

Axios HQ Getting Started Guide

Welcome to your Getting Started Guide! To help you plan your first HQ update — or a whole new communication strategy — we designed a series of exercises that help you reflect on what you’re sending today and discover ways HQ can get you closer to your goals.

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 Re-evaluate. Best-in-class communicators make structured feedback a mainstay in their strategies — to stay in step with what the audience needs, catch issues or opportunities early, and help everyone continue to get smarter, faster.

Step 7: Re-evaluate

Curiosity is key when building or sustaining a communication plan that resonates with your readers. Because just like your organization and its goals change year to year or quarter to quarter, so can the needs of your audience.

Every organization tackles this differently, but many track back to a three-phased approach.

1. **Build a baseline.** This is the activity you might have completed during our “[Evaluate](#)” exercise. It’s [a survey](#) that’s anywhere from 5-50 questions, depending how sophisticated you want your dataset to be and how engaged your audience is. Its goal is to understand what’s working, what isn’t, and what would be even better.
2. **Make step improvements.** This is a series of 1-click polls or surveys that you include in the body of your communications to measure reader attitudes. They tend to cover more niche ideas like topics, tone, length, or send time. Small focus groups are another way to get this kind of iterative feedback, like you might have done in our “[Radiate](#)” exercise. The goal is to get quick, actionable input you can put to work right away to strengthen your essential communications.
3. **Measure progress:** This is similar to your baseline survey, but can include custom questions, too. Many organizations run this refresh within the first six months of launching or re-launching an

essential communication, and then yearly or twice yearly beyond that. The goal is to keep a pulse on what your readers need, how they're responding — at a high level — to what you're sending them, and identify new or emerging needs that might be underserved.

That final piece should be the cornerstone in expanding your communication strategy. Some of your audience's feedback may well poke holes in the communication you're already sending. That's great input and will help you make it stronger. It may also reveal a growing need for other types of insight — information that could live in another existing communication, or entirely new updates that would serve your audience as the organization continues to grow.

- That's why this data, insight, and frequent refresh of both is so critical — and why we hope this Getting Started Guide can continue to be useful. After all, if you start to see the need to improve a different update or launch something new, swing back to our [“Reflect”](#) exercise, and we'll help with that one, too.

What's next: If you're interested in running a “Measure progress” survey but need some help getting it off the ground, [reach out to your account manager](#). We have a [lightweight and customizable survey](#) we can help you set up and send to your readers.