



Office of the
Commissioner of
Official Languages

Commissariat
aux langues
officielles

HOW DO I MAKE AN ACTIVE OFFER?

In each instance (in person, on the telephone and by e-mail), I first use the official language of the majority community and then the official language of the minority community when I make an active offer of service:

- In Quebec: French first, then English
- Elsewhere in Canada: English first, then French



ACTIVE OFFER IN PERSON

» I make sure I greet clients in person in both official languages at all times.

1. I provide a short greeting that is the same in both languages. This is an appropriate way to show that service is available in English and French, without exception. For example:
2. I pause to let the client respond.
3. I continue to provide service in the official language of the client's choice.

(in Quebec)

Bonjour! Hello!
Bienvenue! Welcome!

(elsewhere in Canada)

Hello! Bonjour!
Welcome! Bienvenue!

» If I am unilingual, I know whom to contact to ensure that service is provided in a timely manner in the official language of the client's choice.

1. I inform the client that another colleague will provide service.

(for a client who
chooses English)

One moment please.
I will find a colleague
who can help you.

(for a client who
chooses French)

Un instant, s'il vous plaît.
Je vais trouver un
collègue qui peut
vous aider.

2. I inform my colleague of the official language chosen by the client.



ACTIVE OFFER ON THE TELEPHONE

» I make sure I answer the telephone in both official languages at all times.

1. I provide a short greeting that is the same in both languages. This is an appropriate way to show that service is available in English and French, without exception. For example:

**Name of your institution in both languages,
your name**

(in Quebec)

Agence des services
frontaliers du Canada,
Canada Border
Services Agency,
Étienne Côté

(elsewhere in Canada)

Canada Border
Services Agency,
Agence des services
frontaliers du Canada,
Étienne Côté

Bilingual greeting, your name

(in Quebec)

Bonjour! Hello!
Annie Bennett

(elsewhere in Canada)

Hello! Bonjour!
Annie Bennett

2. I pause to let the client respond.
3. I continue to provide service in the official language of the client's choice.

CLIENTS WHO ARE NOT IMMEDIATELY OFFERED SERVICE IN THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THEIR CHOICE MAY ASSUME THAT SERVICE IS NOT AVAILABLE IN THAT LANGUAGE OR THAT ASKING FOR IT MAY CAUSE DELAYS OR EMBARRASSMENT.

! CHECK:
CAN A UNILINGUAL PERSON UNDERSTAND
NAME ONLY IS NOT AN ACTIVE OFFER
OF SERVICE!

» If I am unilingual, I know whom to contact to ensure that service is provided in a timely manner in the official language of the client's choice. For example:

1. I inform the client that I will transfer the call to a colleague.

(for a client who
chooses English)

I am going to transfer
your call to a colleague.
One moment please.

(for a client who
chooses French)

Je vais transférer votre
appel à un collègue. Un
instant, s'il vous plaît.

» My recorded telephone message contains the same information in both official languages. For example:

(in Quebec)

Bonjour, vous avez joint
la boîte vocale de ____
(name)____ au ____ (French
name of department)____.
S'il vous plaît, laissez-moi
un message et je vous
rappellerai dans les plus
brefs délais.

and

Hello, you have reached
____ (name)____'s voicemail
at ____ (English name of
department)____. Please
leave a message and
I will get back to you as
soon as possible.

(elsewhere in Canada)

Hello, you have reached
____ (name)____'s voice-
mail at ____ (English name
of department)____. Please
leave a message and
I will get back to you
as soon as possible.

and

Bonjour, vous avez joint
la boîte vocale de ____
(name)____ au ____
(French name of
department)____. S'il vous
plaît, laissez-moi un
message et je vous
rappellerai dans les
plus brefs délais.

! CHECK:
CAN A UNILINGUAL PERSON UNDERSTAND
ALL OF THE INFORMATION IN MY MESSAGE?



» My telephone message for extended absences contains the same information in both official languages. For example:

(in Quebec)

Bonjour, hello.

(elsewhere in Canada)

Hello, bonjour.

Je suis absent/absente
du bureau et je serai de
retour le ____ (date)____.
Veuillez me laisser un
message ou communi-
quer avec ____ (name
of colleague)____, au
###-###-####.

I am out of the office
and will be back on ____
(date)____. Please leave a
message or contact ____
(name of colleague)____
at ###-###-####.

Je suis absent/absente
du bureau et je serai de
retour le ____ (date)____.
Veuillez me laisser un
message ou communi-
quer avec ____ (name
of colleague)____, au
###-###-####.

I am out of the office
and will be back on ____
(date)____. Please leave a
message or contact ____
(name of colleague)____
at ###-###-####.

JUST BECAUSE THERE IS LITTLE DEMAND FOR SERVICE IN ONE OF THE TWO OFFICIAL LANGUAGES, DOES NOT MEAN THERE IS NO NEED FOR IT. AN ACTIVE OFFER INVITES MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO USE THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THEIR CHOICE.



ACTIVE OFFER BY E-MAIL

» The signature block in my e-mail contains the same information in both official languages to show that service is available in English and French, without exception. For example:

(in Quebec)

Marie Canadienne
Analyste, Direction
générale des services
d'infotechnologie
Parcs Canada /
Gouvernement du Canada
marie.canadienne
@canada.ca
Tél. : 613-955-5555
ATS : 613-955-5556

(elsewhere in Canada)

John Canadian
Analyst, Chief Information
Officer Branch
Treasury Board of Canada
Secretariat / Government
of Canada
john.canadian@canada.ca
Tel: 613-955-5555
TTY: 613-955-5556

Analyst, Information
Technology
Services Branch
Parks Canada /
Government of Canada
marie.canadienne
@canada.ca
Tel: 613-955-5555
TTY: 613-955-5556

Analyste, Direction du
dirigeant principal de
l'information
Secrétariat du Conseil
du Trésor du Canada /
Gouvernement du Canada
john.canadian@canada.ca
Tél. : 613-955-5555
ATS : 613-955-5556

Instructions for signature blocks can be found in
the Government of Canada's Standard on E-mail
Management.

» My message for extended absences contains the same information in both official languages. For example:

(in Quebec)

Bonjour, je suis présentement à l'extérieur du bureau.
C'est avec plaisir que je vous répondrai à mon retour le
____ (date)____. Si votre demande est urgente, veuillez
communiquer avec ____ (name of colleague)____ au
###-###-#### ou par courriel à l'adresse ____ (e-mail
address)____. Merci.

Hello! I am currently out of the office. I will gladly reply
to your message upon my return on ____ (date)____.
If you require immediate assistance, please contact ____
(name of colleague)____ at ###-###-#### or by e-mail
at ____ (e-mail address)____. Thank you.

(elsewhere in Canada)

Hello! I am currently out of the office. I will gladly reply
to your message upon my return on ____ (date)____.
If you require immediate assistance, please contact ____
(name of colleague)____ at ###-###-#### or by e-mail
at ____ (e-mail address)____. Thank you.

Bonjour, je suis présentement à l'extérieur du bureau.
C'est avec plaisir que je vous répondrai à mon retour
le ____ (date)____. Si votre demande est urgente, veuillez
communiquer avec ____ (name of colleague)____
au ###-###-#### ou par courriel à l'adresse ____
(e-mail address)____. Merci.

! CHECK:
CAN A UNILINGUAL PERSON UNDERSTAND
ALL OF THE INFORMATION IN MY MESSAGE?

ENG
FR
ACTIVE
OFFER

A culture of respect,
a culture of excellence

www.officiallanguages.gc.ca

