

MAKE CONSISTENTLY BETTER EMPLOYER BRAND VIDEOS IN

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A Practical Guide for
Employer Branding Professionals



ABOUT THIS GUIDE:

As filmmakers* who specialize in employer branding video content, we know success for our clients and ourselves comes down to one thing: **asking the right questions.** This guide is built around those questions.

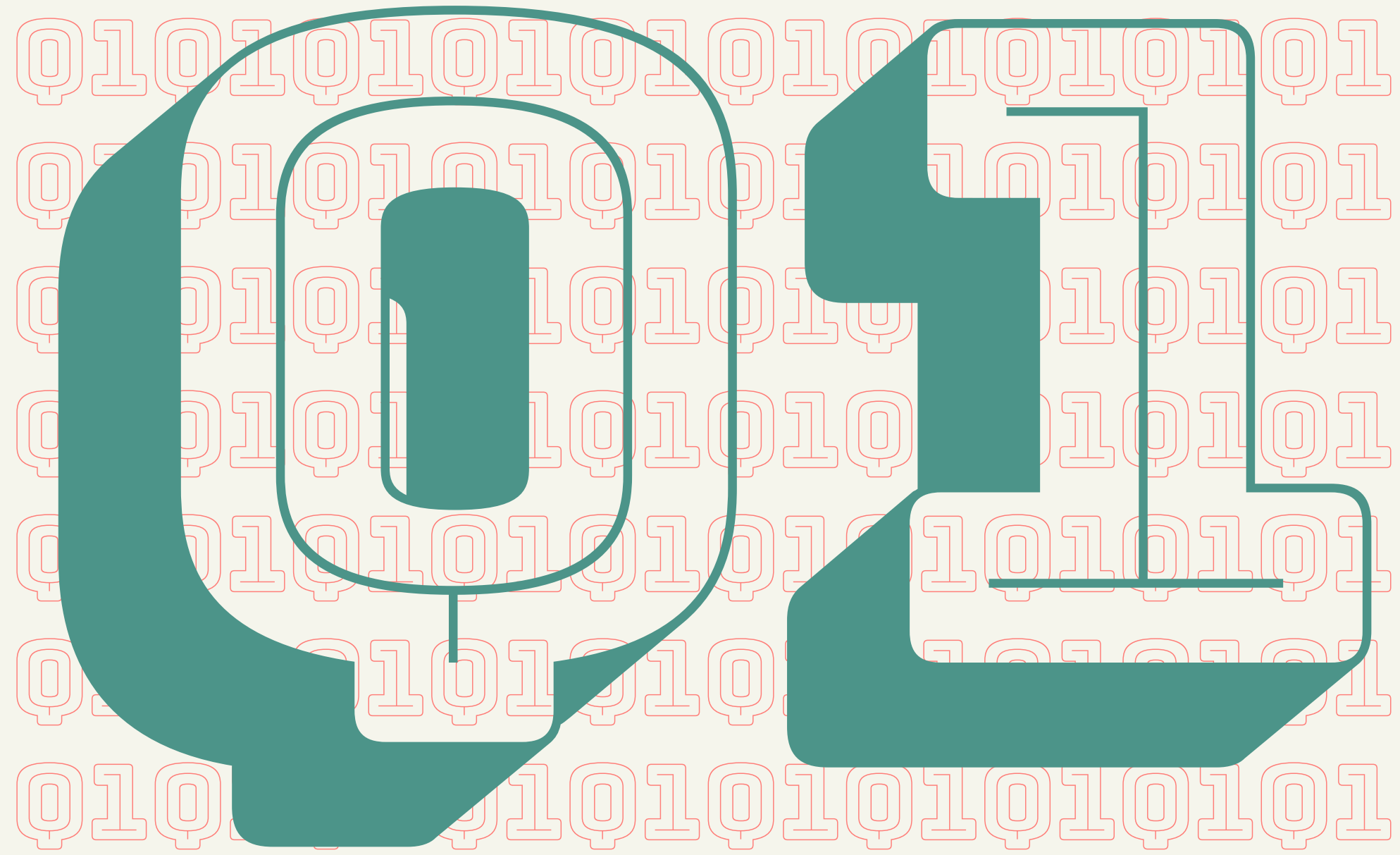
The most important thing you need to create great video content, consistently, is a framework to guide your decisions. That framework can be developed by reviewing **TEN QUESTIONS each time you begin a new video project or video campaign.**

Please consider this guide as both an overview of the questions, and as a practical exercise that can be completed as you prepare for your next video. Answering these ten questions as best you can will set you up for success, whatever success looks like for you.

These ten questions are **IN ORDER**, but **NOT THE ORDER**. You don't even need to answer all of them. Making a great video isn't a straight line path (part of the reason it's often so challenging). Each question informs the others and directs you to accomplishing your goals.

**We're King Toledo, a full service production company with a focus on EB video. We wrote this guide because we want to raise the bar on video across the employer brand space.*





WHAT IS A GREAT VIDEO?



When it comes to video, we use the term “great” pretty loosely. That’s because it should have a different meaning for each organization. “Great” isn’t necessarily reflective of on-screen quality. A great video could be a six figure production with all the cinematic trimmings of a major television ad. Or it could be a free-to-make series of Instagram Q&A videos recorded by your employees. By “great,” we simply mean a video that’s 1) impactful, 2) meets your goals, and 3) authentically reflects the quality and character of your organization.

This question - *‘what is a great video?’* - is a useful starting point because it often helps formulate the idea of what you’re looking for, even if you’re not quite ready to articulate it in a brief or proposal. It’s also a question you can keep coming back to and reevaluating.

