



TOOLS & TEMPLATES

# FLASH REPORTS

## WHY DO A FLASH REPORT?

The flash report is a quick way for team members to “check-in” once a week with one another. It allows the team to see if the other team member’s activities and priorities are in line with their expectations. Are they getting things done? Are the things that they are working on the “right” things for the company?

If everything is fine, it puts everyone’s mind at ease. If there are questions or concerns, it’s a trigger for everyone that they need to pick up the phone and find out what’s up.

## WHAT’S IN A FLASH REPORT?

A flash report is a short email. It’s designed to be easy to write and to read. This is not a time for flash prose, use short sentences or even bullet points to answer these three questions:

1. What are the three most important things you accomplished this week?
2. What are the three most important things you will accomplish next week?
3. Is there anything you need from your team members in order to accomplish these things?

## HOW DO I WRITE A GOOD FLASH REPORT?

The three accomplishments should be short bullet points, with specific status.

### **For example:**

- I completed 3 new customer presentations and closed the ABC account.
- I installed the new packaging equipment at XYZ Company and completed a pilot run.

### **Don’t say:**

- I made sales calls.
- I worked on the packaging equipment.

**The priorities for next week should also be concrete and specific.**

- Follow up with 2 open customer meetings (Smith and Westfield).
- Modify production procedures to incorporate new packaging equipment.

**Don't say:**

- I need to makes some calls next week.
- Keep working on packaging equipment.

**THE THIRD QUESTION SHOULD LIKEWISE BE SPECIFIC:**

- I need approval on the budget for the marketing event by 9/2.
- Will you be meeting with the Acme Company president in the next 5 days? If not I need to call him for feedback on our proposal.
- I need everyone to leave me alone on Thursday so that I can complete the statements for the month.

If writers will keep their comments short and specific they can say all they need in fewer than 200 words. The whole email should stay less than half a page so that it can be scanned in the preview pane of most email software.

**HOW DO I READ AND RESPOND TO A FLASH REPORT?**

If you want to get value out of this tool you have to read the reports! People know you are reading it if you write a brief comment back, not every time, but sometimes. This is a good opportunity to say thank you or good job. It's also a perfect time to get clarification or correct the direction that a team member is taking quickly before they spend a lot of time going off in the wrong direction.

**WHO SHOULD WRITE FLASH REPORTS? WHO SHOULD RECEIVE THEM?**

Team members who work independently and use judgment in determining their priorities are good candidates for using a flash report to their team.

This can really cut back on the time spent in staff meetings or status meetings.