean speaking. | b) This is Dean. |
| 3 a) What can I do for you? | b) How can I help you? |
| 4 a) What exactly seems to be the problem? | b) Could you explain the problem you're having? |
| 5 a) The line's bad. | b) It's not a very good line. |
| 6 a) Could you speak up a little? | b) Can you talk a bit louder? |
| 7 a) I'll connect you to ... | b) I'll put you through to ... |
| 8 a) The number is engaged. | b) The number's busy. |
| 9 a) Can I get her to call you back? | b) Could I ask her to get back to you? |
| 10 a) So you're on ... | b) So, your number is ... |
| 11 a) Could I have your name, please? | b) What's your name, please? |
| 12 a) You're welcome. | b) Not at all. |

Improving a conversation

4 With a partner, read this conversation aloud.

Helpline: Superword helpline, wait a minute ... Yeah?
What's your problem?

Customer: I'm having trouble with PDF files. I can't print them.

Helpline: What? I can't hear you.

Customer: I said I can't print PDF files.

Helpline: Oh. I don't do PDFs.

Customer: Well, could you connect me to someone who does?

Helpline: Can't. The PDF expert's gone out for lunch.
Give me your name and we'll call you later.

Customer: Oh, all right. It's Gearhirt. Jamila Gearhirt.

Helpline: Er, come again?

Customer: That's G-E-A-R-H-I-R-T.

Helpline: OK.

Customer: All right. Well, I'd appreciate it if you could call me as soon as possible. Goodbye.

Helpline: Yeah, right.

- 1 Decide how the conversation could be improved.
- 2 Practise your improved version.
- 3 Now change roles, turn to page 115 and do the same with a similar conversation.



Handling problems

5  1:26 Listen to another helpline conversation, which is based on a true story, and answer the questions.

- 1 What is the customer's problem? 2 What is the operator's solution?