

7462-223 / 7465-223 MAY 2011

Level 2 Certificate for Legal Secretaries / Level 2 Award in Proof-reading in the Legal Environment – Proof-reading Test Answer

THE **ROLE** OF THE **RECEPTIONIST**

At one time a **receptionist's** job was seen as unimportant and that more or less anyone could do it. However, the receptionist is a highly skilled individual.

Some of the qualities of a receptionist **are** as follows:

- 1 must be diplomatic
- 2 can empathise and be polite at all times
- 3** have a smart appearance
- 4 have **a** friendly **manner**
- 5 be caring and thoughtful
- 6 be very organised
- 7 use initiative

Some of the skills of a **receptionist** are as **follows**:

- 1 good telephone manner
- 2 book appointments and deal with visitors efficiently
- 3 fast keyboarding skills – incorrect layout**
- 4 file all papers on a daily basis
- 5 remember clients' names if they are **regular** visitors
- 6** be **knowledgeable** about the company
- 7 keep the area tidy and offer hospitality

These lists are not exhaustive. In large international law **firms**, the receptionist may be one of a team, perhaps working shifts. They need to **liaise** with team members to bring them up to date with the events of the day so that a smooth transition **takes** place. This requires a **professional** approach to the **role**.

On the other scale, a receptionist in a small **firm** may also double up as the filing **clerk**, secretary, **stationery** supplier and also the general **assistant**. Often a junior **secretary** covers the lunch break or while the normal receptionist is on holiday or absent **through** sickness so that the reception is always **manned**.

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The receptionist is the first person that a member of the public meets when visiting the **solicitor's** office and it is important that the initial impression the visitor has is a positive **one**. The visitor should be made to feel important and that **their** business matters. They should be **dealt** with courteously, promptly and efficiently. Once they have been **greeted**, they should be asked to take a seat whilst the receptionist informs the solicitor of the arrival of their client. The receptionist should offer to take the visitor's coat, especially in the winter, and/or their bag if they have **one**. If there is a delay and the client has to wait, **refreshments** should be offered.

Unjustified paragraph

The reception area should have a clean and pleasant appearance which is tidy at all times. Reading material should be displayed neatly, and be up to date. Outdated **newspapers** and magazines should be replaced and checked **daily**. Coffee cups etc should be cleared up after the client has finished their refreshment.

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The receptionist needs to be aware of all employees' movements **in case** someone in the firm is looking for a particular person who has popped out for lunch or to a meeting. They should also know **which** solicitor would deal with the various types of law and specialist cases. The receptionist has to deal with **unexpected visitors** who may need to book an appointment and the **receptionist** needs to **advise** the visitor who the best person is to help them. This is also the same for people who telephone to make an appointment.

The receptionist also deals with **callers** who are delivering goods, **stationery**, couriers who **are** dropping off/collecting files or urgent **documents**, or simply the window **cleaner** or milkman calling to collect their **monthly** money. The reception area is often the hub of the **company** and can be very busy and **exciting**.

Words: 550