NOT JUST GREAT. GREAT FOR YOU.

A truly great video should feel specific to your company and your message. So many employer brand videos are swimming in a sea of sameness. Your logo shouldn’t be the only thing that differentiates your content. And if you watch enough EB video content, you’ll see that’s too often the case. Your company has perspective, a vibe, a collection of personalities and experiences. Yet, so much of that texture is missing in most EB video content. By defining “great for you,” you’ll start to identify the styles, visuals and formats that are unique to the way you share your employer brand with the world.

What is
your goal?



Question #2

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Before you decide to make a video (or that video is the right tool, *see question #3*), it's helpful to stop and **clearly articulate your goal**.

What are you hoping to achieve with your content?

It's a seemingly straightforward question but stopping to ask it leads to crucial clarity in the video making process. Oftentimes there are many goals, and making a hierarchy of them can be helpful as well.

What matters most? What does success look like?

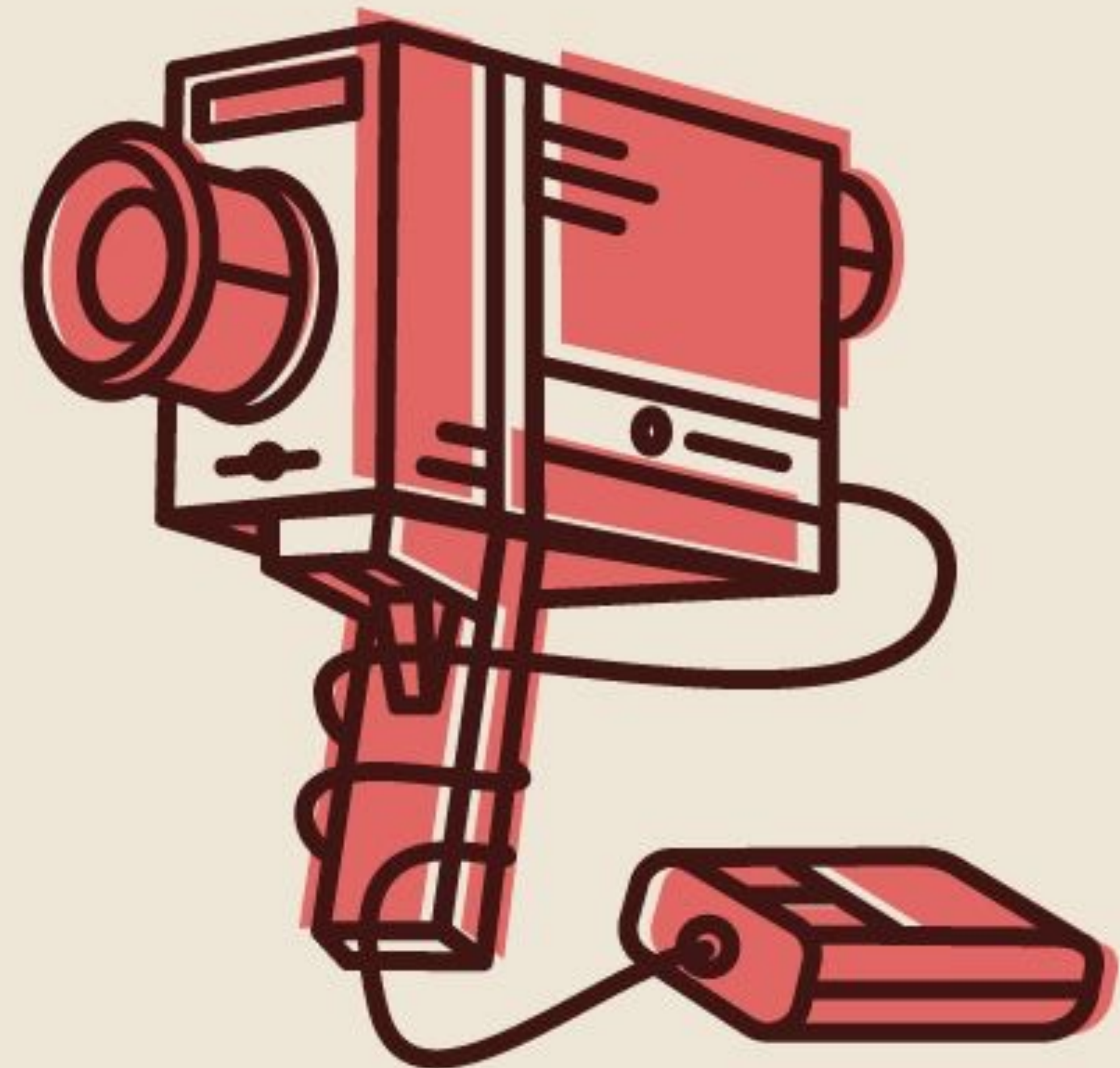
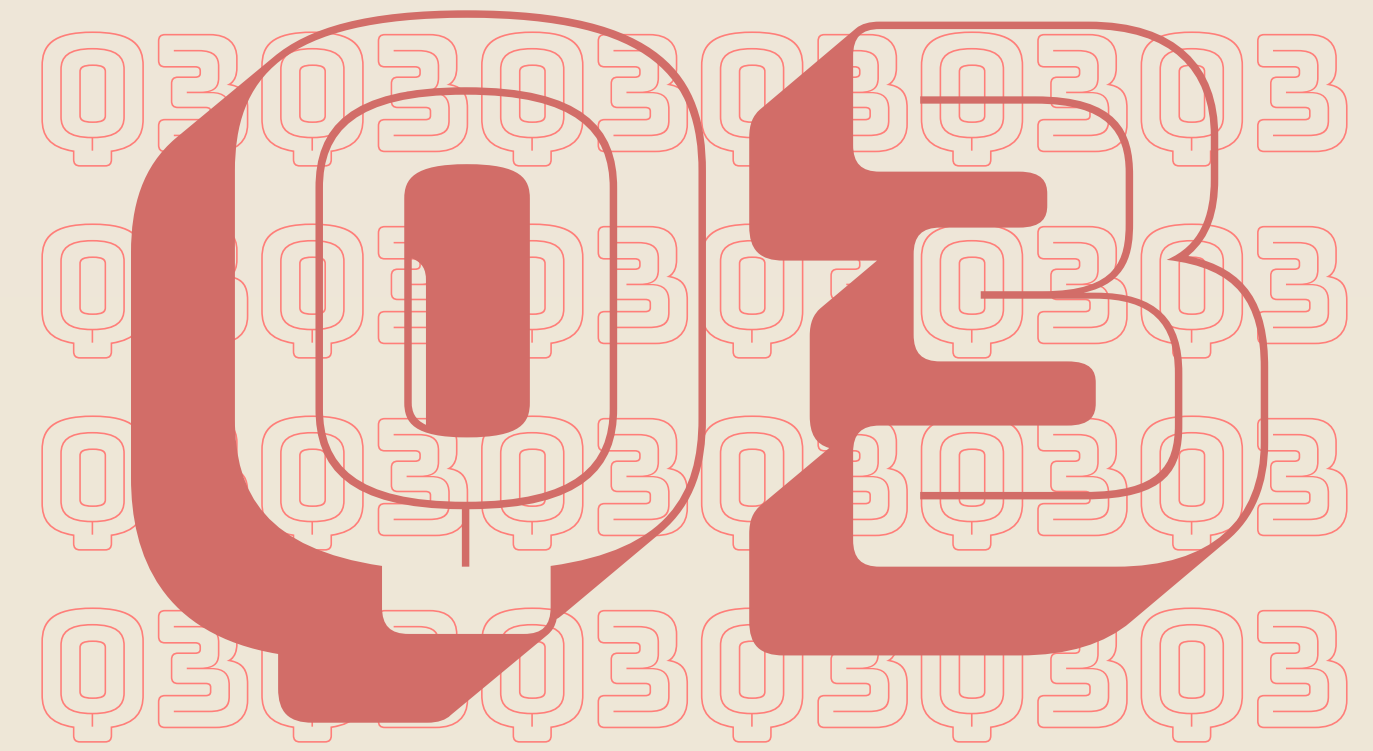
The videos you create will usually map back to your bigger employer brand strategy. Videos and video campaigns are tactics. Your video objectives are usually related to your overall strategic goals. If you can be clear about each video's goal at the beginning, and know its role in the bigger strategy, you'll be in a better position to make smart decisions about your content. The more unique and specific the goal, the more effective your video content will be - and the more it will feel distinct to your organization.

