Answering the phone or using Skype at work is different than answering your personal cell phone or Skyping with your friends. Some employers will provide you with a script to say when you pick up the phone or engage in Skype conversations, while others will leave it up to you. These tips will help you be professional.

**Phone tips**
- Answer your phone within a few rings.
- Ask your employer if you should use a scripted greeting (e.g., “Thank you for calling Business X. You’ve reached Jane Doe in the ABC Department. How may I be of service?”).
- Request permission before placing a client or colleague on hold.
- Speak clearly and use professional language.
- Slow down your speech and choose simple language when speaking with clients who speak English as a second language (avoid the urge to speak louder).
- Make sure to record important details when taking messages.
- When dealing with a difficult client or colleague, use a calm tone of voice and listen to the person’s concerns (research has shown that anger will usually subside within three minutes).
- Never disconnect a call if you accidentally dial the wrong number.
- Ask your supervisor if you should use a scripted voicemail message.

**Skype tips**
- Before using Skype to call a colleague or client, send a note to set up a time.
- Introduce yourself when adding a new contact (a simple “Hi John, this is Jane Doe from the ABC department” will suffice).
- Avoid using IM slang in your communications, especially when contacting your supervisors (use your judgment—if your supervisor tends to use IM slang, then it may be appropriate).
- If your contact doesn’t reply immediately to your communication, continue to work on other tasks until they respond (don’t send continual reminders).
- Skype is not appropriate for sharing large files, instead compress them and send via email, or post them to your company’s FTP site.