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Secretary: Hello, this is Mr. Thompson's office.

Caller: Yes, is Mr. Thompson available?

Secretary: I'm sorry, sir, he has been **tyed up** with meetings all morning.

Caller: Can you tell me when he'll be available?

Secretary: These meetings usually last an hour, but this one has been going on for two. So, it is pretty much **anybody's guess** when it will end.

Caller: I see.

Secretary: I would be happy to **pass along** a message.

Caller: Tell him that Jason Smith from Frontier called and that he must get back to me ASAP. It is about the deal. He can reach me at my office until seven o'clock tonight. The number here is 0555645342. After 7, I'll be available on my cell at 05552332149.

Secretary: Let me read that back to you.

Your office number is 0555645324, and your cell number is 05552332149. I will let Mr. Thompson know as soon as the meeting ends.

Caller: Sorry, but the last two digits are 42, not 24.

Secretary: I got it, 0555645342. Is there anything else I can do?

Caller: No, that is all for now.

Breakdown

Why don't we take a look at the key expressions?

These are the key expressions used in this dialogue.

A) Tied Up: The phrase tied up means to be busy or preoccupied. Please look at the following illustrations.

- 1) I would love to go to the concert with you, but I'll be tied up this evening doing conference calls.
- 2) Bob said he would be tied up with a client all day.
- 3) Don't bother calling; she's tied up with homework.
- 4) I'm sorry I can't make it. I thought that I would have finished by now, but I got tied up.

B) Anybody's Guess: This means that nobody knows. We use this when nobody has any idea what the answer is.

- 1) It is anybody's guess when the meeting will start. The executives have delayed it three times already today.
- 2) I just spoke to him, and he said that it was anybody's guess who the next managing director would be.
- 3) He said he would be here by three. I called his office, and they said that they didn't know where he was. It is anybody's guess where he might be.

C) Pass Along: To pass along something or pass something along means sharing information with other people.

1) I was hoping you could pass this memo along to all the members of the team. Please do it now.

2) Why haven't you passed that memo along yet?

D) **Let me read that back to you:** We use this expression when confirming information that someone has already given to you. People generally like to use the word confirm, and that is fine. However, this expression is useful in business situations.

1) Please let me read that back to you. Your address is 1127 Johnson Street. Is that correct?

2) Could I please read that back to you? Your number is 555-555-2456. Is that correct? Great! I'll give him the message.