

CATCH UP

Catch up and act on a busy thread

You're 40 messages behind. Can you get from noise to action?

You've just been added to a busy thread. Rather than reading every message, use Copilot to work out what has happened and what needs attention.

1 Try it your way

Use a real conversation if you can. See what you naturally ask Copilot.

[Try in Copilot →](#)

2 Need a cue?

Start with the outcome you need:

[Decisions](#)

[Open questions](#)

[Actions](#)

3 Still stuck? Reveal a sample prompt

Have a go first — the sample prompt is on the next page when you want it.

[Reveal sample prompt ↓](#)

4 Did you get something useful?

- ☐ I understand what was decided
- ☐ I can see what remains unresolved
- ☐ Next actions are clear
- ☐ Copilot distinguishes facts from what still needs clarification

5 Take it one step further

Ask Copilot: "What information might I still need before I can act on this?"

Need a little help?



[Watch a quick video](#)
(3 mins)



[See a worked example](#)



[Take the learning path on ASN](#)

🏆 Top tips

- ✓ Use your own work if you can.
- ✓ Be specific about the output you need.
- ✓ Iterate — your first prompt doesn't have to be perfect.
- ✓ Check the result — would you actually use it?

Your notes — what worked, what you'd change

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Sample prompt

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“ Catch me up on this conversation. Separate confirmed decisions, open questions and actions. For each action, identify the owner only where one is clearly stated.

Select the text above and copy it into Copilot.

Why this works

- ✓ It names the three outputs you need, so Copilot structures the answer.
- ✓ It asks for owners only where stated, so nothing is invented.
- ✓ It separates fact from open question — the step people usually skip.

[Try it in Copilot →](#)[← Back to the challenge](#)

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Worked example

Illustrative example — names and details are fictional

The situation

You've been added to a 40-message project thread about moving the Contoso Q3 launch date. Product, marketing and the vendor team have all weighed in over three days, and you need to know where things stand before tomorrow's stand-up.

What Copilot returned



Here's a summary of the thread about the Contoso Q3 launch date.

DECISIONS

- The Contoso Q3 launch moves from 4 September to 18 September.
- The launch event stays virtual; the in-person showcase is dropped for Q3.

OPEN QUESTIONS

- Can the vendor still deliver final packaging artwork in time for the new date?
- Does the revised date clash with the partner newsletter? Not yet confirmed.

ACTIONS

- Priya to confirm vendor dates by Friday.
- Marcus to update the launch checklist with the new milestones.
- Send revised timeline to leadership — owner not stated.

What to check

- ✓ Decisions vs. open questions: are the two confirmed decisions really agreed in the thread, or just suggested? Open the source messages to check.
- ✓ Owners: Copilot only named Priya and Marcus because the thread says so — and it flags the leadership update as unowned rather than guessing.
- ✓ Next actions: could you act on this list at tomorrow's stand-up? If not, ask a follow-up.

[← Back to the challenge](#)