

BUSINESS ENGLISH

Common False Friends that cause confusion in Business

di Tom Roper



The advertisement features a background image of a network of people connected by lines, with various digital devices like smartphones and laptops. On the left, the Euroconference logo is visible. On the right, the TeamSystem logo is present. The main text reads: "Master di 5 mezze giornate" followed by "L'ORGANIZZAZIONE DIGITALE DELLO STUDIO" in large, bold letters. Below this, there is a blue button with the text "SCOPRI DI PIÙ".

As most people know, English has become the **global** language due to its relatively easy grammatical structure and its prevalence around the world. Whilst it is true that the vocabulary and grammar are slightly less complicated than its Italian counterpart for example, as we have seen in previous articles there are lots of **obstacles** that can sometimes make learning it and using it correctly more **difficult**. One of these obstacles are **False Friends**, words which appear incredibly **similar** to words in the Italian language but unfortunately have a rather **different** meaning. This can lead to **misunderstandings** and confusion between speakers, so let's take a look at some of the more **common** False Friends shared between Italian and English: (Italian in Italics)

Accident = *incidente, infortunio* . *Accidente* = Coincidence, Misfortune

“Did you see that **accident** on the motorway? It blocked the traffic for hours!”

“Oh wow, what a **coincidence**, I live in the same neighbourhood, I will give you a lift”

Argument = *discussione, litigio*. *Argomento* = Subject, Topic, Theme

“Sorry to hear you had an **argument** with your Manager this morning!” . “I would like to provide a counter argument to your point”

“Whats the **subject** of today's meeting?”. “It's an interesting **theme** that is worthy of discussion”

Actually = *in realtà , in effetti* . *Attualmente* = Currently

“Did you finish all the reports already?”, “**Actually** I finished them last week and have already started on the new project”.

“**Currently**, we are on target to hit €3m in Sales”

Caution = *Cautela* . *Cauzione* = Deposit, bail

“Please use **caution** when you speak to him, he is very sensitive” .

“We have to leave a **deposit** before we can rent the car”

Confront = *Affrontare* . *Confrontare* = Compare

“The customer **confronted** the sales rep because he believed he had lied” .

“How do we **compare** our prices with those of our competitors?”

Convenient = *Comodo* . *Conveniente* = Good Value

“Our shop is more **convenient** than the market leader because we are strategically placed in local neighbourhoods”

“I prefer the other brand because it is much **better value** than the competitors’ “

Delusion = *Illusione, Allucinazione* . *Delusione* = Disappointment

“It’s simply not true, it’s a **delusion**, they are not able to meet those requirements” .

“It was a massive **disappointment** when the supplier had to close their factory”

Education = *Istruzione , Insegnamento, Pedagogia* . *Educazione* = Good Manners, Upbringing

“He had a great **education**, attending both Oxford and Yale Universities”

“It’s a matter of **good manners**, you shouldn’t interrupt him when he is speaking”

These are just some of the more confusingly similar false friends we come across and how we can use them in context. If you have encountered any others please get in touch and we will include them in further articles. So to avoid **disappointment**, it’s a question of **good manners** to keep following our articles to help improve your Business English

