



3

Projects

Starting point

- 1 What makes a project successful?
- 2 Do you prefer to lead a project or be part of the team? Why?
- 3 Do you like being involved in long-term projects? Why/Why not?

Working with words | Projects

- 1 How can a business help a charity? What are the benefits for the company and its employees?
- 2 Read the article and decide if sentences 1–4 are true (T) or false (F).
 - 1 The idea of volunteerism is increasingly popular in business.
 - 2 Employees at Timberland have to do some voluntary work.
 - 3 Companies like Timberland and Credit Suisse also benefit from the projects.
 - 4 Samira uses the same skills in the volunteer project as in her usual job.

A COMMITMENT TO VOLUNTEERISM

For many employees, work rarely involves helping local communities in the rainforests of the Amazon or teaching children in schools with little or no access to modern technology. However, these examples of volunteer projects are becoming more and more common in the business world, and many companies now offer their employees the opportunity to take part in volunteer programmes.

Timberland is one such company with a commitment to volunteerism. The global clothing manufacturer encourages staff to spend up to 40 paid hours a year on community and social projects. The community benefits from the company's resources, and staff gain new skills and teamwork improves.

Another example is the financial services firm Credit Suisse. It sends employees overseas to help educational and microfinance projects in developing countries. These projects can last for up to three months. The two objectives are to offer expertise to regions of the world that lack access to highly-qualified professionals and for the employees to develop new transferable skills.

Samira Khan is one employee who took advantage of her company's volunteer scheme. Samira normally spends her days behind a desk as a software engineer but currently she's also managing a volunteer project to redecorate a community centre for the elderly in Chicago. Managing a project like this means that Samira is learning new skills such as organizing the schedule so that they complete each milestone by its deadline. She also has to control a limited budget, and every few days she gets updates from her project team to check on their progress. She finds working on this project very rewarding and is pleased to be learning new skills.



- 3** Does your company or its staff ever take part in volunteer projects?
- If you answer 'yes', describe one of the projects.
 - If you answer 'no', what kind of volunteer project do you think it could offer?
- 4** Replace the words in *italics* with a word in bold from the text in 2.
- 1 Can you email the *plan of all the work you have to do and the key dates*? **schedule**
 - 2 We only have a limited *amount of money available for the project*. _____
 - 3 The main problem is that no one knows what anyone else is doing. We need a *situation where everyone works together for this project to succeed*. _____
 - 4 Could you send me regular *reports with the most recent information* about our progress? _____
 - 5 We have to finish the project by a *certain point in time*. _____
 - 6 This project has three main *things we are trying to achieve*. _____
 - 7 I really feel we are making progress now because today we completed a *very important stage* in the project. _____
 - 8 The reason we're behind schedule is because I don't have all the *supplies and human expertise* that I requested at the beginning. _____
- 5** ▶ **3.1** Samira is telling someone about the volunteer project that she is working on. Listen to these extracts from the conversation and answer the questions.

- 1 Which items in 4 does she talk about?
- 2 What does she say about each one?

- 6** ▶ **3.1** Listen again and complete the phrases that Samira uses in column A.

A	B
1 _____ the deadline	= finish on time
2 fall _____ schedule	= make slow progress
3 catch _____	= make up lost time
4 be back _____ track	= return to the original schedule
5 finish _____ schedule	= finish before the planned date
6 _____ resources	= make use of people, money and time
7 stay _____ budget	= spend the right amount of money
8 _____ tasks	= give people different responsibilities
9 get _____ with a task	= do a job
10 _____ updates	= receive reports on progress

- 7** Work with a partner. Take turns to cover the phrases in column A while your partner tests you using the definitions in column B.

Example: A How can you say 'finish on time'?
 B 'Meet the deadline'?
 A Yes.

» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 3** on page 110.

- 8** Work with a partner. Read the comments describing a problem in four current projects. Say what the problem is and what the project manager needs to do, using phrases from 6.

Example: The project is falling behind schedule, so the project manager needs to make sure we catch up again so we can meet the deadlines.

- 1 'We didn't expect so many delays.'
- 2 'We're currently spending 50% more than we planned.'
- 3 'I'm working late every night. I can't do everything on this project.'
- 4 'No one knows what each other is doing. There's no communication!'

- 9** Think of a project you, your department or company are currently working on. Make notes on the following and then tell your partner about the project.

- The objectives of the project
- The project team and the resources needed
- The budget
- The deadlines and milestones in the schedule
- Any problems and possible solutions



Tip | in time / on time

In time means having enough time to be able to do something:

If we leave now, we'll be there in time for the meeting.

