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Il tuo inglese per la professione in pillole.



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CLARIFYING & MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

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Welcome to Oversea MasterPlus, la tua libreria digitale di contenuti per la professione in pillole.

Saper gestire le aspettative in inglese è una competenza chiave nel lavoro internazionale. In questa pillola imparerai come chiarire, riformulare e confermare informazioni durante conversazioni professionali, usando strutture sicure e riutilizzabili in diversi contesti lavorativi. Are you ready? Let's dive in!

Hello! I'm Saskia, your English coach, and today we'll talk about essential communication in context. In international work settings, misunderstandings rarely come from using difficult language.

More often, they come from expectations that are not fully clear — for example, about deadlines, responsibilities, or next steps.

Being able to clarify these points politely and professionally is an essential skill, especially during calls and meetings, where there's little time to correct misunderstandings later.



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Key Sentences

Before we look at what works, it's useful to pause for a moment and look at what often goes wrong. This is especially true for Italian speakers, even those with a good level of English.

Very often, the problem is not grammar.

The problem is how the message sounds.

When something is unclear, professionals tend to react in three ways:

they sound too direct, too uncertain, or they ask questions that can feel accusatory, even if that's not the intention.

For example, phrases like "I don't understand," "You are not clear," or "So what do you want exactly?" are not incorrect from a grammatical point of view. However, in a professional context, they can easily sound abrupt or confrontational.

This is why, in professional English, clarity is usually softened.

The goal is not just to understand — it's to do so while keeping the conversation collaborative and professional.



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So let's move on to what you can say instead.

The five sentences we'll look at now form a safe toolkit.

The first sentence is: "Just to make sure I'm on the same page..."

You might use it like this: "Just to make sure I'm on the same page, the deadline is the end of the month — correct?"

The expression "to be on the same page" comes from the idea of literally being on the same page of a document.

What we really mean in Italian is:

"essere allineati", "avere la stessa comprensione", "essere sulla stessa lunghezza d'onda".

So when you use this sentence in English, you are saying:

"Giusto per essere sicuro/a che siamo allineati"

You can use this sentence at the beginning of a clarification, even if your English is simple. It immediately sets the right tone and gives you time to think before asking your question.

The second sentence is: "If I understand correctly, you're expecting..."



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For example: "If I understand correctly, you're expecting the draft before the audit meeting."

In Italian, this corresponds to: "Se ho capito bene, vi aspettate che..."

Use this sentence when you are talking about deadlines, documents, or deliverables.

The third sentence is: "Can we quickly clarify who's responsible for...?"

For instance: "Can we quickly clarify who's responsible for submitting the documentation?"

In Italian, this means: "Possiamo chiarire velocemente chi è responsabile di...?"

With this sentence, you are asking for clarity in a very practical and professional way. The question is direct, but it doesn't sound aggressive or personal. One important detail is the word "we".

By saying "can we clarify", you make the question collaborative.

You are not pointing at one person — you are focusing on the task.



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The fourth sentence is: “Just to clarify, when you say X, do you mean...?” For example: “Just to clarify, when you say ‘approval’, do you mean internal approval or client approval?”

In Italian, this corresponds to: “Solo per chiarire, quando dice X, intende...?”

This is a very professional structure that shows attention to detail. It’s especially useful when dealing with technical or legal terminology.

The fifth sentence is: “Does that sound right to you?”

You might say: “So we’ll review the contract this week and follow up on Monday — does that sound right to you?”

In Italian, this means: “Le sembra corretto?” or “Va bene così?” This is a soft way to confirm alignment.

The tone is collaborative, and it’s extremely common in native-level spoken English.

This sentence works very well at the end of a call or explanation.

It helps close the conversation clearly, while still leaving space for questions or adjustments.



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Quiz Time – For each question, choose the sentence that sounds unprofessional or risky in a work call. The other options are acceptable.

1. You want to confirm a deadline during a call. Which sentence is not appropriate in a professional context?

- A. Just to make sure I'm on the same page, the deadline is the end of the month — correct?
- B. If I understand correctly, the deadline is the end of the month.
- C. So, the deadline is the end of the month, right?
- D. You are not clear about the deadline.

2. You want to check what the client expects. Which sentence is risky?

- A. If I understand correctly, you're expecting the draft before the audit meeting.
- B. I don't understand what you want.
- C. Just to confirm, you're expecting the draft before the audit meeting.
- D. So you want the draft before the audit meeting.



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3. Several people are involved, and responsibilities are unclear. Which sentence is not appropriate?

- A. This is confusing. Who should do this?
- B. Let's clarify who's responsible for submitting the documentation.
- C. Who is responsible for submitting the documentation?
- D. Can we quickly clarify who's responsible for submitting the documentation?

4. A technical word is used, and its meaning is not clear. Which sentence is risky?

- A. Just to clarify, when you say "approval", do you mean internal or client approval?
- B. When you say "approval", could you clarify what you mean?
- C. This term is not clear at all.
- D. What exactly do you mean by "approval"?



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5. You want to make sure everyone agrees on the next steps. Which sentence is not appropriate?

- A. Does that sound right to you?
- B. So, we'll review the contract this week and follow up on Monday.
- C. Let me know if this works for you.
- D. So this is final.

ANSWER KEYS: D - B - A - C - D



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RECAP

Well done! Alright—let's wrap things up.

This dialogue shows a professional conversation between a client and a professional.

Notice how they clarify deadlines and responsibilities using clear, polite language. Let's listen.

Client: *So we'd like to move forward quickly and have everything ready before the end of the quarter.*

Professional: *Sure. Just to make sure I'm on the same page, the deadline would be the end of this month, correct?*

Client: *Yes, that's right.*

Professional: *If I understand correctly, you're expecting the first draft before the audit meeting next week.*

Client: *Exactly.*

Professional: *Perfect. Can we quickly clarify who's responsible for submitting the documentation?*

Client: *That will be our team. We'll send everything by email.*



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Professional: Great. And just to clarify, when you say “approval,” do you mean internal approval or client approval?

Client: Internal approval first, then client approval.

Professional: Understood. So we’ll review the documents this week and follow up on Monday. Does that sound right to you?

Client: Yes, that works for us.

Professional: Perfect. We’ll proceed as discussed and keep you updated. Thank you. Looking forward to working together.



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Congratulations!

Hai completato la tua pillola di oggi. Continua ad esercitarti con Oversea MasterPlus per ampliare o consolidare il tuo vocabolario.

E se hai bisogno di maggiori informazioni o chiarimenti, parla con noi! Scrivici all'indirizzo segreteria@oversea.it, chiamaci al numero 0113850552 oppure contattaci al 3349906636.

See you next time!



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