WHY VIDEO?

It may seem odd to ask this question, but it's really valuable. ***Are you making this video because you want a video, or because it's the best tool for achieving your specific goal?***

Video has a lot of advantages: it's easy to consume and share. It stands out in a social media feed. It's more and more ubiquitous and expected for important messages. It brings a sense of value to your message. It allows for greater creativity. It can bring a workplace experience to life in ways other mediums can't. The visual nature is particularly ideal for sharing some of the harder to articulate aspects of your EVP. It's also the best medium for truly emotional storytelling. If done right, nothing makes your company's work experience so real and authentic as seeing it in video.

On the other hand, video is usually more cost intensive than other media. It creates a unique expectation relationship with your audience. It takes more effort to make, and that shifts how viewers consume it. There's an expectation that the video will be worth the viewer's time. And when it underwhelms or fails to meet those expectations, it can undermine your brand and message. All of this is to say, don't make video just because you can. **Ask why.** Make video when it can amplify the impact of your message and increase the depth of the relationship with your audiences.





WHO IS THIS FOR?



Along with articulating the goal, **defining your audience** is a helpful, critical step. There are myriad ways of describing who you want a video to reach. Putting it terms that guide your creative and distribution will ensure you are on a path to reach your goals.

Again, you may have multiple target groups, but it helps to make hierarchical lists. If you can't, you may also decide that different pieces of content should be created for each target audience. It's unlikely that your video will be for everyone. You may even want to identify your non-target audience.

Determining your audience early is also a great step to take if you want to learn from and improve your approach (and you should!). Don't be surprised if you find your audience was different than you expected. Video can really inform who your audience is, even if you're not really aware of it. It can also help you tailor your future messages and distribution to better reach your intended audience.

Tip: Be as specific as you need to be in this process.

West Coast university students with physical science majors and a passion for sport? Engineers who value being creative at work? Your company's own C-Suite leadership? Ambitious, civic-minded teenagers looking for a job to help them pay for college? Play with different ways to define your target. Consideration here will inform everything from your messaging, style, format, tone, creative, distribution, and even your ability to measure success.



WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SAY?

What is your message or takeaway? This can range from the simple and overt ('we pay for continuing education') to the complex and emotional ('this job will help you lead a purpose-driven life'). The answer should be closely tied to your audience and goal. And to avoid muddying the waters, we suggest defining your message in a single, short sentence. And then let that sentence be your guide throughout the video making process.

When to Embrace Mixed Messages

Keep in mind that the videos you create can communicate distinct messages depending on who is viewing it and at what point in the recruiting journey. Playing with and embracing this message malleability is useful. It means you can use or repurpose the same piece of content for multiple goals and audiences. That said, don't let the flexibility deter you from pursuing the message that most aligns with your main target audience (Q4) and goal (Q2).

