Business Writing
Intermediate

Session 7: Giving Status Updates
In this session, you will:

- Understand what goes into a status update.
- Practice using the present progressive to talk about what you are working on now.
Let’s Get Started
Intermediate

Listen to Emma and Leo talk about something that their boss, Dave, has asked them to do. What does Dave want? The coach and the learner can role play Emma and Leo and read aloud the conversation.

Emma: Did you get Dave’s email, about this week’s meeting being canceled?
Leo: Yeah, and I was just thinking about those status updates he asked us for. I’m not sure what he wants, exactly.
Emma: *(in a reassuring voice)* He just wants an email from everyone to fill him in on how our projects are going. What we’ve already done, what we’re working on now, and what we’re going to do next. Plus any problems we’re having. You know. The same kind of thing we tell him in meetings.
Leo: But now that I’m putting it in **writing**, doesn’t it have to be more . . . formal?
Emma: Nah, he doesn’t expect formality in emails, not when we’re writing only to **him**.
Leo: Okay. And another thing: The updates I give in meetings, they’re always really brief. Shouldn’t this be longer?
Emma: You know Dave! He likes his emails short and sweet. So I’d keep it that way. It’s just an email, after all. He didn’t ask us to write a full **progress report**. This is just an update.
Leo: Okay, short and sweet it is! That shouldn’t be hard, actually. Everything has gone really well so far, and we’re ahead of schedule.
Emma: Dave will be happy to hear that!
Let’s Discuss

The followings statements are based on Emma and Leo’s conversation that you just heard. Say whether they are ‘True’ or ‘False’.

1. Leo and Emma both need to write emails to Dave.
2. Emma isn’t sure what she should write.
3. Leo and Emma usually give Dave news about their projects during meetings.
4. Emma advises Leo to make this email more formal than usual.
5. Leo plans to write a long, detailed report on how his project is going.
6. Leo’s team is having problems, so his project is behind schedule.
At work, you may need to keep other people—your supervisor, for example—informed about projects you are working on. Sometimes that may mean writing a formal progress report. But it’s common to use email to give brief updates. An email status update is short and may be informal.

Sections of a Status Update Email

• What you have done
• What you are doing
• What you are going to do
• Any problems
In this session, we will practice language to let your colleagues know what you are currently working on. Use the present progressive to describe actions that are happening now.

Rules for the Present Progressive

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<th>Rules for the Present Progressive</th>
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| Present progressive verbs have two parts. Use *am, is, or are + the -ing* form of the main verb. | *I am reading an email.*  
*I am reading an email.*  
*Is your team making progress?*

*Who are you talking to?*
| To make the verb negative, add *not* before the main verb. | *We are not working together.*
| Use the present progressive for actions happening now. | *At the moment, we are collecting data.*
| Use present progressive with time expressions like *now, at present, this week.* | *This week, I am working on a presentation for the annual sales meeting.*
Let’s Practice

Intermediate

Complete each sentence (from a status update email) with the present progressive form of the verb.

1. The IT department ________ (hold) a training for all staff at the moment.
2. Ryan ________ (prepare) the proposal right now.
3. I ________ (email) the presenter with some follow-up questions.
4. Our team ________ (make) good progress.
5. I ________ (hurry) to finish my presentation.
6. Very little ________ (happen) on that project this week.
7. We ________ (write) the last chapter of the report at the moment.
8. The marketing team ________ (work) on the new messaging campaign right now.
Give your coach a quick status update on 1-2 things that you are working on right now (today/this week/this month). Use the **present progressive** form of the verb to show that your work is happening now.