



## **Business English- Present Perfect Simple and Continuous review**

### **Present Perfect Continuous business roleplays and presentation**

- Introduce yourself, mentioning your career history
- Have a progress check meeting with your line manager, giving excuses for things which aren't finished (yet)
- Try for the fourth time today to phone someone in another company
- Arrive late for drinks with a client or meeting a foreign business contact at the airport
- You are asked about your present job in a job interview
- Complain to your friend about how hard your job in the last few weeks
- Make small talk about television programmes

### **Grammar presentation**

*Match these possible sentences to the situations above.*

"I've seen it."

"I've been working like a dog!"

"I've been trying to get through to him."

"I've been working here..."

"I think I've achieved a lot."

"I've been working on..."

"I've done about 50% of it."

"I've been waiting"

"He's gone out to meet a client."

"I've been enjoying 24."

*What time clauses are likely to go with the sentences above?*

*Can you think of any questions that are likely to be answered by those example sentences (with or without the time clauses)?*

*Which two Present Perfect tenses are used above? What kinds of questions go with the two tenses?*

*Match these statements to the two tenses:*

- Often used when talking about how long
- Often used when talking about how many or how much
- Focuses on the result/ achievement
- Focuses on the action

*What are the general differences in meaning between the Present Perfect (Simple) and the Present Perfect Continuous?*

*What would the differences in meaning be between these sentences?*

- I've learnt English./ I've been learning English.
- I've made a lot of mistakes./ I've been making a lot of mistakes.
- I've cut my finger on the guillotine./ I've been cutting my finger on the guillotine.
- I've read the report./ I've been reading the report.
- We've tested three possible video conference systems./ We've been testing three possible video conference systems.
- I've attended three training courses./ I've been attending three training courses.
- They've sold the shares./ They've been selling the shares.
- I've had lots of meetings this week./ I've been having lots of meetings this week.
- He has worked for our main competitor and us./ He has been working for our main competitor and us.
- I've been working here for two years./ I've worked here for two years.

*Why doesn't the last one change meaning (unlike the others)? Which sentence is more common in each case?*

*Why are these sentences wrong?*

I've been being busy recently. X

Have you ever been going to Australia? X

I've been having four jobs. X

I've been knowing my boss for 10 years X

### **Practice**

*Make one true Present Perfect (Simple) sentence and one true Present Perfect Continuous sentence about things in this list:*

- The government
- The price of something
- Consumer confidence/ Business confidence
- The central bank
- Your main competitor
- Your head office

*Choose things from the list below that you know about and discuss what the present trends are and how long the situation has been like that, then write two full sentences.*

- Property prices
- Prices of the main raw material your company deals in
- Shipping costs
- Staffing costs/ Wages
- Overtime
- Crime
- Consumer confidence/ Business confidence
- Consumer spending
- Number of IPOs
- Demand for your main product
- Interest rates

**Suggested answers** (Other answers are possible)

“I’ve seen it.” – Small talk about television – “three or four times” – “Have you ever seen...?” “Have you seen the new series of...?”

“I’ve been working like a dog!” – Complaining – “recently” “this week” – “How has your week been?” “Have you been busy?”

“I’ve been trying to get through to him.” – Phoning for the fourth time – “all day” “since this morning” “for hours” – “How long have you been trying to get through to him?”

“I’ve been working here...” – Introducing yourself – “since January” “for ten years” – “How long have you been working here?”

“I think I’ve achieved a lot.” – Job interview – “in my present position” “in the last couple of years” – “Please tell us some recent achievements”

“I’ve been working on...” – Job interview – “recently” – “What have you been working on?”

“I’ve done about 50% of it.” – Progress check – “so far” “already” – “How much have you finished?” “How far through are you?”

“I’ve been waiting” – Arriving late – “for ages” “for ten minutes” – “Have you been waiting for long?”

“He’s gone out to meet a client.” – Phoning for the fourth time – “just” “already” – “Is he here there?” “Where has he gone?”

“I’ve been enjoying 24.” – Small talk about television – “recently” “since the new series started” “for the last couple of weeks” – “Have you seen anything good?”

Often used when talking about how long – Present Perfect Continuous

Often used when talking about how many or how much – Present Perfect Simple

Focuses on the result/ achievement – Present Perfect Simple

Focuses on the action – Present Perfect Continuous

I’ve learnt English./ I’ve been learning English. – The first would mean I’ve learnt absolutely everything about the language!

I’ve made a lot of mistakes./ I’ve been making a lot of mistakes. – The first is a result so the work probably has lots of mistakes in it. The second is an action, so it might be connected to my tiredness

I’ve cut my finger on the guillotine./ I’ve been cutting my finger on the guillotine. – The latter would be a repeated action with the possibility of it continuing!

I’ve read the report./ I’ve been reading the report. – The first means I’ve read the whole thing. In the second I might have finished it but if so the focus is on the action of reading, e.g. to explain why I haven’t been able to do other work

We’ve tested three possible video conference systems./ We’ve been testing three possible video conference systems. – In the latter we have probably been testing all three at the same time

I’ve attended three training courses./ I’ve been attending three training courses. – Ditto

They’ve sold the shares./ They’ve been selling the shares. – The former focuses on the result, probably meaning all the shares have gone

I’ve had lots of meetings this week./ I’ve been having lots of meetings this week.

He has worked for our main competitor and us./ He has been working for our main competitor and us. – The latter probably means simultaneously

I’ve been working here for two years./ I’ve worked here for two years. – No difference, because “work” has no obvious result/ achievement