

Robert M. Abbott, PhD, CMC

CAREER PROFILE IN BRIEF:

I believe humans can come into a truly life-sustaining relationship with the rest of the Earth community. Fueled by this core belief, I have devoted most of my life to studying human-environment interactions; consulting to businesses and organizations working to reduce the impacts of industrial society on the environment; and proposing alternative structures and processes to create wealth and well being with a lighter ecological footprint. More recently, my focus has further evolved to an emphasis on shifting human consciousness with respect to our place in the human and more than human worlds. I have worked in academia, government, the non-profit and private sectors, nationally and internationally. Within this context, some of my signal accomplishments over a 20+ year career include:

Academic:

- Designed and delivered sustainability curricula for undergraduate and graduate students of management at Royal Roads University (2003-2008).
- Designed and delivered guest lectures or short courses on global management, environmental education, environment and sustainability, and management and leadership at universities in Canada, the United States, Thailand and China (1986-Present)

Business:

- Worked with many of the “early adopter” companies and organizations globally who defined the first generation of sustainability thinking and work (NIKE, Starbucks, and others). Comfortable in boardroom strategy creation as well as factory-floor implementation, performance measurement and reporting.
- Expertise in sustainability strategy and implementation as well as the governance, systems, public policy, accountability and stakeholder engagement aspects of the sustainability agenda.
- Track record of success in bringing regulators, industry, First Nations, NGOs, academics and others together to forge novel collaborations and solutions.

Government:

- Served as Executive Director in multiple capacities with the Ministry of Environment for the Province of British Columbia. Led British Columbia to two consecutive years of carbon neutral government – a globally significant achievement; developed a new business model for BC Parks that will create several millions of dollars per year of new revenue; and facilitated the development of an overarching strategy with respect to Treaty 8 First Nations in Northeastern BC.

Non-Profit:

- Served as CEO of one of Canada’s Networks of Centers of Excellence – a multi-million dollar medical life sciences NGO that facilitated the translation of genetic and genomic research into commercial opportunity.

Robert M. Abbott, PhD, CMC

WRITING AND SPEAKING

- Published two books, *Uncommon Cents: Thoreau and the Nature of Business* (2008) and *Conscious Endeavors: Essays on Business, Society and the Journey to Sustainability* (2009). A third book, *The Future of Mining: 7 Steps to a Globally Sustainable Industry*, is in press and will be published in 2016.
- *Dreaming the Dream Onward: An Initiatory Journey in Poems*, chronicles my recent work with Bill Plotkin in eco-psychology and Soulcraft, and informs my current work to transform attitudes towards nature, and the structures and processes that have placed too many people at a remove from the land – and their own wild nature and heritage. I hope to publish *Dreaming the Dream Onward* in 2016.
- Presented original materials on sustainability and strategy at over 150 conferences and symposia globally
- Since 1997, have written a Blog, *The Strategist*, on topical issues in sustainability, community resilience and global management
- Regularly retained to moderate conferences and workshops, including the Gaining Ground series of sustainability summits in Victoria, Vancouver and Calgary between 2008 and 2010.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Executive Director, Ministry of Environment, Government of British Columbia 2012 – 2015

- Natural Resource Sector (NRS) lead in Northeastern British Columbia, with responsibility for coordinating multiple provincial agencies and their negotiations with Treaty 8 First Nations, industry, and other stakeholders over natural resource development, with an emphasis on LNG development.
- Facilitated the development of an overarching strategy for Treaty 8 territory in Northeastern British Columbia emphasizing critical success factors for government, First Nations, and industry.
- Led the development of the BC Parks Business Strategy and financial viability strategy – work that is integral to the continuing ability of this organization to deliver both world-renowned outdoor recreation opportunities and globally significant temperate zone biodiversity protection.
- Guided the achievement of carbon neutrality across the provincial public sector – a first for North America (2012/13/14).
- Expanded the Carbon Neutral Capital Program from \$5 million per year (for K-12 education) to \$14 million per year to include all post-secondary institutions and all health authorities in the province.

Founder & President, [ABBOTT STRATEGIES](#) 2010 – 2012; 2016 – Present

Robert M. Abbott, PhD, CMC

ABBOTT STRATEGIES is a strategic consultancy focused on multi-stakeholder collaboration to drive whole system change and the creation of shareholder and societal value. Representative projects included:

- Worked extensively with Alberta Oilsands majors and super-majors to “raise the bar” on Oilsands reclamation and make it the gold standard worldwide.
- Developed a sustainability strategy for the National Energy Board of Canada.
- Provided environmental and sustainability advice over a two-year period to Teck Resources, Canada’s most diversified mining company as a member of a blue-ribbon advisory panel assembled from across North America.