WHERE WILL IT LIVE?

Ah, distribution. It should be one of the first things you consider, and an area where you allow yourself the flexibility to adapt. Creating a distribution plan for your video or campaign is always more complicated than it seems, and is a place for creativity and investment. Answering this question also informs the creative, and maps closely to the question about audience.

Some of the sub-questions to consider when thinking about distribution are: *Is this video well-suited for social media? If so is it hyper focused or broad? Will there be an ad spend to support distribution? How much can we amplify distribution through our own platforms, social media accounts and employee network? Are there micro-communities and publication options that will allow us to reach our target audience even more directly? What creative limitations do we need to consider because of our distribution choices?*

Answering these questions will shape your video creative.

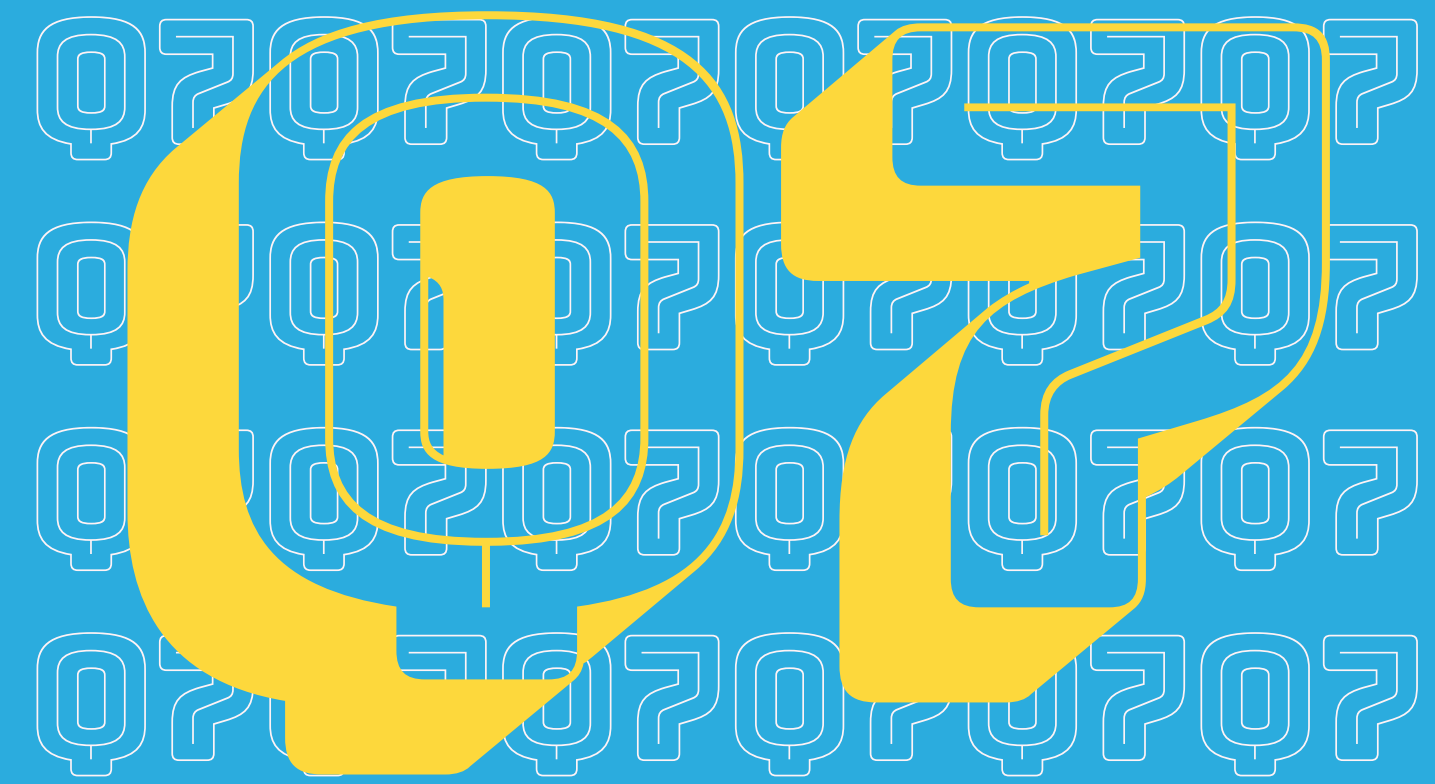


Now that you've formulated your goals, audience, distribution and message, **the creative process** can really kick into gear.

