

# Axios HQ Getting Started Guide

Welcome to your **Getting Started Guide** with Axios HQ. We're so excited you are here!

To help you plan your first HQ update — or a whole new communication strategy — we designed a series of exercises to help you reflect on what you're sending today and discover ways HQ can get you closer to your goals. By the end, you'll have a blueprint for the first update you send through HQ!

We'll take you through each step, or you can jump to the guide most helpful to you:

1. **Reflect**
2. [Audit](#)
3. [Evaluate](#)
4. [Consolidate](#)
5. [Create](#)
6. [Radiate](#)
7. [Re-evaluate](#)

In this guide, we focus on **reflect** — because before you look forward, it's important to look back. Explore what's worked, or what hasn't, for your readers so you can plan an even stronger next step.

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## Step 1: Reflect

It might sound simple — or even like a step you could easily bypass. Trust us. Just like you'd never charge into next year, or even next quarter, without an idea of where you've been, what worked, what didn't, you can't charge into the next phase of your most critical communications without this step.

### 1. What are your organization's mission and values? Jot down key words from each.

- Mission: \_\_\_\_\_
- Values: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Who are the three most important audiences you are responsible for keeping informed?

(Examples: all-staff, our executives, our department leaders, our board, our members, etc.):

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. What challenges, if any, do you face trying to reach those audiences?

(Examples: we don't know what information they value, they don't open what we send, etc.):

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**4. What are you hoping to accomplish by using HQ?** (check all that apply)

- ☐ Send communications that are more thoughtful and meaningful
- ☐ Send communications that are clearer and more impactful
- ☐ Increase organizational transparency
- ☐ Build trust with my readers
- ☐ Learn Smart Brevity and how to use it effectively
- ☐ Boost engagement with my readers
- ☐ Establish and improve relationships
- ☐ Streamline my communication workflow
- ☐ Make essential updates easier to understand
- ☐ Track how readers engage with my communications
- ☐ Simplify our signoff and send process
- ☐ Share information that keeps my readers aligned and productive
- ☐ Help my audience see themselves in our mission
- ☐ (other) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ (other) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ (other) \_\_\_\_\_

**Reflect for a few minutes** on your answers above. You are on a journey to help your most important audiences feel more deeply connected and committed to the work they do.

**For two minutes, free-write** in the space below. What insight, support, or resources would help you overcome the challenges you identified and better serve those readers?

**What's next:** We'll guide you through [a communication audit](#) — taking stock of all the messages your most important audiences see week to week and prioritizing which ones are actually essential.