

# How To Protect Your GSM Phone

## Powerful Solutions Against Phone Loss and Theft

By  
Sagai John Adam

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### Bonus Chapter: Chapter 7- Phone Tips Bonanza

Here are some of the articles published in GSM Today that help you make the best use of your phone.

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## Telephone Courtesy Part 1

By Sagai John Adam

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With nearly 500,000 GSM Subscribers, there are a lot of us with phones out there. Many of us are holding our very first phones! Unfortunately, nobody was born with good telephone manners so these things must be learnt.



Here are a few telephone answering and calling tips. Some of these tips will work for normal landline communication too.

1. In Business calls, Always identify yourself when calling in this format: Name, organization and location.

For example "My name is Adam Sagai from GSM Today in Abuja. I would like to talk to..."

This immediately lets the person know some basic information about you that they can pass on to the person you are calling. If you don't volunteer the information, the person who answers the phone will still ask for the information anyway and waste your time AND MONEY.

2. Make Business calls as brief as possible. Get straight to the point and hang up.

3. Wait for at least 6 rings before deciding that there is nobody (if the voicemail diversion allows you that long.)

4. **\*\*This is going to be difficult for Nigerians to adjust to, but here it is anyway: CALLING A FRIEND AND HAVING LONG CONVERSATIONS DURING BUSINESS HOURS ON THE OFFICE PHONE IS WRONG.**

The emphasis is on "long conversations". Two to five minutes may be a challenge for some chatterboxes but try to restrict your calls to that time range. The high airtime tariffs have been a great teacher of short, sharp conversations.

5. When a wrong-number situation occurs, be polite. If you are the one who called a wrong number by mistake, say "I am sorry, it must be a wrong number". Then verify the number you called. Don't ask, "Which number is that?" It is better to say, "Is that 0803-311-9120?"

6. If you are lucky enough for someone to borrow you their phone, make short calls.

Remember though that the GSM networks bill you on a minute-by-minute basis, so a 10-second call and a 50-second call cost the same. A rushed 20-second call will make you look responsible but the GSM networks will still have their pound of flesh.

There is no need to get a stopwatch but a 1-2 minute call is short enough.

7. Always remember this: it is good manners to allow the person who MAKES the call to end it. If that seems impossible, try to steer the conversation to a conclusion.

With a little tact, you can end any conversation by taking advantage of any slight pause to say "Well, that's nice. Okay now, we will see later and you can gist me some more...see ya".

8. To avoid your calls being tactfully truncated as suggested above in step 7, always ask if the person is free to talk or whether to call back later.

9. Teach your children good telephone manners like: "Hello, this is the home of Mr. Sagai. I am his son Junior".

If they are too young, don't let them answer your phone or you may end up with a smashed phone or one that is flushed down the toilet!

10. Don't keep your callers on hold for too long while you switch to another call or perform some tasks. It costs a lot to call a GSM phone from landlines and other GSM phones.

If you can't attend to a call immediately, politely ask the caller to call back. The only exception should be international call -make time for that, no matter what.

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## **Organising Your Phone Address Book**

**By Sagai John Adam**

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Are you using your Cellphone address book? You should be! I currently have 150 phone number entries in my phone. It has taken over my desktop diary as the primary databank of contacts.

Once your phone book hits 40, you will start noticing the need for organising your entries to shorten the time it takes for you to find names. Here are some tips:

### **1. HAVE A BACKUP**

Okay, I must confess that this has nothing to do with finding names but it is very important that you transfer all the names from your Cellphone to a piece of paper. You don't think it is important? Just ask anyone who has lost his or her Cellphone! You can get a new phone but you can't get those very important phone numbers!



It is tedious but **\*\*very\*\*** necessary. Other things you need to do when copying your phone address book were treated in the article "Preparing for the Evil Day" in GSM Today Issue 7 at:  
<http://www.freelists.org/archives/gsmtoday/03-2002/fullthread2.html>

### **2. USE PREFIXES**

Scroll through your entries and add a "BIZ" prefix to any number of Business contacts. Add a "PAL" prefix to any number from friends. You can form any prefix you like. It is also very important that you form an additional prefix for GSM numbers.

The beauty of such prefixes is that you can quickly search for all your business numbers by just typing "BIZ" in your Cellphone search menu. When the number you are looking for is a GSM number, you can type the GSM prefix and you will quickly view all the GSM numbers in your Cellphone.

Here is how I have organized my own Cellphone:

All business numbers have a BIZ prefix (BIZ-CHUKS, BIZ-SUNNY etc.)

All my secondary school (CSS Jos) mates have a "C" prefix (C-Nanna, C-TJ etc.).

All my church friends (Family Worship Centre, Abuja) have the "FWC" prefix.

