**BE73: Planning: Working Across Cultures: 3 International Conference Calls**

**A:** Discuss these questions.

1 Do you enjoy using the phone? Why? / Why not?

2 What is a conference call? How is it different from a regular phone call?

3 Have you ever been involved in a conference call? How successful was it?

4 What do you think are the differences/similarities between conference calls and face-to-face meetings?

5 What do you think the biggest problems are?

**B: Listening: 2.35-2.40** Listen to six short extracts from conference calls. What do you think is the problem i n each situation?

**C: Listening: 2.35-2.40** Listen again and match the extracts (1-6) to these types of problem (a-f).

a) getting cut off b) background noise

c) speaking too fast d) unknown speaker

e) leaving the main topic f) interrupting I stopping a speaker talking D

**D: Listening: 2.41** Listen to the first part of a talk by an expert on international conference calls.

1 Which of the problems in Exercise C are mentioned?

2 According to the expert, what is the biggest I most common problem?

**E: Listening: 2.42** Listen to the second part of the talk and complete these tips for participants.

1 Make sure you are in a q\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ p\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2 Avoid e\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and d\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3 Prepare for the call in a\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 4 When speaking, stay on t\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5 Signal or label what you s\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 6 Try not to i\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7 Wait to be invited to c\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Call leaders**

• Make sure everyone knows when call will be – send e-mail reminder and number or passwords

• Pay attention to time zones for international calls - very early or very late not popular with all!

• Like meetings, make sure you have agenda and goals so everyone is clear about purpose

• Conference-call meetings take longer than face-to-face meetings - not too many agenda items

• Need to open and close call + important for the call leader to begin on time and welcome participants

• Do a roll call at the start Get people to introduce themselves - helps to build relationships

• Signal the move from introduction to actual talk

• Begin with: 'We’re ready to go. I’ve heard from John, Katja and Marina. Have I missed anyone?

• If a lot of people / big meeting, tell those not speaking to go on mute to reduce noise

• End with summing up + reminder of action points

• Set date and time of next meeting

**F:** Read these notes made by another participant on the final part of the talk and decide whether the sentences below are true (T) or false (F).

1 The times of conference calls are important.

2 An agenda is not important for conference calls.

3 Conference calls tend to be slower than face-to-face meetings.

4 The call leader should introduce everyone at the start.

5 A summary of the main points by the call leader is important.

