

Cancelling a meeting (Conversation on phone)

Occasionally, because of business professionals' ultra-busy workdays, one will be forced to cancel a scheduled appointment to fulfill another obligation. Common reasons for cancelled appointments include, but are not limited to: scheduling conflicts, illness, social obligations, and work mandates (or company-instituted guidelines that impact workers' schedules and are designed to meet a certain goal).

Whatever the reason an appointment is cancelled, it's important that the individual responsible for the cancellation call the person(s) expected to attend the meeting as quickly as possible, to inform them of the change and provide them with the maximum amount of time to restructure their own schedule.

Additionally, the more courteous one is in promptly informing a fellow business specialist of a cancellation, the greater the chances of rescheduling, or agreeing on a different day and time for a previously scheduled meeting, are. Lastly, the rescheduling process is typically completed over the phone, as it's a personal form of communication through which interest and care can be easily conveyed.

Here's an example of a typical business appointment cancellation phone call:

Temp: Hello, Jared? It's Jack. I'm calling to let you know that, unfortunately, I won't be able to make that appointment we scheduled. I've come down with a terrible flu, and I've already been out of work for a couple days.

Lotner: I'm sorry to hear that, Jack—I hope you feel better soon.

Temp: Thanks. And believe me, I wish I could make it, and I apologize for the inconvenience.

Lotner: It's not a problem—I just got over being sick a while ago, so I know what you're going through.

Temp: Yeah, it's rough. But if you're open to it, I'd love to reschedule for next week, when I'm feeling better.

Lotner: That'd be great! What day and time were you thinking?

Temp: Since I'm rescheduling, whenever works for you is good for me.

Lotner: Thanks! Does next Tuesday at nine work—maybe over breakfast?

Temp: It sure does! I'll meet you at your office, if you'd like.

Lotner: Perfect. See you then and feel better soon.

Temp: Will do. Thanks again.

Notice that the call was efficient, understanding, and forward; the caller didn't hesitate to inform the other individual of the cancellation, which would have simply wasted more of his time (and lowered the chances of rescheduling the appointment). Quickness and forwardness are important components of a successful business-appointment rescheduling phone call.

Did you understand the text?

1) What should a business professional do if he or she cannot keep a scheduled appointment?

- a) Ignore the appointment
- b) Send someone else to attend
- c) Leave a message the day of the meeting
- d) Call the other party and explain the situation as soon as possible

2) What are some acceptable reasons for cancelling a business appointment?

- a) Illness, work mandates, social obligations, and scheduling conflicts
- b) One doesn't feel like attending an appointment
- c) One doesn't like the person who the appointment has been made with
- d) None of the above

3) What are some of the potential benefits of promptly informing another party of an appointment cancellation?

- a) Further developing a respectful relationship with this party
- b) Increasing the chances of rescheduling for a later date
- c) There are no benefits of doing so
- d) A and B

4) What is the tone of a quality rescheduling phone call?

- a) Indirect and careless
- b) Direct and to-the-point
- c) Fun and energetic
- d) Unfocused and uninterested

5) When should a business appointment be rescheduled for?

- a) Whenever is convenient for the person or persons who cancelled
- b) Whenever is semi-convenient for both parties
- c) Whenever is convenient for the person or persons who didn't cancel
- d) None of the above