On time means at the correct time:

I have to be at work at 9 a.m. and I always arrive on time. I'm never late, but I don't like to be early either.

Language at work | Present perfect and past simple

- 1 Look at this chart for a project. What kind of information does it give about the project? Does your company use similar charts for managing projects?

Office relocation

STAGE	DATE								
	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4	WEEK 5	WEEK 6	WEEK 7	WEEK 8	WEEK 9
	11-17	18-24	25-31	1-7	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-5	6-12
1 Confirm equipment requirements									
2 Equipment costings									
3 Place order with office supplier									
4 Send plans to depts for review									
5 Collate feedback and finalize plans									
6 Packing and delivery									
7 Unpacking									
8 New equipment arrives									
9 Install									

- 2 ► 3.2 A company is relocating its office from an old building to some modern premises. Listen to a meeting between Judith (the project manager) and somebody on the team (Dawud). Use the chart in 1 to help you answer questions 1-3.

- 1 What is the purpose of the meeting?
- 2 Which stages on the chart are completed?
- 3 Which week is it on the chart?

- 3 ► 3.2 Listen again. Underline the verbs in *italics* that you hear.

- 1 I *agreed* / 've *agreed* the approximate equipment costings with finance.
- 2 *Did* you *place* / *Have* you *placed* the order for the equipment yesterday?
- 3 *Did* anyone *give* / *Has* anyone *given* their feedback?
- 4 Everyone *replied* / *has* *replied* before the deadline.

- 4 Answer the questions in the *Language point*.

LANGUAGE POINT

Do your answers in 3 use the past simple or present perfect? Match each sentence in 3 with explanations a or b.

- a We use the present perfect to talk or ask about an action in the past where the time is not specified: _____, _____
- b We use the past simple to talk or ask about an action in the past where the time is specified: _____, _____

Look at three more sentences from the meeting with the present perfect tense. Complete explanations 1-3 with the adverbs in **bold**.

*Some departments **haven't** sent their requirements **yet**.*

*I've **already** received everyone's feedback.*

*I've **just** emailed them another reminder.*

- 1 We use _____ to show the action happened in the very recent past.
- 2 We use _____ in negative sentences and questions to talk about something that hasn't happened but you expect it will happen.
- 3 We use _____ to emphasize the action happened sooner than expected.

Tip | The present perfect and past simple

In conversation, we often ask a question using the present perfect and then answer with extra information using the past simple:

Has everyone **sent** their feedback?

Yes, they **have**. And overall they **were** very positive.

» For more information, go to **Grammar reference** on page 111.



- 5 ▶ 3.3** Look at the chart in **1** again and read a later phone conversation between Judith and Dawud. Write the verbs in brackets in the past simple or present perfect and choose the correct adverb in *italics*. Then listen and check your answers.

Dawud Hello?

Judith Hi, Dawud. Just calling to see how things are going. ¹ _____ the new equipment _____ (arrive) ² *just / yet*?

Dawud No, it hasn't, but I've ³ *just / yet* called the supplier and the truck ⁴ _____ (leave) the warehouse this morning. It'll be here around four o'clock.

Judith ⁵ _____ they _____ (deliver) everything else on schedule?

Dawud Yes, they did. We ⁶ _____ (unpack) most of the boxes ⁷ *already / just*.

» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 3** on page 111.

- 6** Work with a partner. Ask and answer questions about this schedule for an office relocation project. Use the past simple, present perfect and adverbs (*already, just, yet*) in your questions and answers.

Example: A Have you ordered the headed stationery?

B Yes, I have. I sent it yesterday. (OR) Yes, I've already sent it.

Task	Done?	Additional information
Order headed stationery	✓	Sent order yesterday
Order new furniture	✓	Furniture has arrived
Send new address cards to clients	✓	Sent this morning
Issue staff with new badges	✗	To do

- 7** Work with a partner. Talk about a project or task you are working on and say what you have or haven't done.

Practically speaking | How to give short answers

- 1** Match the questions to the short answers.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1 Are you back on track again? | a Yes, I did. |
| 2 Did you email me the schedule? | b Yes, OK. |
| 3 Have you returned your feedback? | c No, not yet. |
| 4 Can we meet for an update? | d Yes, I am. |

- 2 ▶ 3.4** Add these sentences after the short answers in **1**. Then listen to the four conversations and check your answers.

- In fact, the whole project is ahead of schedule now.
- Sorry, but I've been really busy this week.
- I'll come to your office right now.
- I sent it two minutes ago.

- 3** Match each sentence in **2** to its purpose a–d.

