
Developing Your Professional Definition of Success

What is your professional definition of success? How do you develop a professional definition of success if you do not have one?

To be congruent with the Personal and Organizational High-Performance Assessment, and in particular, to “live” item #5—I am totally responsible for my success at work, it is vital that you define professional success for yourself in writing.

It is important to know that your professional definition of success is individual and unique to you. It is about what makes you professionally successful according to you. Second, you can be as general or as specific as you want to be. It is up to you how you define your professional success.

The purpose and importance of the definition of success is to live in it now - demonstrating you have accepted 100% responsibility and accountability for living successfully in your professional life—you own it.

Your definition of success can change as your life situation changes. For example, your professional definition of success while in your 20s and not in a significant relationship may be very different when you are in your 40s with a family. If you are in integrity with your professional definition of success you can make those changes and remain totally responsible for your success at work.

Your definition of success is not to be confused with a goal as in you meet it or not; or that you are working hard to achieve something. Your definition of success is a commitment that you make to yourself; an intention of how you will live and conduct your professional life everyday. The definition of success is not a hard and fast rule; there is no right or wrong—however, being in integrity with it allows you to make conscience choices regarding external situations.

Examples of Professional Definitions of Success

#1 Consultant

- I am solution-oriented and committed to customer and co-worker success.
- I realize professional income of \$xxxx per year.
- I do not travel more than 6 nights per month.
- I work with colleagues that are high energy and have clarity about their own work.

#2 College Instructor

- I inspire students to want to learn.
- I teach one new class each year.
- I participate in Toastmasters weekly.

#3 Corporate Director

- I mentor, coach, and manage staff at the level they need.
- I spend one quarter of my time at work working on strategic planning.
- I hold others accountable for their agreements with me.

Think about and respond to the following questions:

1.	What about your current job provides the most job satisfaction?
2.	What about your current job makes you feel professionally successful?
3.	What set of conditions do you need at work to create an atmosphere that lets you thrive?
4.	What support would you need to create a situation where the conditions you attribute to success are present?

Based on your answers to the above 4 questions, record statements that represent **your Professional Definition of Success:**

1	
2	
3	
4	