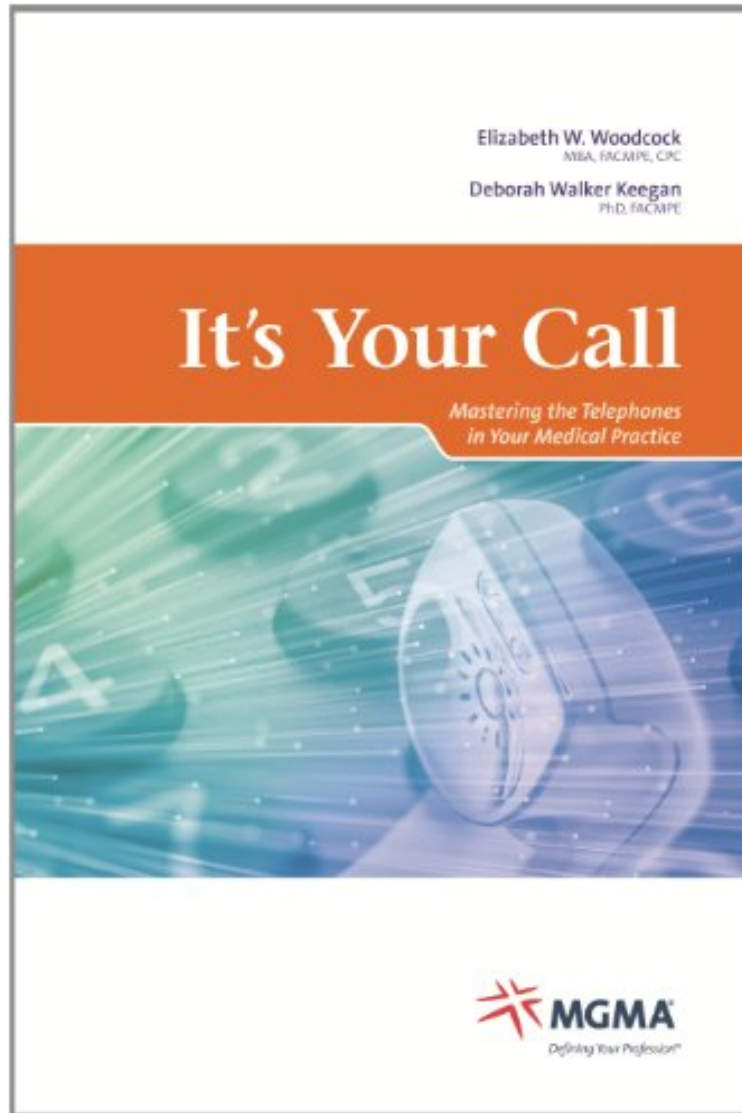


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# It's Your Call: Mastering Telephones in Your Medical Practice

*Elizabeth W. Woodcock, MBA, FACMPE, CPC, Deborah Walker Keegan, PhD*  
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**Elizabeth W. Woodcock, MBA, FACMPE, CPC, Deborah Walker Keegan, PhD : It's Your Call: Mastering Telephones in Your Medical Practice** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised It's Your Call: Mastering Telephones in Your Medical Practice:

If your practice is like so many others, the telephones ring constantly. Because the telephone requires synchronous communication the practice and the patient must be on the line at the same time it is inherently inefficient and has long been a source of frustration for practices and patients alike. Yet the telephone is the most frequently used means of

communication for patients to access your medical practice. With high volume and high expectations the telephone is an area ripe for opportunity. This book gives you the tools you need to take charge of your telephones so you can:

- Optimize patient access
- Measure your telephones to understand their current performance
- Improve the management of each type of call you receive in your practice
- Staff your telephones to ensure that you have the right number and skill mix of staff
- Use telephone scripts and tools for message-taking and callbacks to optimize customer service
- Select a telephone system and its related components to fully leverage technology
- Prepare for mixed-channel communication with patients, such as texting, e-mail, and Web portal
- Assess whether you need a consolidated call center, and if so, design and implement one that is right for your practice

The telephone is a critical access point that requires appropriate staffing and management to provide value high quality at low cost. Indeed, in some medical practices, more care is provided and/or coordinated via the telephone than ever before. Nurse triage and advice, case management, health coaching, patient navigation, and telehealth are expanding to provide patients with new access channels for care. In addition, patient expectations regarding service and turnaround times associated with the telephones are heightened, with patients requesting answers to their questions now. Gone are the days of patients telephoning the practice and being transferred directly to voicemail, which is checked only a few times during the day. Your patients expect timely and informed responses each and every time they call your practice. This book is organized to make it easy for you to access the key tools you need to improve patient communication and access to your practice. Authors Elizabeth Woodcock, MBA, FACMPE, CPC, and Deborah Walker Keegan, PhD, FACMPE, have peppered the book with best practices highlighted to guide you in optimizing telephone performance. Use this book as a blueprint to measure, manage, and staff your telephones for optimal performance. Embrace the tools in this book to improve patient access by expanding to newer technologies, minimizing the need for patients to telephone your practice.