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"Quotes"

"I am constantly being told that I have been a big influence for many people, including other musicians."

~Joan Armatrading

"Whatever your discipline, become a student of excellence in all things. Take every opportunity to observe people who manifest the qualities of mastery. These models of excellence will inspire you and guide you toward the fulfillment of your highest potential."

~Tony Buzan

"[I]f you don't pay the price day in and day out, you'll never achieve true mastery of the subjects you study or develop an educated mind."

~Stephen Covey

*"Having someone like him around, other players sort of raise their playing. *** He's a big leader and a great influence on the younger players."*

~Jon Deeble

"The great thing and the hard thing is to stick to things when you have outlived the first interest, and not yet got the second which comes with a sort of mastery."

~Janet Erskine

"Mastery is not something that strikes in an instant, like a thunderbolt, but a gathering power that moves steadily through time, like weather."

~John William Gardner

"Leadership is more if not much more influence, rather than position."

~John Maxwell

"If people knew how hard I worked to get my mastery, it wouldn't seem so wonderful at all."

~Michelangelo

"Ah, mastery... what a profoundly

Dear Friend,

If They Only Knew

I probably shouldn't reveal this secret, but...oh well, I will. It's been my practice over the years to seek input from unexpected sources when I hire someone.

Now, I'm not talking about skulking around in a person's past to get dirt. Nope. There's usually no need for that. Invariably, I can get as much input by surveying the people in the office whom a candidate often doesn't feel the need to cozy up to because they aren't a formal part of the hiring process. Who are these wonderful judges of true character? Often, it's the administrative team members - the folks who answer the phone calls, or labor to coordinate schedules, or provide greetings at the front door.

I can't tell you the number of times that I've stopped by a receptionist's desk after ushering out an interviewee, only to be met with a grimace and a shaking head, as a portrait of the real candidate (or at least another side of the person) was painted for me. If only the candidate knew just how much influence that person - an individual without a lofty title or hiring authority - actually had in making the decision about his or her future.

Yup, we tend to miss things...sometimes important things. And, what we miss can hurt us or, at a minimum, it can make the journey more difficult.

With that in mind, this month's edition of *EA Insights* asks an important question: "Are You Making the Most of the Seat You're In?" You may find that there's much more you could do where you are right now. So, read on.

Also, if improving your leadership prospects is important to you, there's still time left to register for the May 2014 start of **Maximizing Personal Influence: Experiencing Leadership Success...Even When You're Not in the Leadership Seat**. ([Click here for more information](#)).

All the best,

June

June Melvin Mickens
Executive Advantage, LLC

Are You Making the Most of the Seat You're In?

June Melvin Mickens
Executive Advantage, LLC

Undergirding our work at **Executive Advantage** is a desire to assist people to build thriving businesses and careers. And so, as you can imagine, a lot of attention is paid to the future - what our clients see for their tomorrows and how they can get there.

Now, by no means would I advocate that people stop looking forward. I earnestly do believe that eyeing the future is essential; it keeps you alive and inspired.

Before mapping out what's upcoming, though, I believe that it's equally important to assess where you are *right now*. On one hand, contemplation about the present provides perspective that's necessary in order to create realistic plans about tomorrow. Further, pausing to evaluate today can help you to see if you truly are making the most of what you have access to right now. You may be surprised to find that you're not taking advantage of everything that's actually available to you in the seat you're in today.

Consider what you may be missing in three fundamental areas.

Mastery

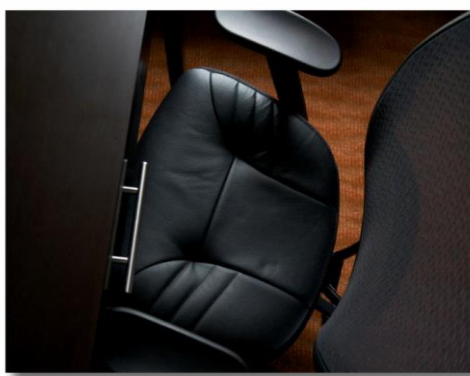
Sometimes people come to us for coaching support as they strategize about, and then travel the path of, advancing to the next career level. Clearly, professional advancement is a valid desire, and partnering with someone to think things through deliberately is a smart investment.

Interestingly, what we may discover during the course of the work is that the person has put the cart before the horse. We've got a person whose priority is tomorrow, but who hasn't mastered fully the role which he or she plays today.

So, as you think about growth, look first at the skills and expectations that are associated with your current role. Are you performing well? Can you, without reservation, cite a pattern of examples that shows that you've mastered the current functions for which you're responsible? If not, it doesn't mean that you stop thinking about the future. However, maybe the short-term milestones become goals related to acing the expectations for your current job so that you're well-prepared for that next role.

