

The 10 Most Common Mistakes in Executive English

Subtle Errors That Undermine Your Credibility (And How to Fix Them)

These 10 mistakes are subtle but they immediately signal 'non-native speaker' to North American clients. Fix these and you'll sound more polished instantly.

The 10 Most Common Mistakes

01

Starting with 'Actually...'

In English, 'actually' implies correction or surprise. Using it habitually sounds condescending.

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Delete 'actually' from most sentences. Reserve it for genuine corrections.

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

Actually, I think we should consider...

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

I think we should consider...

02

Overusing 'I think'

Excessive hedging undermines your authority. Executives state positions; they don't constantly qualify.

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

State your position directly. Save 'I think' for opinions, not facts.

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

I think the deadline is next Friday. I think we need more resources.

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

The deadline is next Friday. We need more resources.

03

Using 'No?' as a tag question

This is a direct translation from Spanish. In English, it sounds informal and uncertain.

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Use 'right?' or 'don't you think?' for tag questions, or eliminate them entirely.

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

We should move forward, no?

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

We should move forward, right?

04

Saying 'I have a doubt'

'Doubt' in English means skepticism or disbelief. You mean 'question.'

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Replace 'I have a doubt' with 'I have a question' or 'I'm unclear on...'

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

I have a doubt about the timeline.

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

I have a question about the timeline.

05

Apologizing excessively

Starting with 'Sorry, but...' or 'Sorry to bother you' undermines your authority.

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Replace apologies with direct statements or gratitude.

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

Sorry, but I disagree with that approach.

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

I see it differently. Here's why...

06

Using 'assist' instead of 'help'

'Assist' sounds formal and stiff. Native speakers say 'help.'

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Use 'help' in almost all cases. It's more natural and direct.

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

I can assist you with that project.

■ BETTER / CORRECTO

I can help you with that project.

07

Saying 'in this moment'

This is a literal translation. English uses 'right now' or 'currently.'

■ ACTION / THE FIX

Replace 'in this moment' with 'right now,' 'currently,' or 'at the moment.'

■ AVOID / INCORRECTO

In this moment, we're focused on Q4.

■ BETTER / CORRECTO

Right now, we're focused on Q4.

08

Overusing 'very'

Excessive use of 'very' weakens your statements instead of strengthening them.

■ ACTION / THE FIX

Use stronger verbs and adjectives instead of 'very + weak word.'

■ AVOID / INCORRECTO

This is a very important project that's very urgent.

■ BETTER / CORRECTO

This is a critical project that's urgent.

09

Saying 'I will send you'

Missing the object. English requires 'I will send you THE EMAIL/DOCUMENT.'

■ ACTION / THE FIX

Always include what you're sending: the file, the email, the document.

■ AVOID / INCORRECTO

I will send you by end of day.

■ BETTER / CORRECTO

I'll send you the proposal by end of day.

10

Using 'How do you call...?'

This is a direct translation from Spanish. English uses 'What do you call...?'

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Replace 'How do you call' with 'What do you call' or 'What's the word for...'

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

How do you call this in English?

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

What do you call this in English?

Los 10 Errores Más Comunes en Inglés Ejecutivo

Errores Sutiles Que Socavan Tu Credibilidad (Y Cómo Corregirlos)

Estos 10 errores son sutiles pero inmediatamente señalan 'hablante no nativo' a clientes norteamericanos. Corrígelos y sonarás más pulido al instante.

Los 10 Errores Más Comunes

01

Comenzar con 'Actually...'

En inglés, 'actually' implica corrección o sorpresa. Usarlo habitualmente suena condescendiente.

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Elimina 'actually' de la mayoría de las oraciones. Resérvalo para correcciones genuinas.

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

Actually, I think we should consider...

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

I think we should consider...

02

Usar 'I think' en exceso

El exceso de cobertura socava tu autoridad. Los ejecutivos declaran posiciones; no califican constantemente.

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Declara tu posición directamente. Guarda 'I think' para opiniones, no hechos.

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

I think the deadline is next Friday. I think we need more resources.

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

The deadline is next Friday. We need more resources.

03

Usar 'No?' como pregunta de confirmación

Esta es una traducción directa del español. En inglés, suena informal e inseguro.

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Usa 'right?' o 'don't you think?' para preguntas de confirmación, o elimínalas por completo.

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

We should move forward, no?

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

We should move forward, right?

04

Decir 'I have a doubt'

'Doubt' en inglés significa escepticismo o incredulidad. Quieres decir 'question.'

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Reemplaza 'I have a doubt' con 'I have a question' o 'I'm unclear on...'

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

I have a doubt about the timeline.

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

I have a question about the timeline.

05

Disculpase excesivamente

Comenzar con 'Sorry, but...' o 'Sorry to bother you' socava tu autoridad.

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Reemplaza disculpas con declaraciones directas o gratitud.

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

Sorry, but I disagree with that approach.

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

I see it differently. Here's why...

06

Usar 'assist' en lugar de 'help'

'Assist' suena formal y rígido. Los nativos dicen 'help.'

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Usa 'help' en casi todos los casos. Es más natural y directo.

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

I can assist you with that project.

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

I can help you with that project.

07

Decir 'in this moment'

Esta es una traducción literal. El inglés usa 'right now' o 'currently.'

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Reemplaza 'in this moment' con 'right now,' 'currently,' o 'at the moment.'

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

In this moment, we're focused on Q4.

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

Right now, we're focused on Q4.

08

Usar 'very' en exceso

El uso excesivo de 'very' debilita tus declaraciones en lugar de fortalecerlas.

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Usa verbos y adjetivos más fuertes en lugar de 'very + palabra débil.'

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

This is a very important project that's very urgent.

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

This is a critical project that's urgent.

09

Decir 'I will send you'

Falta el objeto. El inglés requiere 'I will send you THE EMAIL/DOCUMENT.'

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Siempre incluye qué estás enviando: el archivo, el email, el documento.

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

I will send you by end of day.

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

I'll send you the proposal by end of day.

10

Usar 'How do you call...?'

Esta es una traducción directa del español. El inglés usa 'What do you call...?'

■ **ACTION / THE FIX**

Reemplaza 'How do you call' con 'What do you call' o 'What's the word for...'

■ **AVOID / INCORRECTO**

How do you call this in English?

■ **BETTER / CORRECTO**

What do you call this in English?