

Expressing views and opinions

The constitutions of most democratic countries in the world state that citizens have a right to freely express their convictions and opinions. In addition to having that right, and regardless of what any law might say, generally speaking, people feel the need to express what they think about a particular topic. At times they might ask others what they think about it too. In the business world, consultants, that is, professionals who provide expert opinion and advice, sometimes charge big money for their services.

If you are a learner of English, and if you have found yourself in a situation where you were asked some of the following questions, and your every answer started with *I think...*, this document might help you to vary the way in which you express your views and opinions.

What do you think about / of...?

What's your opinion about / on...?

How do you feel about...?

What are your views on...?

Are you opposed to...?

Are you in favour of...?

Are you for or against...?

I'd be interested to know your thoughts on...

There are different ways of expressing opinion. For example, some are more formal than others, or some are more characteristic of written English than of spoken English. Look at the list below to find out what are the most frequently used expressions in the business context.

I think/believe/feel that...

I am of the opinion that...

I take the view that...

I'm beginning to think that...

Personally/Frankly, I think...

In my opinion/experience,...

In my point of view,....

My feeling is that...

My personal view is that...

As far as I'm concerned,...

As far as I understand/can see/see it,...

To my mind,...

According to me,...

As I see it, ...

It seems to me that...

From my point of view,...

The point I'm making is...

If you ask me,...

If you want to stress a point you are making, you can add some adverbs (*really, firmly, strongly, absolutely, sincerely, deeply, personally, honestly*) to the verbs expressing opinion, e.g. *I firmly believe that economic growth cannot be sustained in the future.*

It can happen sometimes that although we are offering an opinion, we have some doubt about it. If we want to let a person know that we are not certain about what we are saying, we might use one of the following opening statements.

Well, I'm not quite sure, but I think...

I'm not entirely certain, however, my feeling is that...

I still have some doubts, but in my experience,...

Although I'm not 100 percent sure, I still believe that...

Well, I don't know, but as far as I understand,...

A Complete the gaps in the following sentences with the missing words. There is more than one solution possible.

1. I'm not entirely _____ that the quality of the product is good.
2. In my _____, taxes in Croatia are quite high.
3. From his point of _____, we should raise taxes on the rich.
4. _____ to me, this is one of our best projects.
5. I _____ that the Government must do something to that effect.
6. As far as I can _____, nothing has changed.
7. If you _____ me, this law should be revised.
8. The _____ I'm making is that there are major discrepancies in these reports.
9. I take the _____ that education should be available to all.
10. It _____ to me that the author of this article might be looking in the wrong direction.

Key: 1. certain/convinced/sure, 2. opinion/view, 3. view, 4. according, 5. think/believe/feel, 6. see/tell, 7. ask, 8. point, 9. view, 10. seems