- To promise action. ____
- To describe the action you took. ____
- To give an update. ____
- To give a reason. ____

- 4** Write three questions for your partner which require 'yes' or 'no' answers. Then take turns to ask and answer your questions. Use short answers with more information (to promise action, give a reason, etc.).

Example: A Have you done your Business English homework?

B No, not yet. I'll do it tonight.

Tip | Short answers to yes/no questions

We don't normally just answer a question with 'yes' or 'no'.

We normally make short answers by using auxiliary verbs or expressions:

Have you placed the order yet?

Yes, I have. / No, I haven't yet. / Not yet.

Did they deliver the order?

Yes, they did. / No, they didn't.

In addition, we often add further information:

No, I haven't yet. I've been really busy.

Yes, they did. The order came last week.

Business communication | Updating and delegating tasks

- 1 How often do you have meetings with people in your department or team?
How important is it to receive regular updates on everyone else's work?
- 2 ▶ 3.5 Ramon is leading his department meeting. Listen to part of the meeting and complete his notes on the discussion.

New note

Done

Opening new branch

Recruitment

- Update:¹ *They have recruited frontline staff but they need to interview for the post of manager.*
- When:² _____
- Problem: Sue needs ³ _____
- Action: Eloise will ⁴ _____

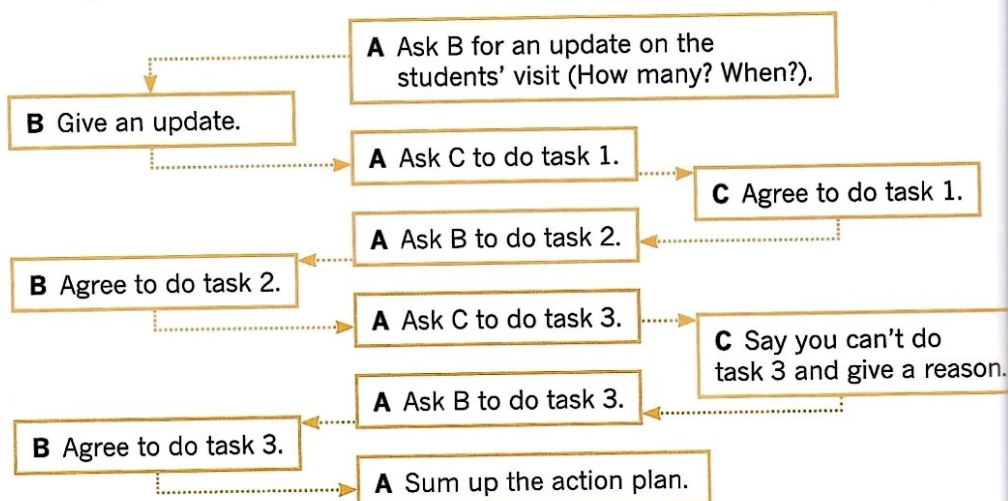
Induction training

- Update:⁵ *Xavier scheduled induction training for new frontline staff.*
- When:⁶ _____
- Problem:⁷ _____
- Action:⁸ _____

- 3 ▶ 3.5 Look at these expressions from the meeting. Listen again and number the expressions 1–12 in the order you hear them.

- 1 Can you update me on that?
- ___ Sorry, but I've never run induction training before.
- ___ Eloise is going to interview with Sue.
- ___ Is that something you can help with?
- ___ Let's check we all know what we're doing.
- ___ What's happening with that?
- ___ Can anyone else help you?
- 12 Let's meet again in three weeks' time.
- ___ I'd like you to help if possible.
- ___ Would you like to help with that?
- ___ Yes, no problem.
- ___ I'd do it, but I'm away as well that week.

- 4 Work in groups of three. Ten business students are visiting your company on the 23rd. You need to book a room for the talk (task 1), get name badges (task 2), organize refreshments (task 3). Have a short meeting using the flow chart.



- 5 Work with a partner. Ask for and give updates about two projects. Student A, turn to page 137. Student B, turn to page 142.

Key expressions

Asking for an update

Can you update me on ...?
What's the progress on ...?
How's everything going?
What's happening with ...?
Where are we with ...?

Giving an update

We've done/finished/
completed ...
So far, so good.
Everything's on track.
We're currently (verb + -ing ...)

Delegating

Is that something you can help with?
Can anyone else help you?
Would you like to help with that?
I'd like you to help ...
Yes, no problem. / I'll do it.
Sorry, but ... / I'd do it, but ... /
I'm afraid I can't do it.

Summing up the action plan

So, let's check we all know what we're doing ...
You're going to ... and I'm going to ...
Let's meet again in two weeks to review the situation/progress.