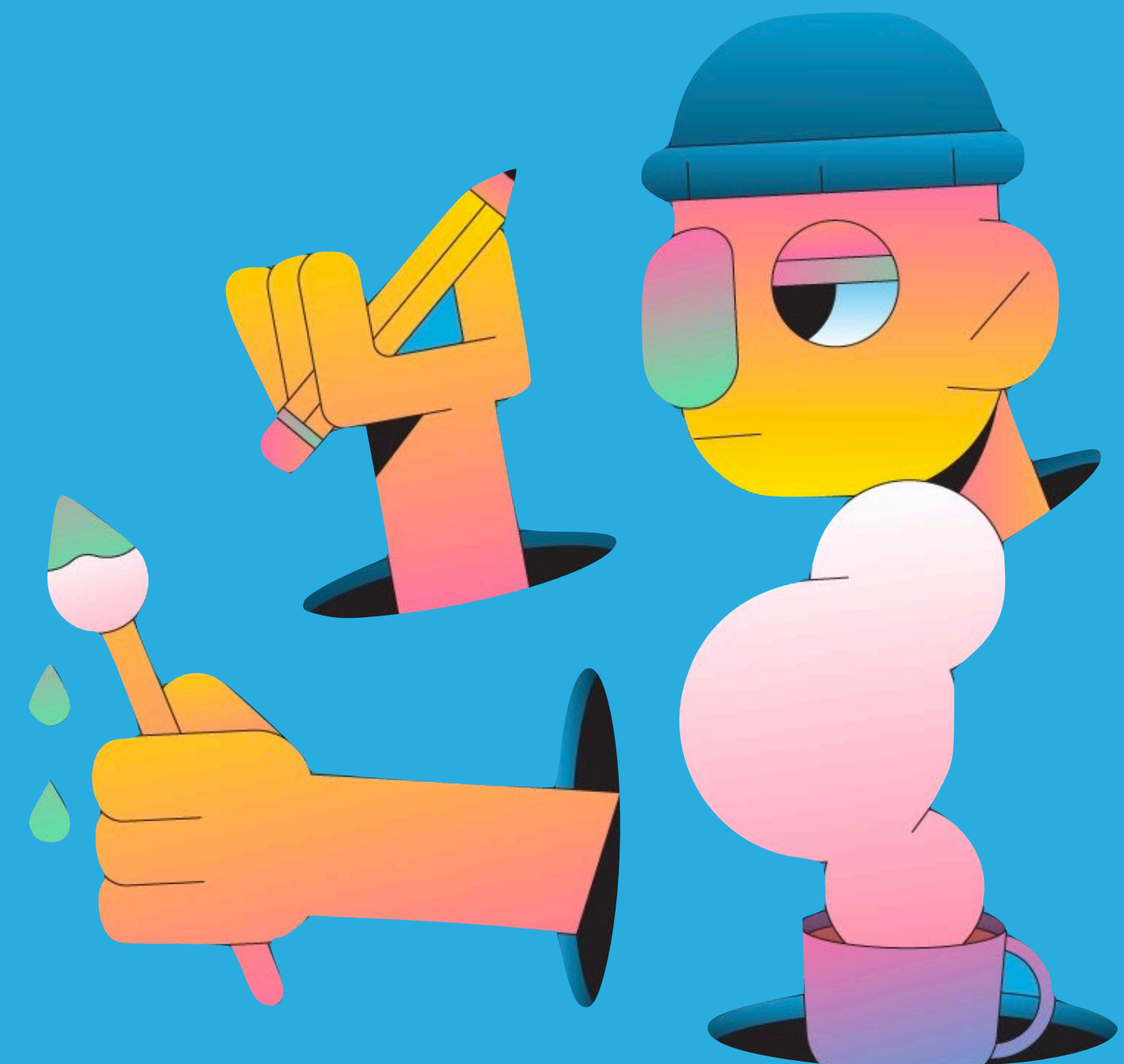
There are certainly go-to video formats, particularly for employer branding: the day-in-life, employee Q&As, the campus tour, etc. These styles are often a great starting point. At the same time (*and we're repeating this because it's so important*), **your videos should be truly unique to your organization.** What's distinctive about the workplace, your mission, your customers, your people, your ambitions? Usually the differentiators that stand out in a video are the people: your employees, leaders, customers and stakeholders. There are lot of companies with excellent pay, great perks and cool offices. But what makes a work experience truly unique is the community. People are your greatest asset and often the key to communicating authentically about your company.

Tips on Finding Your Creative Sweet Spot: Let your people-driven stories shape the vision. Find a tone that reflects your business's goals and culture. Seek out visuals related to the look and feel of your workspaces. There's so much about your organization that can, and should, be worked into your creative execution. Harness it.

Tap into what you love about your company, and it will lead to boundless and unique creativity. Seek out stories from within your walls, or work with partners who can help you do that. Lastly, and most importantly, inform your creative choices using the answers from this guide.



WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?





WHAT DOES IT COST?