Finally, all my GSM numbers have a "+" prefix and I combine it with the schoolmates, church and biz prefix too. So if I am looking for a GSM number, I type "+" but if it is a schoolmates GSM number, I type "+C".

Too many prefixes can become confusing so limit to 3-4 to start with then add more if you feel necessary.

With such prefixes, you can shorten the time you use to search for names in your phone book. No matter how large it gets, you will never have to go through the whole list to find a name.

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## **One-Touch Dialing Or Speed Dialing**

**By Sagai John Adam**

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Do you know that you can dial the first nine names in your phone address book by pressing and holding the buttons 1 to 9? That is the magic called 1-Touch dialing or Speed dialing.

When you press and hold 1, the name in the SIM card address book location one will be dialed automatically. When you press 2, the second name is dialed and so on.

(This means you may have to reshuffle the names in your address book so that the most important name or the ones you call frequently are in the first nine locations. )



Another name for speed dialing is "Flash Dialing".

For example, in a Motorola T180:  
To dial the third name in our address book,  
We press and hold button 3.  
The phone now shows the name and calls the number.

In most phones, you have to assign which phone numbers can be speed dialed in the Phone Setup menu. This allows you to assign any phone number you wish to the buttons 1 to 9.

For example, in a Nokia 3310 Cellphone:  
You activate Speed Dialing by going to the Settings Menu,  
Then selecting Call Settings,  
Then selecting Speed Dialing,  
and finally assign the numbers.

Please note: anytime that button is pressed, the phone number associated with it is called. This will happen even when your cell phone is in your breast pocket or in your bag. That means you will be losing money for making such accidental calls without your knowing it.

To avoid such mistakes, always lock your keypad when you are not using your phone. If you usually carry your phone in your hands, or hang it on your belt, you won't need to

lock the keypad. But if you have noticed that your phone sometimes dials a number by mistake, then lock the keypad.

To lock the keypad on a Motorola T180,  
Press the [\*] button and the hash # button together

To unlock the keypad, repeat the process.

On some phones, just pressing [\*] locks the keypad.

To learn how to lock your keypad, consult your phone's manual. Try looking for "keypad lock" in the index.

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## **1-Minute Reminder**

**By Sagai John Adam**

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You are tight on call credit...and can't afford more than 1-minute calls. What do you do?

Let your Cellphone tell you of course!

Most Cellphone have what is called "call meters" which logs how long you spend talking. It is similar to the car mileage gauge in a car.



You can tell your Cellphone to make a beep when you have talked for a certain number of seconds. The trick is to let it tell you **BEFORE** your 60-sec's are up. A good time would be after 45 seconds. That way, you can start rounding up your conversation and still finish before your 60 seconds are up.

What happens if you exceed the 60 seconds? Well, there is no use hanging up then because your GSM Operator would have already sucked up another N50 for the next minute.

This is because the Nigerian GSM Operators, Econet Wireless, MTN and Nitel GSM charge you per minute. A 3 seconds call is equal to a 60 seconds call. So if you exceed 1 minute, they will deduct for the next minute immediately.

With your "1-minute reminder" in place, you can end your calls before the minute is up.

To activated in my Motorola T190,  
I go to call meters,  
Then I select Set Audible Call Timers,  
Then I select Single Alert Timer.  
I then turn it "ON",  
Then I enter 45 seconds.  
Then I click OK to set it at 45 seconds.

This means that I will hear a beep after 45 seconds. That is my cue to round up and say goodbye.

You can check your Users Guide for "Call Meters" to find out how it is done in your Cellphone. (I haven't found a way of doing the same thing in Nokia Cellphones yet.)

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## ***How Old Is Your Cellphone?***

**By Sagai John Adam**

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How do you know the age of your Cellphone? Or any Cellphone for that matter?

By how long it has been used, of course.

Well, how can you tell? Every Cellphone has a "Lifetime Timer" which logs the hours it has been used. It is a good indication of how much the Cellphone is worth. The longer the hours, the shorter the time left for you to enjoy the batteries.

Just like cars have a mileage gauge (never mind Nigerian cars) that shows you how many miles the car has traveled, every Cellphone has a timer that shows you how many hours and minutes of calls have been made on the Cellphone.

To have a look at the lifetime timer, you must go to the Call menu on your Cellphone.

On a Motorola T190,  
Go to Call Timers, then select Lifetime Timer.

On a Nokia 3310,  
Go to Call Register,  
Select Call Duration,  
Select All calls Duration.

On a Siemens S40,  
Go to Call Setup,  
Select Time and Charge,  
Select Status.

Please refer to your Cellphone Users Guide. You can search the index for "Call duration" or "Call costs".

So when next someone says, he just bought a Cellphone 2 weeks ago and wants to sell it off to you, remember that you can find out the age of that Cellphone. Just find out how "old" it really is!

