

How to ask for clarification in English

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Sometimes when we have a conversation with someone, we sway in our thoughts and tend to overlook what the other person just said. This annoying situation can happen with anyone of us. But it is our duty to clarify the mistake or tell the person to repeat what he/she said. This situation can also be experienced by an employee during a meeting. In this particular blog, we would like to share some of the ways to ask for clarification.



Words to be used to clarify something:

1. Sorry?

The word sorry is mostly used to express apology or when we regret for something. Sometimes when we miss a conversation or an important question, instead of asking what? You can replace it with sorry which seems to be a more polite word.

Example: Sorry, I did not hear you?

2. Could you give me an Example: please?

Sometimes we cannot understand what the other person wants to explain or say. So, instead of misunderstanding the topic, you can ask the person to give an example of what he/she wants to explain. This will help you understand the topic in a better way.

Example: I have not understood the meaning of this sentence. Can you give me an **example** please?

3. Pardon?

Pardon means to repeat something or come again on the topic. It is a more polite way to say sorry and asking to explain something again. Sometimes, during a meeting when a person wants to say sorry they can say pardon instead of saying sorry. It creates a good impression on the person. Pardon also means to excuse me, when you want someone to move out of your way.

Example: Pardon, can you please repeat it again.

Example: I am getting late, pardon me.

4. Come again?

It is a very friendly and a casual way of asking or requesting someone to repeat what they said. This cannot be used during meetings.

Example: I was busy with my work, please come again?

5. What was that?

This is used when you are not sure about what the person is talking about. You can use this word when you want to clarify it. It is an informal way of asking a person.

Example: Reena was not aware of what Heena was talking about. So, she asked Heena - what was that?

6. I beg your pardon?

The meaning of this sentence is same as pardon. It means to apologise or when you are sorry about something or to regret. But this sentence brings more formality and it gives a good impression on the person who said it.

Example: Ram was confused about the project which the boss was presenting, so Ram said "I beg your pardon?"

We hope this blog will help you to [improve your English](#) and these words will improve your day to day communication.

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- By Shailja Varma

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