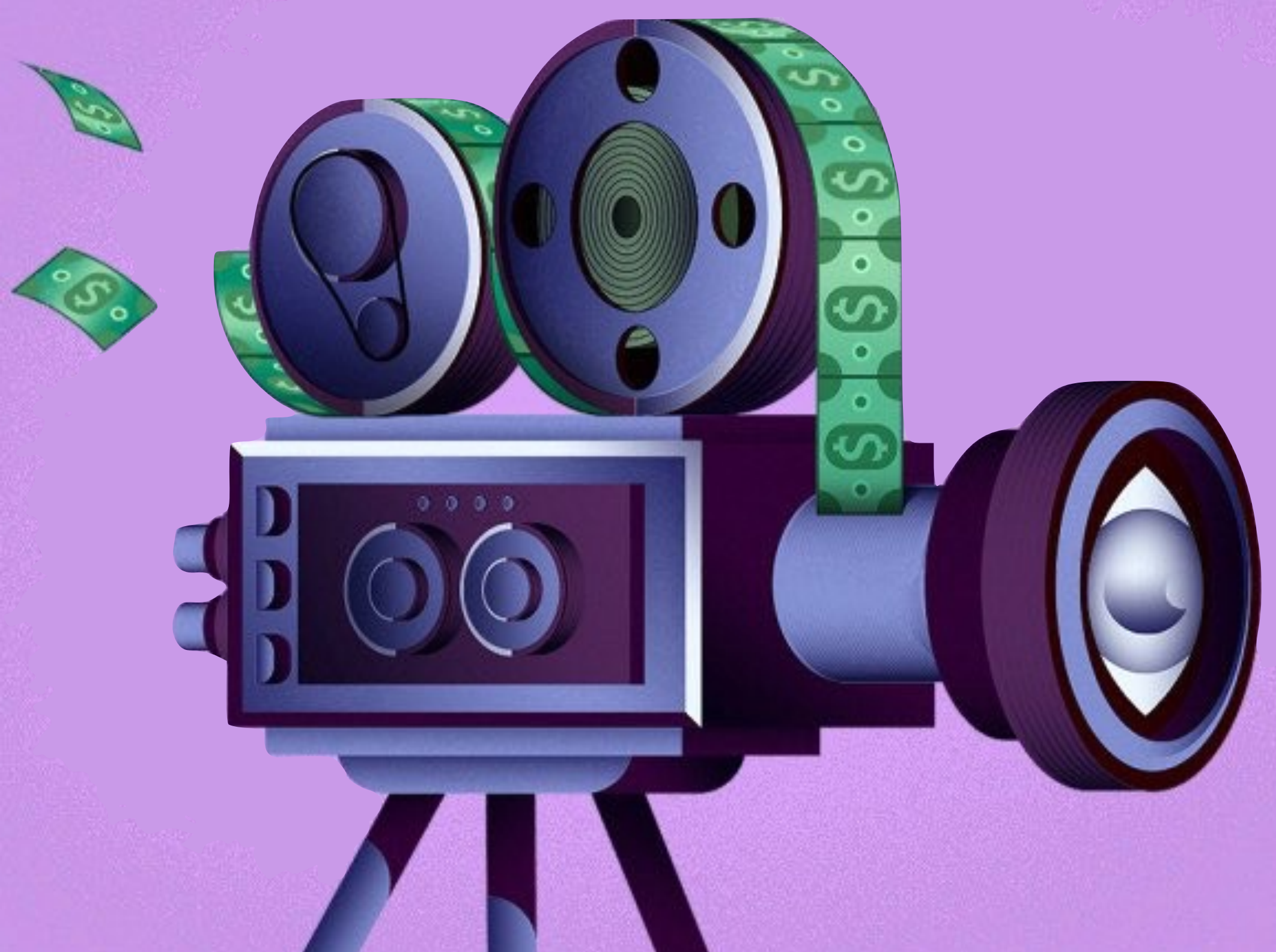
The question of **budget** can be vexing, especially as the scale and scope of a video project expand. If you don't already have a budget allocation, determining what to spend usually comes down to priorities.

“How much does a video usually cost?”

As a producer, this is the ultimate unanswerable question. Of course, cost depends on so many factors, particularly the creative, which (good news!) you started to outline in Question 7. On the flip side, an existing budget can be an important tool for keeping creative vision realistic. In this way, Q7 and Q8 are the yin-and-yang of video production.

“But really, how much should we plan to spend?”

For reference, a single professionally produced short docu-style video can cost upwards of \$35,000, and often much more. Some common factors that drive budgets up include extensive development and writing, travel, graphics & animation, shoot complexity, crew size, speciality locations or sets, and lengthy client reviews. Some employer branding teams spend more to ensure each video feels like their company's polished customer facing marketing. On the other end, simple employee interviews or video job postings can be created for just hundreds or thousands per video. Of course, there are plenty of free or affordable content creation tools that you can use even if you're on a shoestring.



BONUS: BUDGET SUBQUESTIONS

There's a better way to think about budget, and that's through an ROI lens. The big question here is: ***How much is it worth to achieve this specific video's goal (Q2)?*** That's only part of the equation, however. Often it helps to ask some sub-questions when working to determine your budget, such as:

- How important is this video?
- How important is the audience I'm trying to reach?
- What's the ROI for attracting the right talent into our pipeline from the start? (And turning away the 'wrong' talent).
- How will this video reflect on the quality of our organization? (Not just on-screen quality, but story quality).
- How much heavy lifting will this particular video or series do? Is it seasonal, evergreen, or easily repurposed?
- When do you need it? (The adage about "fast, cheap, & good - pick two" is very applicable to video production).
- How much of the video creation process can (or should) your team do internally, versus working with outside partners?
- Have you factored in costs for distribution, measurement and follow-up?





HOW DO WE ACTUALLY MAKE THIS THING?

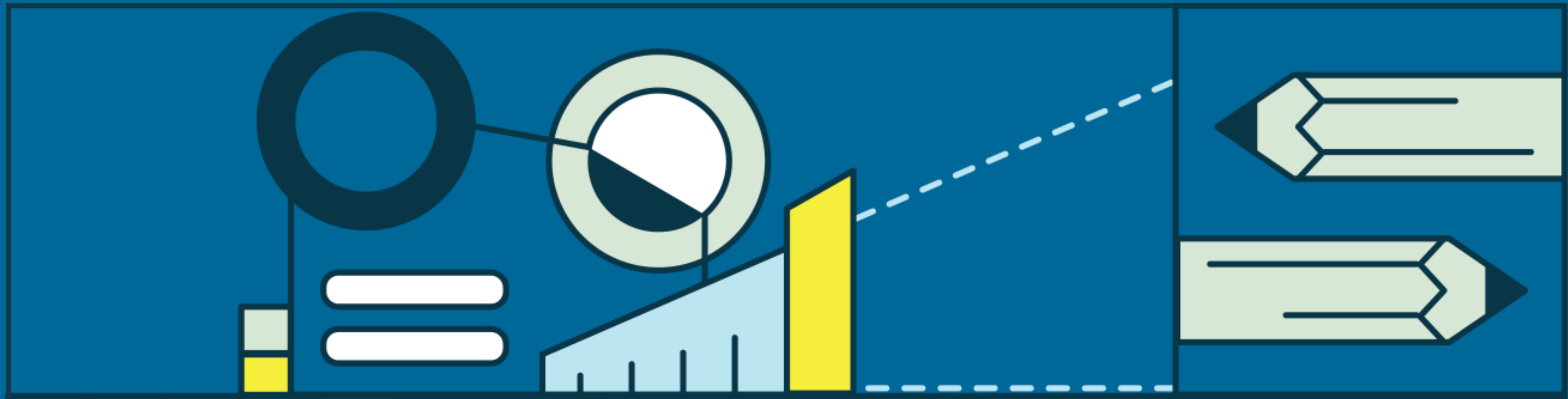
Video production isn't one size fits all. Everything you've thought about leading into this question will help determine your needs. There are six general "phases" to a video production, the complexity of each depends on your project. Here's a quick overview:

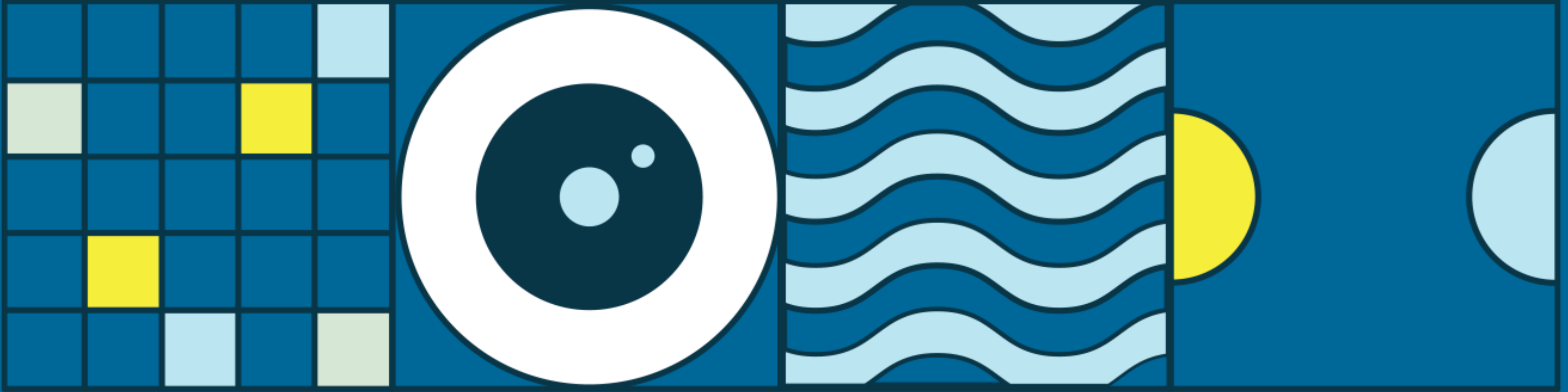
1) Strategy & Ideation

Good news! You're already on your way. Developing a goal, identifying your needs, finding a production partner, targeting audiences, thinking about your ideal distribution, coming up with a rough concept and budget all usually happen here.

2) Creative Development

Your creative vision takes off here. You start to think about casting, work on scripts and outlines. At the end of this process, you'll want to be able to clearly know your story, how you plan to bring it to life, and how much it costs. Green Light!





3) Pre-Production

Armed with an idea, budget and timeline, this is where the detailed planning begins. It often involves fine tuning the script or outline, making storyboards, confirming casting, pre-interviews, detailed scheduling, hiring crew, getting permits, confirming locations and more. The more complex a shoot, the more critical pre-production becomes. Don't rush through this step!

