



Writing an e-mail on your progress

The Language Partnership

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Part 1: Key expressions: Sending an e-mail on progress (semi-formal)

Possible scenarios: You need to report to your line manager each week, month etc. You need to produce a review of performance over the last quarter. You need to participate in your annual performance review.

Key expressions:

- ✓ **Start:** Please find a summary of my/our performance against our targets, objectives, KPIs in preparation for our meeting on...
- ✓ **Start:** Please find an update on/overview of progress.
- ✓ **Start:** Please find a review of the last month, quarter, 12 months etc.
- ✓ **Main:** I would like to highlight/to focus on/to draw attention to
- ✓ **Main:** Overall, on average, the overall trend is, the underlying trend is...
- ✓ **Main:** I believe the reason for this, I would suggest this is caused by, this can be explained by..
- ✓ **Main:** We have successfully achieved/delivered against/met our targets.
- ✓ **Main:** We had a number of issues that prevented us achieving.....
- ✓ **Main:** It has been a successful, positive, productive, challenging, demanding, month/quarter year etc.
- ✓ **Finish:** If you have any questions do get back in contact.
- ✓ **Finish:** I look forward to talking this through.

Part 2: Your grammar checklist in writing a progress e-mail.

Grammar checklist:

- ✓ **Past simple** – trends/changes in the past. **Example:** Profits soared last month.
- ✓ **Present perfect** – trends/changes that started in the past and continue to now. **Example:** Profits have declined since January 2017/over the ***last 2 months**.
- ✓ **Present perfect continuous** – trends/changes that started in the past and continue to now. To give emphasis that this trend is dynamic and set to continue.
Example: Profits have been rising since January 2017.
- ✓ **Present continuous** – trends/changes that are happening right now. **Example:** Profits are recovering right now.
- ✓ **Going to** – evidence based prediction about future performance.
Example: Based on our analysis profits are going to stabilise in Q2 2017.
- ✓ **Will** – instincts informing a prediction about future performance.
Example: I have a feeling profits will rocket in 2017.

Be careful with 'last'. It is mainly used as a past time reference but can also be used in some expressions to connect the past to now.

Part 3: Your vocabulary reference: Verbs of change for a progress e-mail.

Key verb	Similar verb
Decrease	decline, fall, contract
Increase	improve, rise, gain, climb
Decrease (dramatic)	drop, plummet, slump, halve (x2), bomb, collapse
Increase (dramatic)	double (x2), surge, rocket, soar, jump, snowball, triple (x 3)
Fluctuate	vary, oscillate, yo-yo
Recover	pick up, bounce back, revive, turn around
Reach a low	bottom out
Peak	reach a high
Stabilise (contextual)	stagnate (contextual), flatten out, level off,
Be at	stand at

When describing trends you can use a range of terms such as adverbs that moderate the verb; slightly, gradually, dramatically, significantly, substantially, etc.....

Example: Profits have increased dramatically.

You can also use these terms as adjectives that modify the noun form.

Example: There has been a dramatic increase in sales.

Part 4: Writing a progress e-mail – An example.

Dear Laurent

Please find a short summary on the team's progress in preparation for our meeting next Monday. It has been a good quarter. Overall, sales have continued to rise steadily in Q1. They peaked in the first week of February and since that point have fluctuated slightly.

The number of complaints has been declining which is great news. Complaint levels reached a 12 month low in January 2017. As things stand all our complaints have been actioned and we currently have three open cases.

The number of general enquires has really plummeted in Q1 which I believe is evidence that our new Frequently Asked Questions are working effectively.

We are on track with the roll out of our new customer management system. The project team has been working hard to complete the data migration and I am confident we are going to meet the 2nd April 2017 deadlines. The team morale is good and I am pleased to say we have resolved the disagreement between Jim and Donny. They are working well together now.

If you have any questions on this, do let me know. I look forward to our meeting next week Monday.

Best regards

Toby