

RESOURCE · REFERENCE

Meeting phrase bank

Thirty-six phrases for meetings, in English and Spanish, grouped by what you are actually trying to do. These are the ones that come up in nearly every session I teach — not textbook sentences, but the small moves that keep a meeting running.

Pick two or three from each group and use them until they are automatic. That is more useful than knowing all thirty-six.

Opening and framing

Shall we make a start?

¿Empezamos?

Neutral opener. Works even while people are still arriving.

Just to give a bit of context —

Para dar un poco de contexto:

Signals that background is coming, so nobody interrupts to ask why.

The main thing I want to get to today is...

Lo principal que quiero tratar hoy es...

Sets one priority. Protects you when the agenda drifts.

Before we dive in — is anything missing from the agenda?

Antes de empezar, ¿falta algo en el orden del día?

Cheap goodwill, and it surfaces surprises early rather than at minute fifty.

I'll keep this brief.

Voy a ser breve.

Buys attention. Only use it if it is true.

Can we park that and come back to it?

¿Lo dejamos aparcado y volvemos luego?

Closes a tangent without dismissing the person who raised it.

Asking for clarification

Sorry, could you say that again?

Perdona, ¿puedes repetirlo?

In Spanish, use perdone / puede with people you address formally.

Just so I've understood – you mean...?

Para asegurarme de que lo he entendido, ¿quieres decir que...?

The most useful phrase on this page. Reflecting back catches misunderstandings while they are still cheap.

What do you mean by that exactly?

¿A qué te refieres exactamente?

Direct but not rude in either language, as long as your tone is curious.

Could you give me an example?

¿Me puedes poner un ejemplo?

Turns an abstract disagreement into a concrete one.

Sorry, you lost me at...

Perdona, me he perdido en...

Naming where you lost the thread is far more efficient than a general "I don't understand".

Can I check I've got the numbers right?

¿Puedo confirmar que tengo bien las cifras?

Nobody has ever been thought less of for checking figures.

Buying time

That's a good question – let me think for a second.

Buena pregunta, déjame pensarlo un momento.

Completely normal for native speakers too. Silence while you think reads as competence, not hesitation.

Can I come back to you on that?

¿Te puedo contestar más tarde?

Better than an answer you will have to correct later.

Off the top of my head...

Así, a bote pronto...

Flags that the answer is approximate, which protects you if it turns out to be wrong.

I'd want to check before I answer that.

Prefiero comprobarlo antes de responder.

Firmer than the previous one. Use it when being wrong would be expensive.

Let me put that another way.

Déjame decirlo de otra manera.

Your escape hatch when a sentence is not going where you wanted.

Give me a second to find it.

Dame un segundo, que lo busco.

Fills the gap while you search a document, instead of leaving dead air.

Agreeing and building

Exactly — and on top of that...

Exacto, y además...

Agreement plus a contribution. Cheapest way to be visible in a meeting.

That's a fair point.

Es un buen punto.

Also the perfect setup for disagreeing immediately afterwards.

I'd go further, actually.

Yo iría incluso más lejos.

Strengthens someone else's argument and associates you with it.

That matches what we're seeing.

Coincide con lo que estamos viendo.

Adds evidence rather than opinion.

Building on what Ana said...

Retomando lo que ha dicho Ana...

Naming people is disproportionately effective in both cultures.

Happy to go with that.

Por mí, adelante.

Ends a discussion cleanly once you are content.

Disagreeing and pushing back

I see it slightly differently.

Yo lo veo un poco distinto.

Softer than "I disagree", which sits higher on the scale in English than most learners expect.

Can I push back on that?

¿Puedo discrepar en eso?

Asking permission first makes the objection land as collaboration.

My concern is specifically...

Mi duda es concretamente...

Narrow objections get answered. Broad ones sound like a verdict.

That works, but it would mean...

Se puede hacer, pero implicaría...

Says no without closing the door. The most useful pattern in this group.

I'm not sure that follows.

No lo tengo tan claro.

Challenges the logic rather than the person.

What am I missing?

¿Qué se me escapa?

Ends your objection with an opening. Almost impossible to take badly.

Closing and next steps

So, to summarise where we are —

Entonces, resumiendo dónde estamos:

Whoever summarises controls what the meeting decided.

Who's picking that up?

¿Quién se encarga de eso?

The question that turns discussion into action.

Can we agree a date?

¿Ponemos una fecha?

Vague commitments are the same problem in every language.

I'll send round a note after this.

Os mando un resumen después.

Use les mando instead of os mando in more formal Spanish settings.

Anything else before we close?

¿Algo más antes de cerrar?

Gives quieter people their last chance to speak.

Thanks everyone — useful session.

Gracias a todos, ha sido una reunión útil.

Ending warmly costs nothing and is remembered.

This one is on me. Print it, share it with your team, put it next to your screen. No signup, no strings.

If you want these worked through against your own meetings, emails and documents, the first session is free:

wordroot.de/booking.html

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