

20 Ways to Measure Your Professional Growth



How am I doing? How far have I come? How could I be doing better?

If you've found yourself asking questions like these, you're certainly not alone. (And props to you for starting down the road to introspection!) Consider what Maya Angelou once said: "We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty." This month, we are all about reflecting on the development of our professional journeys, admitting the changes we've gone through (or recognizing the ones we need to). Check out these 20 ideas we've put together to help you assess your growth as a professional.



Values alignment.

Many studies demonstrate that having work that aligns with your personally held beliefs increases your productivity and overall sense of well-being, among other benefits.



Foundation of support and accountability.

Feeling personally accountable to someone as well as having a community of support are both tried-and-true ways to support your professional growth. Have you established an accountability crew or a mentoring relationship with someone you trust to help you stretch and develop?



Goal achievement.

Reflect at intervals (such as monthly, quarterly, or mid-year) on the initial goals you set and your current progress toward them. These regular check-ins are also great times to decide if these goals are still relevant or motivating to you.



Productivity.

Are you bringing in more work in the same amount of time? Honing your skills and developing efficiencies may have helped you accomplish a greater number of job tasks in a given timeframe than you did in the past. If your output is up, chances are you've grown in some important ways in your work style that are worth understanding and repeating.



Networking and relationships.

The company we keep is important. Networking [connections](#) can be both an inspiring source of ideas for growth and a valuable sounding board to help us discover more about ourselves and what motivates us.



Change or improvement based on information or data.

If you're tracking things and learning from that data, that's a great sign of professional growth. For example, if you're a freelance writer, you could ask to review the edits made to your work and learn from commonly made mistakes. Not only is this a more efficient way

of working, but it can also benefit you with more work and last-minute opportunities if you continue to be easy to work with and require little editing. This kind of reputation can lead both to more income and better relationships with clients. Gather information that helps you make stronger decisions and improves the quality of your professional work.



Self-knowledge.

Can you easily name your strengths? Has your knowledge of these increased? Have your strengths changed over time?



Openness to feedback.

There's a reason why 360-degree evaluations are widespread in companies that focus on leadership and personal development. It can be really helpful to raise awareness and understand our blind spots, strengths, and weaknesses. Conduct a mini [360-degree evaluation](#) by asking colleagues, clients, family members, and friends you trust to give you candid feedback on your personal performance.



Playing to your strengths.

You have explored a deeper understanding of your strengths and then found actionable ways to harness them. If you need some ideas on discovering your strengths and what you want to accomplish, here's a great [resource](#) to help you.



Happiness.

The feeling of making progress toward a goal is a literal happiness booster. If you're feeling [happier](#), chances are it's due to experiencing personal growth in some area or having a growth mindset.



Victory over weaknesses.

You have knowledge of your weaknesses and how to support yourself in those areas. You've surrounded yourself with the necessary tools, resources, and people to overcome or work around your limitations.



Working smarter.

Gone are the days of begrudgingly working through a task. When you feel that something is hard, you're proactive about identifying the need and taking action. We've all been in that moment, thinking, "This Excel spreadsheet task is taking me way longer than (I thought) it should." Identify the need—enrolling in an online training course, finding an expert to outsource it to, or even deciding the task isn't necessary anymore—then make it happen. Here are a [few ideas](#) for working smarter, not harder.



Continuing education.

Many professionals are required to keep up with current developments and best practices in their field through regular training, conferences, and networking events. As an entrepreneur, you may need to own this process yourself. Have you recently attended any relevant webinars, conferences, or trainings or received any credentials that set you apart or in line with others in your field?



A development routine.

You've developed a routine or established a dedicated time to focus on your development. Take heart, as growth doesn't have to happen in large bursts, either. Anthony Trollope, an author who was also credited with revolutionizing the British postal service said, "A small daily task, if it be really daily, will beat the labours of a [spasmodic Hercules](#)."



Giving.

It's a milestone often overlooked, but you have achieved a very special place in your growth when you realize you have enough energy, desire, and inspiration to give back through your time and abilities, by volunteering or giving back financially to meet the needs in your community.



Sustainability.

You're gaining new projects and new income that are enough to sustain your needs and expenses. These may be a result of increases in your skills, experience, networking, and other factors.



Discernment.

You're able to say no to the projects and/or clients that don't fit you. Here are some [great tips](#) on how to graciously turn down work.



Value.

You have determined your commercial value—through doing market research and tracking the time you've invested in deliverables—and you ask for it when working with a client.



Time allocation.

You're spending time where you need to: on your health, your family, and other areas of life that are important to you. You have determined the value of your time and ensure that you outsource tasks and services as needed to give you more time for the things that matter.



Saving and investing.

You're saving for the future, investing in your career, and giving back to others when you can.



As it turns out, happiness and success may be one big part choosing the [right area](#) to grow in and another big part actually measuring growth in a way that gives meaning to your focus and tells the story of progress. The good news is, you can successfully track your path of personal and business growth—no formal degree in [metrology](#) required.

Here are a few additional resources that may be helpful in your growth journey:

- Reflecting on growth is beneficial throughout your career, and especially helpful during hard times. For inspiration from fellow entrepreneurs who have overcome challenges and used them as learning opportunities, you may enjoy this [podcast](#).
- Just for fun, here's a list of "[101 Reasons Being an Entrepreneur Rocks](#)."
- To check out all of our "20 Tips" resources, go to our [Powerhouse Resources](#) page and follow us on [Facebook](#).



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