Opportunity

Have you ever gotten so locked in on one thing, even something good, that you missed out on other things that were equally good, if not better? I have.



Well, as you consider the seat you're in right now, what are the opportunities available to you? Sometimes we focus in on the negatives: "I'm only an X, so I can't do Y." But, what can you do from where you sit?

Think about the job itself.

Are there aspects of your current role that never really have been fleshed out? That's an opportunity!

Are there special assignments (on top of doing your basic job well) that might offer you experience or exposure that would prepare and/or position you for the future you're envisioning? Those are opportunities!

Are there people in your current sphere of influence who could be significant contacts because they're great teachers, mentors, champions, networkers, or something else? These folks present opportunities!

There may be opportunities open to you...right now...that you're not accessing. And, as a result, you may be making your journey to tomorrow longer, more difficult, or not as full as it could be.

Influence

People sometimes tell me that they see leadership in their future. And, that makes me chuckle. Leadership doesn't have to wait! Who or what are you leading now?

Wherever you sit, you have a sphere of influence. What are you doing with that?

If you walk into any organization, and you're perceptive, you will begin to recognize the influencers. Some of them have leadership titles. Many of them don't. And, that's not a bad thing.

So, do you recognize the level of influence that you do, or could, play where you are right now? How are you impacting where you are right now in ways that yield positive results and advance shared goals? Are you developing your leadership - your influence - skills on a daily basis so that you can maximize your effectiveness wherever you sit today? (And, if you answered "No" or "I'm not sure" to any of these questions, I invite you to register today for the **Maximizing Personal Influence** seminar beginning in May [[Click here](#)]. Join me in a small-group setting to focus in on this important area of your professional development.)

You see, when you find yourself so mentally done with today that you are only, or primarily, focused on tomorrow, you're probably missing out. Let no day be a waste. Make the most of the seat you're in today, and use that seat to take you to a tomorrow that finds you well-prepared for all that lies ahead.

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MAXIMIZING PERSONAL INFLUENCE

Experiencing Leadership Success...Even When You're Not in the Leadership Seat

- * Do people count on you to lead, even though *leading* technically is not a part of your job?
- * Have you been tapped as a leader, but your efforts often don't yield the results you want?

Overview

Join **Executive Advantage, LLC** for *Maximizing Personal Influence: Experiencing Leadership Success...Even When You're Not in the Leadership Seat*. *Maximizing Personal Influence* is a multi-session seminar, designed to bring you together with other professionals in a small-group setting to help you improve performance and success as a leader. It offers a rare opportunity to learn about effective leadership, to take a fresh look at the present, to build your skills, to plan for the future, and to expand your network in the process.

How Can You Join Us?

Reserve your spot today for *Maximizing Personal Influence*!

* Five-Month Program: Six Sessions (May - Sept. 2014)

- Four Group Sessions
(Full-day sessions; Saturday, 5/17, 6/21, 7/19, & 9/20)

- Two Individual Coaching Sessions
(Hour-long sessions; Months 1 & 4)

* **Location:** Courtyard Marriott Downtown Silver Spring

* **Registration:** \$3,000.00 (Payment plans available)

[Click here for more information.](#)

About Executive Advantage

At **Executive Advantage**, we are committed to providing results-based business and management consulting, leadership development, and coaching support. We partner with business leaders to build healthy, well-functioning organizations, where goals are met and people thrive. We also partner with individuals to create professional (and personal) lives with clearer direction, improved results, and greater balance.

To learn more about **Executive Advantage**, contact us [online](#) or at (301) 280-5950.

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satisfying feeling when one finally gets on top of a new set of skills... and then sees the light under the new door those skills can open, even as another door is closing."

~Gail Sheehy

"[W]hy should I run for office and lose what little influence I have?"

~Ron Silver

"The world is full of abundance and opportunity, but far too many people come to the fountain of life with a sieve instead of a tank car, a teaspoon instead of a steam shovel. They expect little and as a result they get little."

~Ben Sweetland

"The influential man is the successful man, whether he be rich or poor."

~Orison Swett Marden

"Why are there so many people who never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity?"

~Unknown

"To recognize an opportunity and use it is the difference between success and failure."

~Unknown

"A wise man doesn't just wait for the right opportunity, He creates the right opportunity."

~Unknown

"I have more influence now than when I had the power."

~Gough Whitlam

"[He] is the definition of a leader. He's a calming and focusing influence and he fights every game, every step of the way."

~Ted Woodward