

B1

PHONE & VIDEO CALLS

MONOLOG · 3 MIN.

Explaining a Simple Technical Problem by Phone · *Podcast*

The printer is on strike and the hotline speaks English — how to describe a technical problem clearly on the phone in three steps.

Listen to the episode +
comprehension test:

<https://www.englisch-lehrer.com/podcasts/explaining-a-simple-technical-problem-by-phone>

NAME

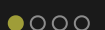
DATE

BRICK 1 · LEARN THE KEY PHRASES



Read the eight phrases with meaning and example. You will hear all of them in the episode.

ENGLISH	DEUTSCH	EXAMPLE
hotline	Support-Hotline, telefonischer Kundendienst	<i>The hotline is open from eight to six on weekdays.</i>
error message	Fehlermeldung	<i>The screen shows an error message every time I print.</i>
to get	bekommen, erhalten – die richtige Übersetzung von „bekommen“	<i>I get an error message when I open the file.</i>
to restart	neu starten	<i>Please restart the printer before you call support.</i>
cable	Kabel	<i>I checked the cable, but the connection looks fine.</i>
update	Update, Aktualisierung	<i>The problem started right after the update.</i>
to talk someone through	jemanden Schritt für Schritt anleiten	<i>Could you talk me through the installation?</i>
blank	leer, unbedruckt	<i>The printer only produces blank labels.</i>



BRICK 2 · FILL THE GAPS



Complete the missing word from the conversation.

get

become

becomes

am

through

over

along

about

01 The correct sentence is: "I _____ an error message."

02 For example: "Could you talk me _____ the next steps?"

BRICK 3 · TRUE OR FALSE?



Tick one. T = true, F = false.

01 Daniel's first call to the hotline solved the problem quickly.

T ☐ F ☐

02 Before calling again, Daniel had already restarted the printer and checked the cable.

T ☐ F ☐

BRICK 4 · ORDER



Number the steps of the conversation (1–5).

- 01 ☐ The driver is reinstalled and the shipment leaves on time
- 02 ☐ The first call fails because of "I become an error message"
- 03 ☐ Daniel calls again and describes the problem precisely
- 04 ☐ The label printer stops working before a shipment
- 05 ☐ A colleague teaches Daniel the three-step structure

BRICK 5 · YOUR VERSION



Write two sentences of your own using phrases from Brick 1.

MINI-CHECK – CAN I DO THIS YET?

- ☐ I can announce a delay politely.
- ☐ I can propose an alternative.
- ☐ I can promise written confirmation.

Listened twice and ticked everything? Then you are ready for the real conversation.

Cut-out flashcards

✕ Cut out, fold on the line – English in front, German on the back. Or practise digitally:

<https://www.englisch-lehrer.com/podcasts/explaining-a-simple-technical-problem-by-phone>

hotline

The hotline is open from eight to six on weekdays.

Support-Hotline, telefonischer Kundendienst

error message

The screen shows an error message every time I print.

Fehlermeldung

to get

I get an error message when I open the file.

von „bekommen“
bekommen, erhalten – die richtige Übersetzung

to restart

Please restart the printer before you call support.

neu starten

cable

I checked the cable, but the connection looks fine.

Kabel

update

The problem started right after the update.

Update, Aktualisierung

to talk someone through

Could you talk me through the installation?

jemanden Schritt für Schritt anleiten

blank

The printer only produces blank labels.

leer, unbedruckt

Answer key

Check only when you have finished. Every answer comes with the **why**.

BRICK 2 · FILL THE GAPS

01 **get**

"Bekommen" is "to get" — "to become" means "werden". "I become an error message" would mean you turn into one.

02 **through**

"To talk someone through something" means to guide them step by step — the standard request to support.

BRICK 3 · TRUE OR FALSE?

01 **False**

False — the first call was a disaster; the second call with the three-step structure took five minutes.

02 **True**

True — step two of the structure: say what you have already tried.

BRICK 4 · ORDER

- 01 **1.** The label printer stops working before a shipment
- 02 **2.** The first call fails because of "I become an error message"
- 03 **3.** A colleague teaches Daniel the three-step structure
- 04 **4.** Daniel calls again and describes the problem precisely
- 05 **5.** The driver is reinstalled and the shipment leaves on time

KEEP PRACTISING LIVE

Want to practise these phrases in a real conversation?

Online lessons with real teachers — English training since 2004 · Berlin · Hanover · Online.

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