Progress Reporting
~ By Duncan Haughey

Progress reporting is an essential activity of project management. The project manager issues regular reports on progress against budget, schedule and scope. Include these people on your circulation list:

- Project Sponsor
- Budget Holder
- Senior Users
- Team Members

Keep the report brief and sum up the key points in your project. I recommend this simple format on a maximum of two pages:

1. Report Date
2. Overall Status
3. Project Summary
4. Key Issues
5. Identified Risks
6. Tasks and Next Steps
7. Decisions Needed
8. Key Future Dates
9. Budgeted Cost
10. Spend to Date

Anyone reading the report must be made aware of progress and know when their help is needed to keep the project on track.

Keeping people updated ensures they remain involved and committed. Regular communication is essential to the well-being of any project. Common failings in this area are:
- Poor communication channels
- Lack of honest communication
- Unwillingness to communicate bad news
- Not asking for help if it's needed

Regular progress reporting creates a valuable written record of a project's life. Later you can look back and decide how to improve the running of future projects.