

# Saent's mission and Lifeline's UX overhaul - What do you think?

We're embarking on a critical new phase for Saent, and I'll involve you at every step by sharing regular updates here on the blog and in the [Saent community](#).

We're about to overhaul Lifeline's user experience (UX). Such a project matters if you're already using our app. But the impact of this undertaking reaches beyond Lifeline and touches all aspects of Saent.



Photo by [Denys Nevozhai](#) on [Unsplash](#)

UX design—at the scope we're dealing with here—is about more than what the interface looks like. It scrutinizes the entire product experience by diving deep into the user's world with questions such as:

- What's the vision and purpose of your company or product?
- Who are your typical users?
- What are their objectives?
- Why do they have these objectives in the first place?
- What's the most optimal way for our product to fulfill them?

We didn't have clear answers to these questions. I had many bits and pieces scattered across blog posts and notes collected over many years. But none were as crisp and coherent as they should be.

Asking these questions has forced me to revisit the fundamentals of Saent. Below you'll find what I've come up with so far, but none of it is final.

💬 ***I'd love to hear what you would change about these ideas** in the comments below or [jump on a call with me here](#) to share your thoughts. You can also comment on specific sections in [this Google Doc version](#).*

## Saent's vision and purpose

*"Today's organizations don't need more efficiency—they need human creativity and imagination."* - Myles Downey in [Effective Modern Coaching](#)

We believe the future of work isn't a place for Inbox Zero and overwork heroes. Instead, it's a world that values creativity, deep work, and balance:

- **Creativity** = thinking, valuable & meaningful ideas, creating, problem-solving, decision making. *Robots and automation will take over most everything else.*
- **Deep work** = *"Professional activities performed in a state of distraction-free concentration that push your cognitive capabilities to their limit. These efforts create new value, improve your skill, and are hard to replicate."* - Cal Newport in [Deep Work](#)
- **Balance** = disconnecting, rest, reflection, learning, sprinting (focus-rest, focus-rest), harmony across all life's areas. *Inspiration is creativity's fuel, and it usually strikes when you're not working.*

No one ever produced a great work without these three elements. Or, put differently:

**peak creativity = deep work + balance**



If you need an economic justification for this vision, here's one: In the future of work, individuals, teams, and companies that can consistently reach peak creativity will create the most value for themselves and others. As a bonus, they'll do so in a way that's more fulfilling and healthier than those who don't.



*Photo by [Federico Beccari](#) on [Unsplash](#)*

## **What pain does Saent resolve, and what happens if we don't?**

We know of many a creator who comes out of bed to crawl behind their computer and attack an endless to-do list. They take a guilty toilet break now and then, plus a sandwich at their desk that has to pass for lunch, only to end their days well into the evening with more tasks on their list than when they started.

If we don't resolve this sad state, much creative potential continues going unfulfilled, while creators continue wasting unnecessary and low-value hours at computers instead of in other pursuits.

Thoughts and remarks like these are typical for people in this struggle:

- "I've worked all day, but what have I *done*?"
- "I just can't focus."
- "How are you?" "F\*cking busy."
- "I work a lot less these days. Just around 50 hours per week instead of the crazy 70+ weeks I was doing before." 🤖
- "Yeah, of course I know I should do more of X, Y, Z, if only I had the time. You know how it is. Work's just too busy."

This dreadful situation has two root causes:

1. The ravenous appetite of work.
2. Creators squandering their time and attention.

## 1. The ravenous appetite of work

*"Here's what many of us know but can be tough to admit: Work will fill the space you give to it." - [Conscious Culture](#)*

Work, left unchecked, is a hungry beast that eats up every possible hour of your life.

Sadly, that's precisely the situation for most creators, especially since the global COVID pandemic. Work finds you anywhere at any time, which leads to a state I already [described and coined many years ago](#): **"Everything, all the time."**

When you live together with a ravenous beast 24/7 (thanks, smartphone!), you have **no rest EVER**, and **all other areas of your life die** a slow and sure death.



Photo by [Philipp Pilz](#) on [Unsplash](#)

This situation is detrimental to your health, relationships with loved ones, and, ultimately, your creativity and ability to produce great work. It's also impossible to get out of, as illustrated beautifully with the analogy below from the book [Brave New Work](#):

*"A few people are struggling mightily to pull a cart full of stones up a hill. The cart is outfitted with surprisingly square wheels. Another man who has happened upon them offers an innovation: round wheels. "No thanks!" they say. "We are too busy."*

## 2. Creators squandering their time and attention

When you have financial troubles, the [first recommendation](#) is to create a budget to know what you spend your money on.

It's the same for our time and attention. **Ignorance** about where they go is directly related to a low [Return on Attention](#).

When you do keep track, you'll find lots of attention gets sucked away by **distractions**. Some of your own making—worries, stress, insecurity, doing meaningless tasks—that get amplified by many external ones—notifications, other people, games, and so on.

A side effect of such distractions is that you lose your **ability to focus**. The more deep work you do, the more focused you get, and the longer you can sustain it. Unfortunately, the inverse holds, too.

These factors add up to many low-value hours with not much creative work to show for them.

## How does Saent resolve these problems?

Saent is like Strava—a running and cycling app—for creative work. We create products and content that help you do the best creative work of your life through a rhythm of deep work and balance.

*"How much sleep do you get per night? When was the last time you worked more than 40 hours a week? Are you happy at your job? These are the questions that most impact software quality... Programming is an extension of our minds, and anything that compromises our minds will hurt our programming skills." - Hillel Wayne in [The Epistemology of Software Quality](#)*

Saent is for creators who believe—as we do—that the future of work belongs to those who can reach peak creativity frequently, consistently, and sustainably. It's for those who believe that the roads of all-nighters, mind-boggling multitasking, and endless distractions lead nowhere.

