

TLP Five-Minute Read Over Coffee – Giving a progress update with clarity

I do a lot of work helping clients feel more confident in giving precise updates on progress. Please see an example progress email below and some working principles in support of that. Any questions do contact me - toby@tlp.lu.

Hi Zack

I wanted to give you an update on my progress over the last couple of weeks. Please find enclosed the Sales Report - 20 May 2022. There have been lots of positives. We have started new contracts with five of our existing client base. It feels great to work with LuxX again as it went quiet with them for a couple of years. We should hit our sales target for May 2022. I think that is a great achievement given the uncertain context we all face.

Winning new business remains a challenge. We have not had the response we wanted to our new releases. I believe the market is more cautious right now about changing suppliers and trying new approaches. Given this I think our priority has to be delivering excellence to our current clients. I remain reasonably optimistic that we can achieve our year end target (assuming the current crisis does not further escalate).

If you have any questions on any of the above do let me know.

Best wishes

Toby

→ Some points about the above:

- 1) I assume Zack is my manager and I have a good relationship with him. In this context I would feel comfortable with 'Hi'.
- 2) I don't use the full 'email sandwich' using an expression like 'I hope this email finds you well' as I think this is not needed with my manager. However - I still give some context at the start.
- 3) I start with the positives and then highlight the challenges but try and do this in a real and authentic way.
- 4) I use 'feeling based' verbs to express my convictions. 'I feel', 'I think', 'I believe'. This allows me to clearly express my view without coming across as

aggressive.

5) I use 'we' or 'our' a lot because I want to highlight a sense of a common objective.

6) I highlight the impact of wider market conditions but not in a way that sounds like I am making excuses.

7) I state optimism but clearly qualify this based on events I can not control.

8) I use some bread (reference email sandwich) at the end of the email - 'If you have any questions...' I feel this makes my style more open and responsive.

9) I use quite a streamlined date convention - 20 May 2022 as I think this is still professional - although the classic the 20th May 2022 is also good.

10) I use 'Best wishes' to highlight I want to stay professional but communicate warmth at the same time.
