I just want to share the incident that happened to me yesterday. I received a call from a woman by the name Lisa claiming she is calling on behalf of Bank Negara. She introduced herself formally and explained to me that Bank Negara is concerned for credit card users in Malaysia who overspend their limit and put themselves too deep in debt. So, Bank Negara is introducing this new "MBF Countdown Backup" card for all owners of credit cards all around Malaysia and will soon be a compulsory thing. The card, according to Lisa, will be swiped each time a transaction is performed using your credit card and this will enable Bank Negara to monitor our spending. And in return, we will get discounts ranging from 5% to 40% for different merchants. Then, this is where my stupidity sets in. Because she spoke to me in Bahasa Malaysia and the background noise implicates that it is a bank working environment, and above all this, she was able to readout to me my 16-digit credit card numbers and particulars and even my outstanding balance with the credit card, it convinced me that this could be a new system implemented by Bank Negara. So, when she asked for my 3-digit approval code written behind the credit card, I "STUPIDLY" gave it to her.

Then after all this was charade was over, Lisa informed me that a charge of RM480 will be charged to my credit card as a starters fee to waive off the annual fee. This woke me up!! So, I questioned Lisa on why do I need to pay for something that Bank Negara wants to implement to help the people of Malaysia(not a very noble cause). Then she explained to me that they are from a company calling on behalf of Bank Negara. And she said all the banks are well aware of this system. She then passed me over to her manager, Mr. Zakri or Mr. Z (similar to the MIB) or something. This gentleman then tries to assure me that this is not a fraud or scam. Then after his long-winded speech about the benefits of their card (no longer Bank Negara's), I told him to hold the approval of the card as I don't need it. I told him that I will call my bank to verify this card and get back to him. He agreed to my suggestion and even gave me 2 of his contact numbers for me to get back to him (03-40422522 and 03-40424288). So, when I called both my credit card banks regarding this matter both banks told me that there was no such thing. Immediately I told that I might have fell for a fraud telephony case and wanted to cancel and suspend all my credit cards. The banks suspended my cards and agreed to send me a replacement card. Then when I called back Mr. Z at the number he gave me, a different lady attended to me and passed me on to a Chinese lady who spoke in mandarin to me in a very heavy Chinesefaccent. I told them that I have called my cc banks and cancelled my cards and specifically told her that I do not agree to their terms and I don't want their offer. She explained to me and assured me that they will delete my cc details and not charge me for anything. So, all this happened yesterday. Being paranoid, I called my banks again this morning to double check if any transactions had gone through yesterday after I cancelled my card. And guess what. Those scammers actually did try to charge me but the banks did not let the transactions go through. I consider myself lucky coz I acted a step ahead of them.

Lesson from all of this, never ever entertain telephony offers that involve credit cards. 2 of my colleagues fell for these scams before and 1 of them was lucky enough to have the bank recognize it as a fraud case while the other 1 lost RM3000