Instead, the journey to peak creativity involves daily deep work interspersed with plenty of rest and time for other inspiring pursuits like reading, learning, sports, and quality time with others.

## Hit your deep work rhythm

[All great artists](#) and activities have rhythm. But rhythm doesn't happen by accident—you need to craft, practice, refine, and maintain it. Lifeline's reports and timeline visualize your daily rhythm so you can compose and practice yours. You'll see how much you've focused and when it's time to rest. And Saent's community, challenges, and other content help you refine rhythm over time.

*"One woman shifted a hairpin from one container to another whenever she wrote a page of her book. Another man moved a marble from one bin to the next after each set of push-ups. Making progress is satisfying, and visual measures—like moving paper clips or hairpins or marbles—provide clear evidence of your progress." - James Clear in [Atomic Habits](#)*

## Tame the ravenous work beast

Lifeline helps you see—and limit—the time and attention you spend on work activities. At the same time, many of its features—along with Saent's content and community—are focused on maximizing the quality of those hours you do spend working.

Finally, we ensure you pay out your increased Return on Attention in other areas of life, not more work. That balance leads to increased inspiration, which further lifts your creativity and starts a virtuous cycle.

## Seamless improvement, not as an add-on

Everything about Saent is immediately actionable. You don't need to spend hours to learn how Lifeline works or grind through one of our books or challenges. We design everything to fit into your existing daily work rhythm with little or no investment of your time or attention.

Lifeline, for example, trains your ability to do deep work every day. Or take our [Find Your Focus challenge](#): it lasts just ten days and requires a daily investment of only 10 -to 20 minutes.

*"The nice thing about deep work is that it's a clear state of mind. You begin a session with a well-defined ritual, you work on a stretch chunk for 1 – 3 hours, then you finish and go rest. This clarity allows you to track how much time you spend in the state. This tracking gives you a number to try to improve. You'll be surprised by how little time you naturally spend doing deep work. You'll also be surprised by how quickly you can increase these numbers once you know what you're looking for and are keeping track of what you're doing."* - Cal Newport in [Knowledge Workers Are Bad at Working](#)

Most productivity tools help you prepare, organize, collaborate, or analyze. When it comes time for doing the actual work, you're on your own. Not with Saent and Lifeline—we improve the work experience itself.

## What Saent isn't

As reading tool Readwise [described here](#) about their product development process, it's sometimes helpful to define what a product is *not*.

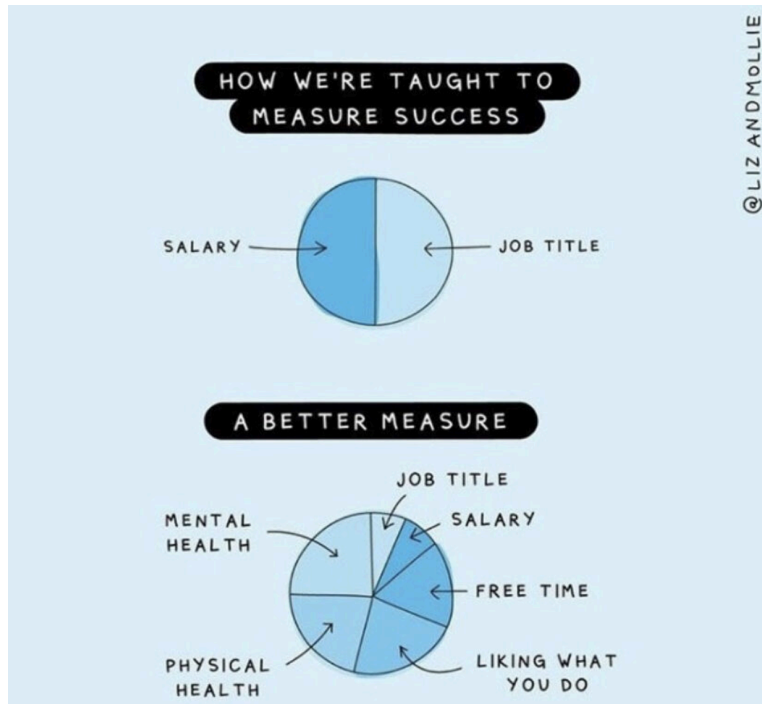
Saent is not:

- A task manager
- A distraction blocker
- A time-tracker or client billing solution



- An efficiency maximizer or automation tool
- A timer tool for hustlers, robots, or big brother managers

## Our mission - the change we want to see if we succeed



We're taking a stand against busyness and growth as the main priorities and badges of honor for knowledge workers and creators specifically. Productivity is a means to an end, not the end.

We encourage meaningful instead of meaningless productivity and strive to invest its returns in shorter workweeks and days, not more work.

*"Work-life balance and wellness impact us in a subtler way than technical practices do. It's easy to point to a bug and say, 'This couldn't have happened in Rust.' It's a lot harder to point to a bug and say, 'This wouldn't have happened if the programmer wasn't stressed out and sleep-deprived.' There's no feedback loop that pushes developers away from too much stress and too little sleep."* - Hillel Wayne in [The Epistemology of Software Quality](#)


A key role for Saent in all this is to help creators reduce their work time *and* prove that that's a more effective and valuable approach than overwork.

We know we've succeeded when we see people bragging on Instagram and LinkedIn about how short their workweek was, along with evidence—data, screenshots—from Lifeline.



***“Either you believe that we need to change how we work, and you’re going to take that leap, or you don’t and you won’t. From here on out, I’m speaking to the believers. The catalysts. The visionaries. The risk takers. The readers who know in their gut that if we don’t change how we come together as human beings to build and shape the future, then the future won’t be a place we want to be.”*** - Aaron Dignan in [Brave New Work](#)

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