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## **Unlocking Your Phone**

**By Sagai John Adam**

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Nitel GSM subscribers and Econet Wireless Subscribers will be familiar with PIN codes (PIN means Personal Identification Number) because their SIM card comes with the PIN security code activated. The PIN code is requested every time you turn on the phone as a security measure.

Whenever you make a mistake and type in the wrong PIN code 3 times, your phone becomes "blocked." No more making or receiving of calls for you.

How do you unblock your phone? Your first step is to get hold of your PIN Unblock Key or PUK which the GSM network operators have included to help you unblock the phone in such circumstances.

MTN's PUK is printed behind the SIM plastic pack beneath the phone number (a.k.a. MSISDN) while Econet Wireless prints it on a little card supplied in the Buddy pack. Nitel GSM expects you to go to their office so they can look it up for you.

After getting the PUK, you can then type the following codes:

Press **\*\*05\***

Then enter the PUK and press Yes/OK

Enter the correct PIN and press Yes/OK

Enter the correct PIN again and press Yes/OK

Unlocking your phone is very easy but most people never take the time to read through the User guides provided by the GSM Operators. You have an opportunity here. Once you have practiced unblocking your phone a couple of times, you can do it for others. For a little fee of course.

Just don't let them see you do it or they won't feel you deserve any pay! Telling them to come back later while you "fix the problem" is a good excuse...

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## **GSM 4 Kids**

**By Sagai John Adam**

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Nigerian Teenagers are going to love me for this!

Yes! Kids can have cell phones.  
Yes! Parents can restrict whom they can call.  
Yes! Teens will grumble about such restriction but who cares?  
Yes! Everyone can be happy!



The crash in connection fees has made it possible for almost anyone to have a GSM phone. (With just N17,400, you can pick up an MTN line and handset.) Even kids can now have their very own cell phones. after all Daddy and Mommy now have. (Some daddy's even have 3 cell phones!)

The major concern is how to restrict usage so that Teenagers won't chitchat away N1,500 in conversations to their pals. Parents will probably want their kids to only call members of the family on the cell phones and no one else. The good news is, it can be done.

Here are the steps:

1. you must buy a cell phone
2. you must make a list of acceptable phone numbers you want them to call
3. you must have a little knowledge of the features cell phones or take it to an expert
4. you must have the cell phone manual handy
5. you must get the PIN2 code from the GSM network

The magic feature that helps you accomplish all this is called the Fixed Dialing List or Fixed Dial Numbers (FDN).

You can find it in Security Settings menu on most phones. To use FDN, you must activate it and then type in the phone number(s) you want. You must also use a password called the PIN2 code to lock it so that you are the only one who can add new numbers to the list.

You can get the PIN2 code from the Customer Services numbers of Econet Wireless (111) and MTN (180). Nitel at this time does not have a Customer Services Number.

Your kid cannot call any number outside what is in the Fixed Dial numbers. But they can receive calls from every body.

Finally, you must include the Customer Services Voicemail and credit refill numbers to the list so that they call those numbers. These are usually toll-free anyway so they are not using any money.

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## ***DTMF May Be The Culprit!***

**By Sagai John Adam**

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I believe that the GSM networks will be shocked whenever they take a look at their records to ascertain how many of their subscribers have setup their voicemail box. They will be appalled at how very few subscribers have been able to set it up, much less use it.

The main reason why subscribers are not using their voicemail is because THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. Nobody has taught them how. It is true that the GSM networks printed the instructions when they first launched the voicemail services, but that was months ago, when they first rolled out. Moreover, the total number of subscribers at that time was less than 100,000.

Today, there are nearly 1 million GSM subscribers in Nigeria who have never known that they have a free voicemail box. The solution to this is education.

Another reason is DTMF: Dual Tone Multi-Frequency. This is a feature in phones that allows you to "talk" to a computer on the other line. Another way of referring to a phone with DTMF is "touch tone" or tone-based phone. Most Cellphones come with DTMF enabled. But if your Cellphone has disabled it, you won't be able to set up your voicemail.

How do you know if DTMF is enabled? It is simple. Press the buttons on your Cellphone. Do you hear different sounds? Or is it just the same "beep" sound no matter the button you press. Try pressing 1-2-3, then 4-5-6 then 7-8-9. If you heard different tones that sound like doh-reh-me , DTMF is enabled.

Without DTMF, MTN subscribers won't be able to recharge their call credits or use the voicemail because they are required to press certain buttons like 1 or 2. Without DTMF, Econet Wireless subscribers cannot setup their voicemail. In fact, when they type in the

default password 1111#, the IVR (Interactive Voice Response) will tell them that it is the wrong password.

Fortunately, DTMF can be enabled in most Cellphones. Check the "Settings" menu and look for Keypad tones. Change it to DTMF. It may be in another menu on your Cellphone so check the manual. Remember that it is already enabled in most phones.

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