

Handling Questions

How to deal with questions from the audience,
both friendly and hostile



"IS IT WORKING NOW?"

Clarification 1

TIP

When you give a presentation in English, one of your main objectives is to sound clear. But when there are misunderstandings, a small audience should be prepared to interrupt you to clarify what you said.

TASK 1

Here are four simple ways of checking with the presenter. Write in the missing pairs of words.

follow + run missed + say see + explain catch + repeat

You didn't hear:

- 1 Sorry, I that. Could you that again, please?
- 2 Sorry, I didn't that. Could you it, please?

You don't understand:

- 3 Sorry, I don't quite you. Could you just through that again, please?
- 4 Sorry, I don't quite what you mean. Could you just that, please?

TASK 2

Sometimes it is not enough to tell the speaker you don't understand. You need to say exactly what you don't understand. In these examples how do the questioners make it clear which points they missed?

Presenter	Questioner
1 Turnover was [redacted]	Sorry, turnover was what?
2 The greatest demand was in [redacted]	Sorry, the greatest demand was where?
3 We contacted [redacted] in Tokyo.	Sorry, you contacted who?
4 We finished the study last [redacted]	Sorry, you finished the study when?
5 The whole project needs [redacted]	Sorry, the whole project needs what?
6 Our main market is in [redacted]	Sorry, our main market is where?
7 We've known this since [redacted]	Sorry, you've known this since when?
8 Start-up costs could be [redacted]	Sorry, start-up costs could be how much?
9 The study took [redacted] to complete.	Sorry, the study took how long to complete?
10 We've had [redacted] of enquiries.	Sorry, you've had how many enquiries?



TASK 3: T25

Now you try these. If you are in a group, work with a partner. Take turns to be the questioner and interrupt the presenter. If you are working alone, listen to your CD and interrupt to ask for clarification

- 1 Presenter: This is not the time to be thinking of [redacted] **(expansion)**
 Questioner:
- 2 Presenter: We need to think about exporting to [redacted] **(Spain)**
 Questioner:
- 3 Presenter: Clearly, the best person is [redacted] **(Mr Branson)**
 Questioner:
- 4 Presenter: The market leaders are [redacted] **(the French)**
 Questioner:
- 5 Presenter: We must reach our preliminary target by [redacted] **(October)**
 Questioner:
- 6 Presenter: The main problem, of course, is going to be [redacted] **(money)**
 Questioner:
- 7 Presenter: Advertising has cost us well over [redacted] **(half a million)**
 Questioner:
- 8 Presenter: Do we pull out now? The answer is [redacted] **(No)**
 Questioner:
- 9 Presenter: As a market, Brazil is very different from [redacted] **(Argentina)**
 Questioner:
- 10 Presenter: We need to be putting more money into [redacted] **(R&D)**
 Questioner:
- 11 Presenter: We should know the results by [redacted] **(the end of the year)**
 Questioner:
- 12 Presenter: We've been forced to cut prices by [redacted] **(30%)**
 Questioner:
- 13 Presenter: It might take [redacted] to finalize the details. **(months)**
 Questioner:
- 14 Presenter: There are more than [redacted] similar products on the market. **(fifty)**
 Questioner: