



The Permission Audit: A Tool for Anyone Who's Waiting Long Enough

Created by Peggy Vasquez

*You don't need permission to grow. To speak. To take up space.
You already have it. This audit will help you act on it.*

How to Use This Tool

This is a personal audit — not a performance review. There are no right answers. The goal is honesty. The kind you can only have with yourself, in a quiet moment, when no one is watching.

Work through each section slowly. Don't rush past the questions that make you uncomfortable. Those are the ones that matter most.

How to approach it:

- Find a quiet moment — this isn't a skimming exercise.
- Answer honestly. This is your space; no one is grading you.
- Come back to it; awareness builds over time.
- Keep it — refer back to it when you feel yourself shrinking.



SECTION 1 — WHERE ARE YOU WAITING?

Awareness is the first act of courage.

Most of us don't realize how much we're waiting until someone asks us to look. Waiting isn't always obvious. It doesn't always feel like fear. Sometimes it feels like being professional. Being patient. Being polite.

But if the truth is that you're holding back—in meetings, in conversations, in your career—this is where we name it.

Where are you holding back? Check all that apply:

- ☐ Speaking up in meetings
- ☐ Sharing my opinion when I wasn't directly asked
- ☐ Advocating for myself in a performance review or career conversation
- ☐ Asking for a raise, promotion, or expanded role
- ☐ Pushing back on a decision I disagreed with
- ☐ Volunteering for a visible project or opportunity
- ☐ Starting a conversation I've been putting off
- ☐ Introducing myself to someone with more authority
- ☐ Saying "I did that" instead of deflecting credit
- ☐ Other:

Now go deeper:

1. Which area on that list has cost you the most?

2. How long have you been waiting in that area?

3. What has the waiting cost you — in opportunity, confidence, or visibility?



SECTION 2 — WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

Fear doesn't mean stop. It means pay attention.

Here's what I've learned from years of working with administrative professionals: the waiting is almost never about capability. It's about fear. And the fear is almost always one of these.

Which of these fears is driving the waiting? Check all that apply:

- ☐ Being wrong — and having people see it
- ☐ Being rejected — and what that would mean about me
- ☐ Being seen as too much: too bold, too ambitious, too forward
- ☐ Being seen as not enough: not experienced, not credentialed, not ready
- ☐ Disrupting the relationship with my executive, my team, my peers
- ☐ Losing what I already have by reaching for more
- ☐ Standing out in a way that invites scrutiny
- ☐ Other:

Now sit with it:

4. Which fear is most familiar to you?

5. Where did you learn that fear? Was it taught to you — by a manager, an experience, a workplace that punished boldness?

6. Is that fear protecting you — or just keeping you small?



SECTION 3 — WHAT WILL YOU DO INSTEAD?

One step. Not ten. Just one.

This is where the audit becomes action. You don't need a plan. You need a decision. One specific, honest commitment to stop waiting in one area — starting now.

Complete this:

Instead of waiting for _____,

I will _____.

I will do this by (date): _____.

7. What's the smallest possible version of that step — something you could do in the next 48 hours?

8. Who could support you in taking it?

9. What will you tell yourself when the fear shows up — because it will?

REMEMBER:

No one handed me permission. I stopped waiting for it. And my career, my life, and my confidence changed when I did.

- ✓ Awareness is the first act of courage
- ✓ Fear is information — not a verdict
- ✓ You don't need to feel ready. You need to decide.

You don't need permission to grow.
You don't need permission to speak.
You don't need permission to take up space.

You already have it. Now act on it.

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