



A modifier changes the meaning of a word by describing it. A modifier can be a single word, like an adjective. In the sentence below, the adjective American is modifying the noun delegation.

e.g. The American delegation left the conference early.

Modifiers can also be groups of words known as modifying phrases. Modifying phrases often start with verbs that end in -ing or -ed.

e.g. Having signed an immunity agreement, Luc Leclerc testified at the inquest that he had accepted more than a half of a million dollars in bribes.

e.g. Astonished by the news, journalists rushed to the courthouse to cover the story.

As these examples show, the word being described by the modifying phrase must also be the person or thing that performs the action in the rest of the sentence. In the first example, Luc Leclerc both signed the immunity agreement and testified at the inquest. In the second example, the journalists were both astonished and rushed to the courthouse.

If it is not clear what the modifier is modifying, it is not a modifier.