4) Production

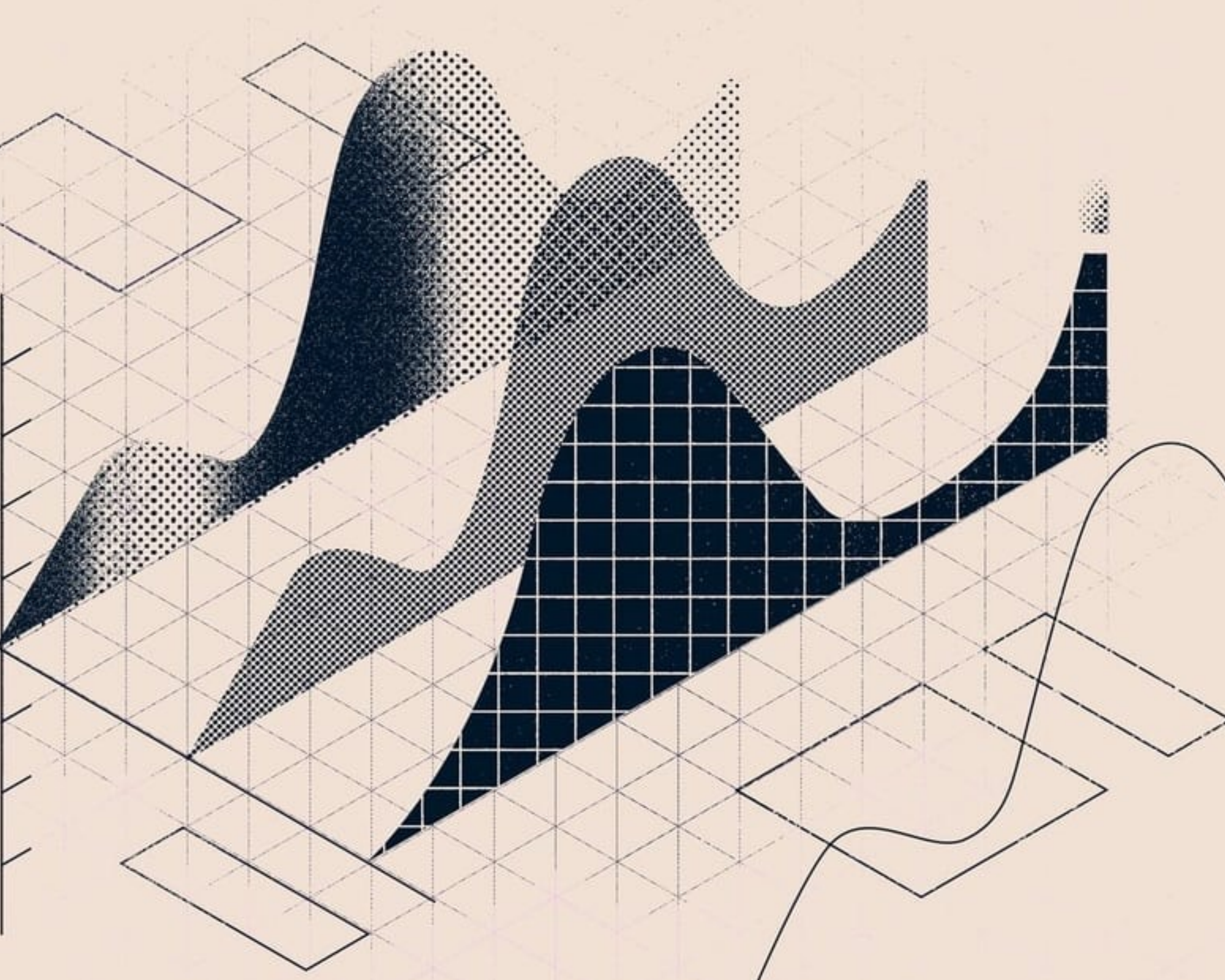
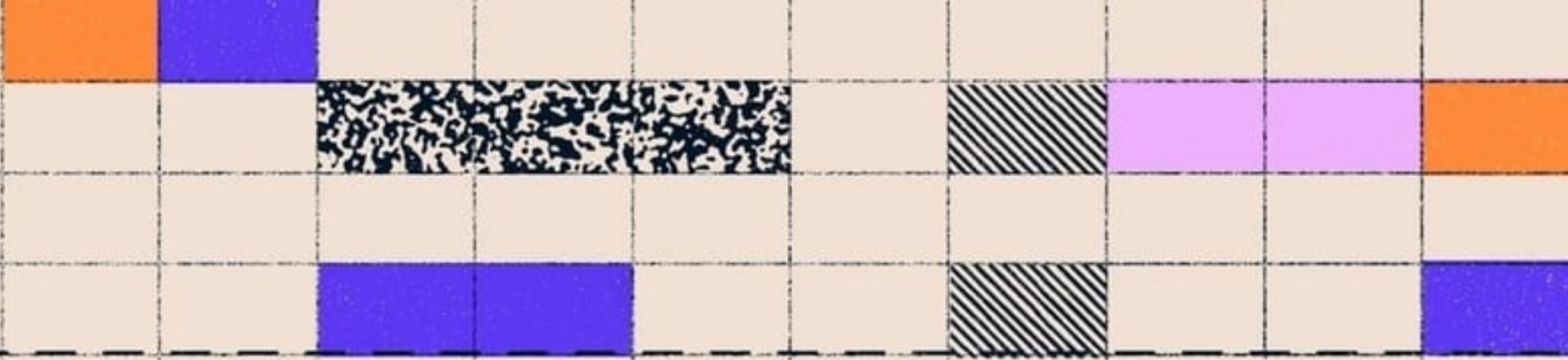
Is it just one camera and a sound guy? Are we shooting for three weeks across the globe? No two shoots are the same. Two pieces of advice: 1) Be as small and nimble as your project allows, especially if you're filming in a workplace with non-actors. 2) Be prepared to deviate from your plan. Have contingencies to make the most of your shoot if, *and when*, things don't go exactly as planned.

5) Post-Production

This is where everything comes together. Editing, writing, animation, graphics, original music, sound mixing, color grading reviews, screenings with stakeholder. Questions to ask before you get to this stage include: Who needs to see the video before it's locked? At what point in the process and how many reviews are needed? How will you manage feedback from stakeholders?

6) Distro & Evaluation

There's more on this phase in the next slide, but have you planned for your distribution and measurement? Hopefully, you've reviewed this framework and already have a plan in place. Important questions to ask here are what assets, variations and versions will you need to deliver? Are you prepared to evaluate your success and pivot as needed?



HOW DID WE DO & WHAT COMES NEXT?

Success is relative. Yet, for video it's often entirely measurable. Ultimately, you should be measuring a campaign's success back to the goal that drove you down this path. Being prepared to do that from the start is important.

As Employer Branding leaders, you're likely not just looking for views, but for engagement, specific actions and relationship building. All of that is measurable, and in ways that can map back to your goals. Don't let views and likes be your only indicators of success.

And the best part about video measurement is that it will inform your next campaign, prompt a re-edit or to lead you to adjust your whole video strategy. Just don't forget to answer these questions again before you start anew.



BONUS QUESTION: WHO IS KING TOLEDO?

King Toledo is an award-winning full service video production company based in California and operating globally. Documentary filmmakers by training, our team lives and breathes Employer Branding video. [Seriously](#). We came to this space because we wanted to help shape the future of employer brand and corporate video. We are fanatical about telling real, human stories that drive impact for our clients.

A little about us:

- 1) We bring unrelenting quality to each project, no matter the scale or budget.
- 2) Story and character come first in everything we do.
- 3) We work with clients as passionate about their work as we are about ours.

Find out more:

www.kingtoledo.com

Or send us a note, even if you're just looking for advice or feedback. Consider us collaborators, friendly neighbors and enthusiastic cheerleaders. We want your video content to thrive. We hope to hear from you soon.