

Sustainable Ambition™ Self-Assessment

A reference tool to help you understand where to focus your attention on your journey of Sustainable Ambition.

By Kathy Oneto



Introduction

It's time to rethink the Future of Work and build a foundation for professional and personal fulfillment that is grounded in the concept of Sustainable Ambition™. Sustainable Ambition is centered on the idea of having a fulfilling career from decade to decade based on an individual's personal definition of success and achieving that without burnout while honoring her personal aspirations and ambitions as they ebb and flow over time.

The concept is rooted in three pillars: **Right Success, Right Aspiration, and Right Effort**. The language of "Right" borrows loosely from the Buddhist concept of the "[Eightfold Path](#)" and specifically one of its eight teachings, "Right Effort." But Sustainable Ambition isn't rooted in a religious practice, just simply the idea that there is a self-defined appropriate or desirable level that can be achieved along these dimensions. And embedded in this concept of "right" is the idea of individualized pursuits and personal choice.

The following self-assessment questions build upon my article, [Sustainable Ambition™](#). It is intended as a reference to help you understand where to put your attention first on your journey of Sustainable Ambition. Do you want to align yourself to meaningful and fulfilling work? Raise your satisfaction level and optimize given your current career stage? Or, do you want to focus your effort and integrate your life and work more effectively?

Let's get started in helping you craft a more sustainable career and a more integrated work/life to make life work for you!

You can access more information and resources at [Sustainable Ambition](#) and join the "Sustainable Ambition Forum" list [here](#).

Take the Assessment

To take the assessment, simply answer the questions Yes or No and at the end add up how many in each area you answer affirmative or not. Below we provide guidance on where to start based on your responses. Let's get you closer to Sustainable Ambition with this first assessment step.

Right Success is about defining (career and overall life) success on your terms. It's about listening for and embracing your **purpose, values,** and **flow** (intrinsic motivations). It's about being clear about your "Why" and your "What."

Right Success Assessment:

- Purpose – Have you articulated a Purpose for your career, calling, or work? Or, do you have a goal around the type of impact you'd like to have with your work? (Note: Purpose can be altruistic but does not have to be. At minimum, it's ideal to capture what motivates you to do your work, what draws you to want to make an impact. For example, perhaps what's most important to you is having an impact on your team's development, nurturing talent, and building leaders. Or, perhaps you want to excel at delivering the highest customer service and insights to your clients. Or, you may want to put your company on a stronger, more resilient path for the benefit of your employees, customers, and investors.)
- Meaning – Does your work have meaning for you? Do you feel like you are adding value and contributing to something beyond yourself? For example, do you know how you want to contribute and serve others, such as your customers, employees, and investors, which gives your work meaning?
- Fulfillment – Do you feel like you have a fulfilling career?
- Values – Are you clear about your values and use them to help you make decisions about what's best for yourself and to guide your behaviors?
- Intrinsic Motivations – Do you know the work you love? Do you know the activities when you lose track of time?
- Mastery – Do you know what you want to master?

Right Aspiration is about managing your work satisfaction and ambition from decade to decade. It's about navigating your path, paying attention and keeping a pulse on your work/life satisfaction level over time. And, knowing your ambition right now, understanding your “How Far” and “By When.”

Right Aspiration Assessment:

- Stage – Are you clear on what stage you are in in your career and what will satisfy you in this stage?
- Satisfaction – Are you aware of your current career satisfaction level?
- Personal – Are you following your own path vs. society's should's?
- Ambition – Are you clear on your current ambition level? Do you know your “how far” and “by when?”
- Meeting Your Needs – Do you have a pulse on what lane (fast, middle, slow) you want to be in right now? Or if you want to take an off or on ramp?
- Attention – Are you paying attention to how you are feeling about your career? Are you listening to your gut instincts and the whispers? Are you exploring your curiosities?

Right Effort is about directing your energy so your work doesn't unintentionally take over your life. It considers 6 P's: perspective, pace, priorities, productivity, place, and pause. It's about guiding your actions by being in choice (perspective, pace, priorities) and intention (productivity, place, and pause).

Right Effort Assessment:

- Perspective – Have you reframed your view on time, and have you taken responsibility for the choices you can make in managing your time and effort?
- Pace – Are you clear on the level of effort you want to put in at this stage in your career and life?
- Pace – Do you avoid the addiction to being busy and avoid the “should” of working long hours?
- Priorities – Are you clear on your priorities right now? Are you clear on what you are saying “yes” to and “no” to?
- Balance Adjustment – Do you revisit your priorities regularly and check to see if where you are investing your time is aligned with your wishes?
- Choice – Do you find yourself making choices between priorities or non-priorities?
- Productivity – Are you managing your energy to make the most of your time? Do you feel like you are using your time and effort wisely?
- Place – Does your work environment support you in finding Sustainable Ambition and support the type of life you are seeking?

- Pause – Do you find time to take breaks and pauses, no matter the length of time, to get recharged and reinvigorated?
- Intention – Are you being deliberate in how you use your precious time and energy?

Understand Your Responses

To understand where you are with Sustainable Ambition, consider in which areas you had the most No answers. This will guide where you want to put your focus.

