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## "Quotes"

*"Many workplaces that never before offered telecommuting have had to do so in the face of the coronavirus. Once systems are established and practiced, both government and private employers will institute more telecommuting options."*

~Sharyl Attkisson

*"The reality ... is that it's future-oriented. If we're planning for what we have, we're behind the curve."*

~Anthony Foxx

*"Happy is the person who knows what to remember of the past, what to enjoy in the present, and what to plan for in the future."*

~Arnold H. Glasow

*"Forecasting our futures is built into our psyches because we will soon have to manage that future."*

~Alan Greenspan

*"An adaptable company is one that captures more than its fair share of new opportunities. It's always redefining its 'core business' in ways that open up*

## The New Normal

It is an understatement to say that we are living in unprecedented times. COVID-19 has left its mark, in some way, worldwide.

A client shared with me recently that her 7-year-old pushed back adamantly on her characterization of the switchover to homeschooling and the calls for social distancing as "the new normal". In no uncertain terms, his response was "Mommy, this is NOT normal!" So true, my dear little one, so true...

Yet, this is the normal we have...for now anyway. But, for those of us who continue to work during this season, and for those of us who eagerly anticipate the day when we must awaken to an alarm again and don something other than sweatpants, the time we have now is utterly important.

And so, I invite you to join me for this edition of **EA Insights**. Let's take a few minutes to think about business decisions -- those for today and those for the tomorrows we all long to welcome in the very near future.

All the best,

*June*

June Melvin Mickens  
Executive Advantage, LLC

## Open for Business?

June Melvin Mickens  
Executive Advantage, LLC

COVID-19 has forced us all to function differently than we ever would have expected a year ago.

Who would have envisioned that considerations of essential vs. non-essential businesses; face masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer; or worldwide social distancing and virtual just about everything would become a way of life...prayerfully only for a season?

Who would have foreseen the impact of a virus on businesses of all shapes and sizes?

Yet, this indeed is the situation in which we find ourselves. And, these are the circumstances that we, as business owners, managers, and staff must work through -- both for today and for the future.

So, if you are in, want to return to, and want to a long future of *Open for Business* days, I have three questions for you.

**Are you managing current operations wisely?**



Public health restrictions have been placed on every one of us. But, that doesn't mean that all business has stopped. Telecommuting for office staff; virtual doctor's appointments, hair-care consultations, classroom sessions, and even church; drive-through and delivery restaurant services and more have allowed many of us to continue to function...albeit differently.

Clearly, this season does not permit business *as usual*. But, are you maximizing your ability to continue to do business in *some* manner?

We often talk about innovation. Well, if at no other time, this is the time for it. Although, we'd all love to get back to normal life...like yesterday...until we can, how do you make the most of what you do have? How do you use your current resources -- human, financial, facilities, supplies, etc. -- in order to keep some semblance of an operation going? This is the time to stretch your thinking; try new methods; perhaps even adapt to meet related, but slightly altered, needs in order to provide a service and stay in business.

There's opportunity today. Are your eyes open to it?

### **Are you planning for the resumption of operations?**

There will come a day when the restrictions are loosened and ultimately lifted. But, trust me, it won't be as if someone waves a magic wand and all goes back to normal overnight.

The \$64,000 question is: Will you be ready?

Does everyone return at once? Does everyone return? Do you maintain aspects of the operational changes made or the new markets entered during this season of distancing? What decisions or assistance are needed in order to ready yourself and those around you to get back to work fully? How do you communicate that the doors -- literally or figuratively -- are open again?

Today is the time to begin planning for business resumption for the days immediately after the go-ahead is given. But, also...

### **Are you forecasting for the future?**

The okay to get back to work will be a wonderful mile marker. And, clearly, we need to be ready for it. What happens next, though?

Eventually people may be permitted to come back to work, or come to your establishment. However, for a while it may be more of a trickle than a gush. We don't know. Are you prepared?

You may have had a significant market share pre-coronavirus, but it's unlikely to automatically return to that level immediately after stay-at-home lifting. What do you do?

You see, it's future-focused planning that also becomes an essential part of the work to be undertaken now. This is the time to devote some effort to thinking about internal and external factors that affect the business, about lessons learned over the past month or so as we've been pushed out of our comfort zones, and even about hair-brained ideas that were tried...and worked completely or to some degree. If you don't look ahead, and you simply attempt to return to business as usual, at best, an opportunity is missed and, at worst, you just may be signing your own business-end papers.

So, I join you in your desire for us all to be open for business in the fullest sense very, very soon. In the meantime, though, it is important not only to stay healthy but also to plan well.



If having a strategic thinking partner to come along side during this period would be a help to you, call on us at **Executive Advantage**. Let us assist you to make wise decisions on an individual or business-wide level so that you can truly get back to work. **Contact us today.**

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## 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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*new avenues for growth."*

~Gary Hamel

*"The outbreak of COVID-19 has created an unprecedented situation around the world."*

~Ram Nath Kovind

*"Ideas can be life-changing. Sometimes all you need to open the door is just one more good idea."*

~Jim Rohn

*"Managing a business, small or large, today requires an extremely disciplined, thoughtful approach with regard to the pressure that people are under."*

~Howard Schultz

*"It is ... essential that we engage with companies and potential investors and get the message across that we are open for business."*

~Nicola Sturgeon

*"[O]nce you open up your...store again, you're open for business. And you have to be responsible."*

~Quentin Tarantino

*"There's definitely a huge opportunity for businesses to transform their operations and decision making[.]"*

~Jerry Yang