

Starting Something New 4

'This is all your fault!'

 Warm up:

- When was the last time you made a mistake (big or small)? Did you learn anything from it?
- How do you usually react when you make mistakes? Do you stay calm or get angry at yourself?
- Have you ever been blamed for something that wasn't your fault? What happened?
- Are you good at apologising? Why do you think so many people have trouble saying sorry?



1. Read the story and answer the questions on the next page.

Tessa and Jason have decided to start their own business together, a cute little bakery truck called 'Bake it Easy.' In the beginning, everything goes very smoothly. Jason and Tessa work well together, and they have even purchased a little truck and built up a small but loyal customer base at some local markets. But then the issues start. At first, it's just a few miscommunications, but it gets worse and worse until eventually Tessa and Jason are driving each other crazy.

For example, at one point Jason got a request to come to a corporate event with enough food for 50-80 people. He sent Tessa a message asking her to prepare enough pastries for "roughly 60 people." Tessa made enough for exactly 60 people, and the customer was pretty upset when there wasn't enough food for everyone. Tessa blames Jason for not being specific in his message, and Jason thinks it's Tessa's fault for not making more, just in case.

Then there was the social media management. A few weeks ago Tessa posted a 'free drink with every purchase over \$10' offer on Facebook, and didn't tell Jason about it. Jason thought the first guy who asked for a free drink was trying to cheat him with a fake Facebook post, and he got mad and yelled at him. Only after another person asked for a free drink did Jason realise it was actually a real post. Jason told Tessa that she should have told him about the offer, but Tessa didn't understand why Jason was so mad about it.

Last week was the worst of all. Tessa arrived early in the morning at the truck, and discovered Jason had left dozens of uncooked pastries in the oven, which obviously had to be thrown away after being left out all night. Tessa is upset at Jason because he left them there, but Jason thinks it's Tessa's fault because she was the last person to leave the truck, and should have checked the ovens.

- a) What miscommunication caused the issue at the corporate event? *Jason said they needed food for roughly 60 people, Tessa made food for exactly 60 people.*
- b) Why did Jason get angry at a customer? *He thought the free deal post was fake.*
- c) Why did Tessa have to throw away dozens of pastries? *Jason left them in oven because he thought Tessa would put them away.*
- d) Whose fault do you think each of these 3 situations is?

Fault vs Blame vs Mistake

When talking about mistakes, we often talk about *who* is responsible for the mistake. 'Fault' is a noun used to describe responsibility for a mistake, and the fault for a mistake 'belongs' to someone. It is often used with possessive pronouns such as 'my', 'your', 'his', etc.

E.g. *"You should have woken me up earlier, now I'm going to miss my flight! This is your fault!"*

'Mistake' can be similar to 'fault', but it focuses more on the accident than the responsibility. 'Mistake' is often used with the verb 'make.'

E.g. *"I made a mistake and forgot to book our hotel."*

Blame is usually a verb. It is the action of saying something is someone's fault.

E.g. *"Don't blame me for missing your flight, you should have set an alarm!"*



2. Complete the sentences below with either 'fault', 'blame', or 'mistake.' With 'blame' you may have to change the form of the verb (e.g. blamed, blames, blaming).

- a) She made a small *mistake* in her report, but it was easy enough to fix.
- b) She always *blames* everyone else for her problems, but never looks at her own behaviour.
- c) The company tried to *blame* the shipping service for the delay.
- d) You were speeding at the time of the accident, so it's definitely your *fault*.
- e) I know I'm late but it's not my *fault* that the train was cancelled!
- f) A lot of people *blame* politicians for the state of the world at the moment.
- g) Honestly, this was our *fault*, we need to do better next time.
- h) Everyone makes *mistakes*, the important thing is that you learn from them.
- i) My 5-year-old daughter tried to *blame* our dog for drawing on the wall.



'Should have' for past mistakes

One of the most common ways of talking about mistakes in the past is 'should have' + (past participle).

E.g. "*I should have worn a jacket today, I'm freezing!*"

The negative structure is 'should not have' + (past participle).