Yet, generally, I'd say this—if you aren't clear on your purpose, values, and flow (Right Success), start here. This work is foundational and can help inform understanding your aspiration and how you want to manage your effort. We offer some guidance below on next steps.

If you are clear there, then move on to Right Aspiration. Here, I'd first encourage you to check-in with yourself and listen to how you are feeling about your career right now. Then below are noted actions on how you can go deeper. I'd suggest starting with our [Career Hygiene Audit](#) (use the password "sustain" to view). It will help you better understand your level of satisfaction right now with your career.

Finally, if you are clear on your Right Success and Right Aspiration or just feel like you are in a highly engaged phase of your career but might be wrestling with how to integrate work and life, focus on Right Effort. Again, some guidance shared below with more to come.

What to Do Now

Right Success – Define your own success by knowing yourself:

- Get clear on your [“Why” and your “What.”](#)
- Create a Vision for your personal-professional or life-work fulfillment. That can take the form of simply carving out 30-60 minutes to sketch or draw and imagine your ideal life-work experience right now. If you were living your fulfilled life according to your values and doing the work you love, what would that look like? What do you imagine? Consider visualizing your ideal week. Or, consider completing our [“Decade by Decade Horizon Map,”](#) or simply answer the Visioning probes we offer. (Use the password “sustain” to view.)
- [Find your Purpose.](#)
- [Define your Values.](#) (Use the password “sustain” to view.)
- [Conduct a Flow Audit.](#)

Right Aspiration – Navigate your path by tuning in:

- Take a [Career Hygiene Audit.](#) (Use the password “sustain” to view.)
- Know your ambition—get clear on your [“How Far” and “By When.”](#)
- [Better understand career satisfaction stages.](#) (Get an initial view here, with more detail to come!) (Use the password “sustain” to view.)
- Use the Career Attention Workbook to tune in and pay attention to how you are feeling about your career right now. (Coming soon!)

Right Effort – Get deliberate about managing your energy with the 6 P’s:

- Work on your perspective.

Perspective asks you to shift your mindset around time and choice. It empowers you to recognize that time is finite and that you are in control of where you put your focus. So [own that you have choice](#) in how you spend your time and know the pace and the level of effort you want to put against your career right now.

- Check your pace.

Your pace can be impacted by what you learned about your ambition within Right Aspiration. Are you clear on the level of effort you want

to put towards your work right now in relation to your life goals? What's important to note here is that working hard or prioritizing your career isn't always the wrong answer, as some might think. Sometimes you will need to dedicate more time to your career to achieve what you are seeking to achieve. Just if you do so, make sure it is in service to reaching your goals, aligns with the rewards you desire, and keeps you in a state of flow while digging in. Yet, one needs to be careful about overinvesting time to the point of burnout. Believe me, I've been there. So, pay attention if you start to feel resentful at some point. That's a signal something is off with your work-life integration.

- [Check your busy-ness meter. And get focused.](#)
- [Clarify your priorities.](#) And do so considering the integration of both your professional and personal lives.
- [Make the most of your time with 10 Productivity & Energy Management Tips.](#)
- Assess your workplace. Do they support the concept of Sustainable Ambition in principle? Are there things you can do yourself and/or ask for that would get you closer to Right Success, Right Aspiration, and Right Effort? [Read more here for things to look for.](#)
- Define your pauses. Determine now how you will carve out time for pauses on a daily, weekly, quarterly, and/or annual basis. [Here are some ideas](#) on how to think about Pauses from our "How to Take a Sabbatical" series.
- Create an intention and attention practice. Start a daily practice of setting both intentions and your attention for your day. Ask yourself, "What is my intention(s) for today? Where will I put my attention today?" I've done this, and it helps me get centered and focused on what truly matters. It reminds me who I want to be and where I want to have impact.

Close

With this Self-Assessment and "What to do now" guidance in hand, we hope you have some tools to get you on your way to achieving

Sustainable Ambition. We'll champion you achieving a fulfilling career from decade to decade based on your personal definition of success and achieving that without burnout while honoring your personal aspirations and ambitions as they ebb and flow over time.

Let's get started in helping you craft a more sustainable career and a more integrated work/life to make life work for you!

Would you like to stay in touch as we continue to explore Sustainable Ambition and build our guidance and toolkit? Sign-up for the "Sustainable Ambition Forum" list [here](#) and get a monthly or more round-up of content and the best tips, inspiration, resources, tools, books, podcasts, and more that we uncover to achieve Sustainable Ambition.

Interested in exploring Sustainable Ambition with an Executive Coach & Career Strategist or interested in figuring out what's next for your career, a VIP Leadership Brand Session, or Workshop? Contact [Kathy Oneto](#), Founder of [Sustainable Ambition](#).



Sustainable Ambition is about crafting a fulfilling career to support your life from decade to decade. It was founded by Kathy Oneto, an executive and leadership coach and career strategist, as well as a strategy and marketing professional.

At Sustainable Ambition, you can find content, tools, and resources complemented with coaching and workshops.

Find us at <http://www.sustainableambition.com/>.