



Dealing with Misunderstandings

Misunderstandings happen all the time when speaking in a foreign language. It may be that somebody didn't catch what you said, that they're not sure what you meant or perhaps you don't understand what your speaker is trying to say. The good news is there are some useful phrases to help you handle these moments politely and professionally.

Misunderstanding

- I'm sorry but I'm not sure I understand
- Sorry, I'm not sure I know what you mean
- Sorry, I don't quite follow you
- I'm afraid I don't understand
- Sorry to interrupt, I didn't quite catch that

Asking for Clarification

- Could you say it in another way?
- Can you clarify that for me?
- Could you rephrase that?
- When you say ... do you mean ...?
- Could you repeat that? I think I may have misunderstood you
- Could you say that again, please?
- Would you mind repeating that last part again?
- Could you clarify what you mean by ...?
- Could we run over/go over .. again?

Clarifying

- In other words
- Let me clarify that.
- To put it another way ...
- I'll just repeat that

- Let me go through that again
- I'd like to go over this again if you don't mind
- The question they're asking is ...
- I think they're trying to say ... is that right?
- You can view In document ...

Asking for Further Information

- Could you be more specific?
- Could you give me an example?
- Could you elaborate on that?

Confirming Understanding

- Let me see if I've understood you correctly. You're saying ...
- So, if I understand correctly, you mean ...
- Just to check, are you saying that ...?
- Do you mean ...?
- So what you're saying is ...
- So, in other words ...
- Can I rephrase what you've said ...
- So you mean ...
- Are we all on the same page?
- Have I made everything clear?
- Are there any other questions?
- I think I got your meaning
- Can I just check what I got from that?
- Is that what you meant?

When Somebody Misunderstands You

- Not exactly - what I meant was ...
- I think there's been a misunderstanding
- Let me put it another way
- Sorry, that's not quite what I meant

The most important thing is to remain calm and stay friendly. Dealing with misunderstandings is normal, it just means a little more communication or explanation is needed.