Director of Sustainability, [STRATOS INC.](#)

2008 - 2010

Stratos is one of Canada’s leading sustainability consultancies. In addition to managing all aspects of the sustainability practice (strategy creation and implementation, staff recruitment and mentoring, market development, project management), representative projects included:

- Opened and led the Calgary/Western Canadian HQ of the firm.
- Developed a sustainability strategy for Walmart Canada.
- Developed a strategic issues management plan for Suncor Energy.
- Created a sustainability materiality analysis for the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association.

Practice Leader, Corporate Responsibility & Sustainability, Calgary/Alberta [DELOITTE](#)

2007 – 2008

- Led the creation of a sustainability and climate change practice in the Calgary/Alberta market.
- Assessed strategic alignment between sustainability and broad business strategy for Suncor Energy.

Founder & President, [ABBOTT STRATEGIES](#)

1997 – 2007

- Developed a global decarbonization strategy as well as an environmental strategy for NIKE.
- Developed global ecological footprint for Starbucks to highlight areas within the company’s value chain where significant environmental impacts occur.
- Designed and implemented an ISO-conformant EMS for the entire power supply side of BC Hydro, one of North America’s largest electric utilities. Guided the corporation to successful registration of the system to ISO-14001.

Director, Strategic Environmental Management Services, [GOLDER ASSOCIATES](#)

1995 – 1997

Robert M. Abbott, PhD, CMC

Golder Associates is one of the world's largest and most respected consulting engineering firms, with particular expertise in mining and oil and gas. Representative projects included:

- Established baseline environmental and OH&S performance at NIKE's third-party contract factories in China, Vietnam, and Indonesia.
- Examined the environmental, economic, social and cultural issues associated with shrimp farms throughout Thailand. Developed strategies and policies to leverage good practices and improve areas of weakness.
- Acted as Manager and Team Leader for a privileged and confidential environmental audit of a major base metal producer's operations in the Yukon and Alaska. Audit included all operating mine sites as well as transportation facilities serving the mines and port facilities where ore concentrate was stored.
- Developed an environmental strategy for a major transportation client in Alaska as part of a plea arrangement with the US Department of Justice.

Principal & Practice Leader, Environmental Excellence & Sustainability, COOPERS & LYBRAND (now [PricewaterhouseCoopers](#))

1990 – 1995

- Created first sustainability report for BC Hydro, one of North America's largest electric utilities.
- Created plan, endorsed by Board, to make BC Hydro the most sustainable electric utility in North America.
- Developed national contaminated sites remediation strategy for the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Canada.

EDUCATION

PhD	Resource and Environmental Management, Simon Fraser University (1999) Dissertation focus: <i>The Business Value of Sustainability – A Case Study of the British Columbia Pulp and Paper industry</i>
MA	Geography (specialist designation in Environmental Studies), University of Toronto (1986)
BA (Honors)	Applied Resource Geography, University of Victoria (1984)
CMC	Certified Management Consultant (2002)

CRITICAL SKILLS

- Expertise in understanding the issues at the heart of the economy-energy-environment nexus
- Consistently high reviews for teaching, facilitation, and workshop and conference moderation

Robert M. Abbott, PhD, CMC

- Track record of success in reducing costs, increasing revenues, improving reputation and creating both shareholder and societal value.
- Expertise in sustainability strategy and implementation as well as the governance, systems, public policy, accountability and stakeholder engagement aspects of the sustainability agenda.
- Expertise in competitive strategy, climate change and the linkages between sustainability, reputation and branding.
- Ability to quickly assess organizational and competitive contexts and focus leadership teams on key issues: values, passion, innovation, adaptation and organizational ideology.
- Proven ability to motivate staff for peak performance; to manage projects on time and budget; to exercise governance responsibilities; and to effectively engage high impact/high influence stakeholders.

PROFESSIONAL/COMMUNITY SERVICE

Present

Board Member, Whistler Centre for Sustainability
Member, External Advisory Committee, School of Environmental Studies, University of Victoria

Past

Board Member and Member of Executive Committee, Canadian Genetic Diseases Network and Canadian Gene Cure Foundation
Board Member, Smart Growth BC
Chair, Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (Vancouver)
ASTM Committee E-50 on Environmental Assessment
ASTM Sub-Committee on Environmental Performance Standards
Business Council of British Columbia (Environment Committee)
Chair, Principles and Practices Committee, Canadian Environmental Auditing Association (CEAA)
Member, CEAA Executive Committee
Founding member of CSA national technical committee on environmental management systems (EMS) – wrote EMS standard adopted by CSA and ISO.
Institute for Research on Environment and Economy, University of Ottawa