

How to write a status report in 8 steps

So, how do you go about doing project status reports? Be sure to create a clear structure you can use consistently for all future status reports. You should also make sure it matches with your [project brief](#) to keep your report on topic.

Follow this guide to understand what to include in your project status report, and watch as we put each step into practice with an example of an Employee Satisfaction project.

Step 1: Build your report where work lives

Before you build your report, make sure you're already tracking your work information in a project management tool. That way, you don't have to manually grab information from a host of sources—instead, you can reduce manual work and create a report with a few clicks.

Starting off with a project management tool makes it easy to capture dependencies and note upcoming tasks so you're never blindsided about your project health.

Step 2: Name your report

A great option is to simply use the project name for clarity. If you're reporting on this project regularly, you should also include a date or timestamp.

Example project report title: February 2020 - Employee satisfaction initiative

Step 3: Indicate project health

The project health is the current status of the project. Project health may change from report to report, especially if you run into blockers or unblock big project risks. Look for a [project management tool](#) that allows you to communicate the project's status and whether or not it's on track. One way to do this is to use a color coding system (green = on track, yellow = at risk, red = off track).

Example project health update: Project status is on track.

Step 4: Quickly summarize the status report

Your project status report summary should be brief—about 2-3 sentences. The goal here is to give readers who may not have time to read the entire report a quick TL;DR of the most important facts.

This is the first section of your report, so it's the best place to:

- Include highlights
- Flag major blockers
- Note unexpected project risks

Example status report summary: Our survey results are in and being reviewed. At first glance, we're seeing 80% employee satisfaction, up 3 points from the last survey. The Engagement Committee is working with the Executive team on what new engagement initiatives to implement in our key target areas, which include career growth and transparency.

Step 5: Add a high-level overview of each key area

Depending on your project, your key areas may vary from report to report, or they may stay consistent. For example, in an Agile project that's continuously improving, you'd likely use dynamic key areas that cover the things your team worked on during the last sprint. Alternatively, for an event planning project, there are a set number of key areas that you always want to touch on, like promotion, signups, and speakers.

For each key area in the status report, add a few bullet points that give an update on progress, accomplishments, and upcoming work.

Example high-level overview of a key area: Survey results

- 70% of employees took the satisfaction survey.
- Our overall satisfaction rating is 80%.
- Only 57% of employees report having a clear path towards career advancement, down 5% since the last survey.
- 41% of employees listed transparency as the number one improvement they'd like to see.

Step 6: Add links to other documents or resources

While you shouldn't include every little detail about how your project is going, some people will want to know more. For stakeholders who are looking for more in-depth information, provide links to documents or resources. This can include more specific project information, like links to specific project milestones, or the broader impacts of the project, like a reference to the business goals the project is contributing to.

Example: Include a link to the employee satisfaction survey, as well as to the larger company OKR around increasing employee engagement over the course of the fiscal year.

Step 7: Flag any blockers the project has run into

All projects run into roadblocks. These can come in the form of project risks, unexpected increases to the budget, or delays that impact the project timeline. Keeping stakeholders in the loop when issues arise will help everyone adjust accordingly to stay on track.

Example roadblock: The executive team wants to look at results before the engagement committee meets again, but won't be able to do so for another three weeks. This will delay our overall project timeline.

Step 8: Highlight next steps

These could include a list of next steps, kudos you want to give someone, or anything else you want to highlight.

Example: Thank you Sarah A. for sending out multiple communications to employees encouraging them to participate in the survey!