

CLARIFY

Summarizing



Summarizing is one of the Clarify style behaviors in the Sphere of Influence 360°.

When summarizing, you retell the most important issues of a story or recap a conversation to check whether you and your listener mean or understand things the same way. It also helps you to verify that everything has been discussed.



“The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak.”

- Hans Hofmann

Exercise 1: Main ideas only (written text)

In this exercise, you will first practice identifying the main ideas in written text.

Step 1: Scroll through your inbox for a colleague or customer's email and choose one that has roughly two or three paragraphs.

- Read the email multiple times.
- Determine the most important points (what information is essential?)
- Mark these main issues and write them down below.

Main points in your colleague or customer's email:

Step 2: Consider the main points you noted in the box above.

- Are there things you could cross out?
- Do you see terms that might perhaps be grouped together?

Step 3: Use the key remaining words to make logical sentences. Write your summary in the box below.

Your summary:

Repeat this exercise until you notice that it's getting easier and easier to identify the essence of and summarize an email.

Exercise 2: Main ideas only (interactions)

In this second exercise, you will practice identifying main ideas while in a meeting or conversation.

Take a notebook with you to write down the input for your summary during the meeting, just like you did in the first step of the previous exercise. You only have to write the main ideas down.

If you feel confident enough to recap what you've talked about with your conversation partners, you can move on to **Exercise 3**.

Exercise 3: Share your summary

Before you verify what is discussed with your conversation partners, it can be useful to let them know that you intend to give a summary of what's been said. Below, you find some sentences you can use to start your summary.



“To summarize, ...”

“We’ve talked about...”

“Let me recap what we discussed...”

It can't hurt to ask whether your conversation partners recognize the conversation from your summary - they may have something to add or see things differently. This is a great way to find out whether you're on the same page or not and that everything is clear.

Evaluation:

How did your attempt to summarize work out?



1



2



3



4



5

What did you learn? What insights did you gain?

What went well? What would you repeat?

What can you do to improve your performance?

What is your next step?