Smart Brevity® Reminders

We live in an increasingly distracted world. Data shows smart, busy readers want one thing: information they can trust, delivered in an efficient and engaging way.

Axios HQ has found the same holds true for colleagues and clients. With Smart Brevity, we challenge ourselves to share only what's vital and truly worthy of your unique reader's time and attention. Here's how we do it:

Imagine your audience: Write for a smart, curious person near the center of that group.

- Share what's new, essential and actionable for them.
- Cut away the background and extra information they already know.

Raise the bar on what's worthy: Select updates with long-term impact.

- It's better to exclude something than to include something unworthy.
- Ask yourself: Is this worth my audience dropping everything they're doing to read right now?

Prioritize three details:

Headline: This could also be the subject of your email, title of your press release, etc.

- Cap them around 60 characters — It's highly memorable for fast-moving readers.
- Keep them concrete — 59% of readers share a link without clicking it. Try to teach them something.
- Use short, simple words — It keeps your content conversational and easy to consume.

What's new: The first sentence of your update that tells your reader something essential.

- Keep it to one sentence — If you can guarantee readers remember one thing, make it this.
- Make it distinct — Avoid repeating information or phrases that exist in your headline.
- Stay conversational — How would I say this to a friend or colleague?

Why it matters: The critical context that explains how this news impacts your reader.

- Stay brief — Try to answer this in one, tight sentence, too.
- Keep that smart reader in mind — Why does this matter to them, specifically?
- Don't force it — If it doesn't matter to that reader, stop writing and move on to something else.

Style for impact: The rest of your text should be digestible and scannable to boost retention.

- **Bullets** break up blocks of text and create easy-to-skim lists.
- **Bolding** amplifies key points and pulls readers deeper into the update.
- **Links** provide access to related resources and deeper analysis — all in service to the reader.

Go deeper: Axios HQ is powerful writing platform that helps you bring these principles to life in your own professional communications. Learn more at axioshq.com or email us at hq@axios.com.