E.g. "*I should not have eaten so much, my stomach hurts.*"

'Should have' is often shortened to 'should've', and 'should not have' is often shortened to 'shouldn't have.'

E.g. "*I should've told you, but I was afraid you'd be angry.*"

Note: When people are speaking quickly, 'should've' can sound like 'shoulda'

E.g. "*We shoulda left hours ago, we're going to be so late.*"



3. Complete the sentences below with 'should have' and the past participle of any verb that makes sense in the context.

- a) She failed the exam because she didn't study enough. She *should have studied* more.
- b) We got lost on the hike. We *should have packed/taken* a map before leaving.
- c) I hurt my back trying to lift my fridge alone. I *should have asked* for help.
- d) I'm so tired today, I *should have gone* to bed earlier last night.
- e) Eventually, we realised that we *should have bought* a bigger car, because we have 3 kids.
- f) You *should have told* me that you have a cat before inviting me to your house, I'm allergic!
- g) David forgot about an important meeting, he *should have put /written* it in his calendar.
- h) Our website didn't look good for the first few years, we *should have hired/gotten* a professional designer.
- i) The bakery had to throw out a lot of ingredients because they expired, *they should have organised/managed* their stock better.



4. Read through the situations below and write texts saying whose fault each situation is, and what they should have done. Try to use the language you have learned so far.

a) A small cake delivery company starts offering same-day delivery for local customers. Mia, the owner, asks her employee Daniel to update the website with the new delivery policy. Mia told Daniel that the new policy only applies to orders placed before 2pm, because after 2pm they will not have enough time to deliver them on the same day.

Daniel updates the delivery policy on their website but forgets to include the 2pm cut off time. A customer makes a large order after 2pm for a birthday cake, and is very upset when it doesn't arrive the same day. Daniel thinks the issue is Mia's fault, because she didn't check the website after he updated it, and Mia blames Daniel because he did not include the information.

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b) A group of friends planned a camping trip together, and everyone thought someone else was bringing the tent. Jake remembered discussing it in the group chat, but nobody clearly agreed who would actually pack it. Eventually, they arrived at the campsite late at night and realised nobody brought the tent, and they had no shelter. Everyone was upset and started blaming each other. Jake thinks Emma should have checked before leaving because she organised the trip, but Emma argues that Jake obviously should have brought the tent because it belonged to him.

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c) A group of roommates bought a dog together, and everyone agreed to keep the front gate locked because sometimes the dog tried to run away. One evening, Ethan noticed the gate was open after Olivia carried groceries inside, but he thought she would close it herself. Olivia thought Ethan was behind her and would lock it. Eventually, the dog escaped and now they can't find it anywhere! The roommates start blaming each other immediately. Olivia says that Ethan should have closed the gate when he saw it open, but Ethan says it was obviously Olivia's responsibility because she opened it in the first place.

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d) A small coffee shop recently started using a new online ordering system. Apparently, the manager asked one employee to turn off orders at 4pm because the kitchen closes early on Sundays. However, the employee thought she meant to stop accepting delivery orders only, not pickup orders. Eventually, several customers arrived after 4pm expecting food, but the kitchen had already been cleaned and closed. The customers were upset, and the manager blamed the employee for misunderstanding the instructions. The employee argued that the manager should have explained the situation more clearly.

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e) A tattoo artist was working on a customer who wanted a large Japanese-style dragon tattoo on his back. The customer said he wanted the dragon to look "really cool." The artist and the customer had very different ideas about what that meant, but neither of them realised it during the consultation.


Halfway through the session, the customer looked in the mirror and became really upset because the dragon looked much scarier than he expected. The artist argued that the customer had approved the sketch earlier and even said it looked "awesome." However, the customer claimed the sketch was much smaller on paper, and the artist obviously should have explained how intense it would look at full size with shading and colour.


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 5. With a partner discuss what you agree and disagree on for each scenario.

 **6. Listen to Jason and Tessa and answer the questions.**

- a) Why does Jason like it when they take their food truck to the flea market? *There are interesting people*
- b) Why is Jason not happy with what happened at the last flea market, and why does Tessa think it's not her fault? *They sold all of their pastries. Jason thinks this means they should have made more. Tessa thinks it's not her fault because Jason only asked for more the night before the flea market.*
- c) Why did Jason have to wake up at 3am? *To bake 3000 bread rolls.*
- d) Why does Jason think the bread roll problem is Tessa's fault? *She wrote '3000' in her message*
- e) Why does Tessa think the bread roll problem is Jason's fault? *Because 3000 is obviously a mistake, it's almost 10 times what they sold on their best day. She thinks Jason should have checked first.*
- f) What is Jason's suggestion, and why doesn't Tessa like it? *He thinks they should offer to sell the bread rolls to a bakery. Tessa thinks a bakery will already have their own bread rolls, and won't want to buy some from a random truck.*
- g) What is Tessa's suggestion? Do you think it's a good one? *To offer a free bread roll with every purchase.*
- h) Who do you blame for the bread roll problem, and what do you think they should have done?



Audio Transcript

Tessa: Good morning Jason, big day today, are you ready for the flea market?

Jason: Absolutely, I love selling at flea markets, there are always some really interesting people there.

Tessa: And lots of customers! Last time we went to a fleamarket we sold everything we had before lunch time.

Jason: True... but to be honest that just means we should have made more.

Tessa: What do you mean?

Jason: Well, I told you the flea market would be a really big day for us, and I told you that we should make more pastries, but you made the same amount of pastries that we normally do. We could have made a lot more money if you'd listened to me.

Tessa: What? Don't blame me, you only told me that we would need more the night before the flea market. If you wanted more pastries, you should have told me earlier.

Jason: Whatever. At least we're ready for a big day this time.

Tessa: Yeah, today is going to be huge! Did you bake all the pastries I put on the list?

Jason: Yep I did, I made 60 strawberry cakes, 80 apple slices, 50 chocolate puddings, and 3000 bread rolls.

Tessa: Excellent, we'd better get moving if we want to get there on time Wait, did you say 3000 bread rolls?

Jason: Yep I did. Do you think we'll sell them all?

Tessa: Jason please tell me you didn't make 3000 bread rolls.

Jason: I mean... yeah I did. It took me hours, I had to wake up at 3am to do it.

Tessa: Oh my god I can't believe this. Jason I only asked you to make 300 bread rolls.

Jason: No... you... look check the text message you sent me, you said 3000!

Tessa: There's no way, let me check (pause to look at phone)... oh. Ok... I did say 3000, but Jason that is obviously a mistake! You should have checked with me first before making 3000 bread rolls!

Jason: I'm sorry but this is not my fault, if you say we need 3000, I'm making 3000!

Tessa: Jason use your head! The most we've ever sold in a day was 400, so why would I ask you to make 3000! That's almost 10 times our best day!

Jason: Still not my fault! You should have checked your message before sending it to me, 3000 means 3000!

Tessa: Oh come on, are you really blaming me? Did you actually think we would sell 3000 rolls today, Jason?

Jason: I mean... maybe I should have checked with you.

Tessa: (Sigh). Ok, let's not argue about whose fault it is. We now have about 2000 bread rolls that we almost certainly can't sell. What are we going to do?

Jason: I don't know. Are you hungry? I could eat 1000 at least.

Tessa: Oh ha ha Jason, now is really not the time for jokes.

Jason: Sorry. I have an idea. Why don't we go to another bakery and ask if they want to buy some bread rolls from us?

Tessa: What? Come on Jason, no bakery is going to just buy food from a random food truck. They all have their food delivered or made every morning, so they already have enough. Don't be stupid.

Jason: Don't call me stupid Tessa, it was just a suggestion!

Tessa: Ok ok, I'm sorry, I should not have called you stupid.... Ok wait, I have an idea. Why don't we make a big sign saying that it's our opening day, and that every customer gets a free bread roll every time they buy something.

Jason: That... that might actually work. We'd still lost money on the bread rolls.

Tessa: Yes, but we'd get a lot of new customers.

Jason: Ok, that's a good idea. Why don't you drive, I'll make the sign.