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## "Quotes"

*"One of the things I learned the hard way was that it doesn't pay to get discouraged. Keeping busy and making optimism a way of life can restore your faith in yourself."*

~Lucille Ball

*"Cease to be a drudge, seek to be an artist."*

~Mary McLeod Bethune

*"Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skillful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives, the cumulative experience of many masters of craftsmanship. Quality also marks the search for an ideal after necessity has been satisfied and mere usefulness achieved."*

~William Foster

Dear Friend,

### A Song from the Past

Whether you're a Diana Ross fan or not, if you were around in the mid-70's, you're probably at least somewhat familiar with *The Theme from Mahogany*. After all, this song had to have been sung at more than half of the graduations and school music programs in 1975 and 1976, and it became ingrained in our memories.

*Do you know where you're going to?  
Do you like the things that life is showing you?  
Where are you going to?  
Do you know...?*

Now, although I do enjoy an occasional walk down memory lane, there's another reason for recalling this song from the past. As I've been informally talking with folks lately -- business owners, executives, managers, leaders, professionals -- so frequently what I'm hearing is dissatisfaction...with where your business is, with where your team is, with where your career is (or your current job), with your results. And, in typical "June-fashion," I want to see what I can do to help you turn things around!

So, expect two things from **Executive Advantage...**

First, of course, is this month's edition of *EA Insights*. The focus this month is *What Do You Do When You Don't Like Whatcha Got*. Let's talk about what's vexing you, how you cope with it, and how you can improve your likelihood of turning things around.

Second, though, we're building in a touch point -- an opportunity to check in with you and get your feedback on ways that **Executive Advantage** can support your "turn-around" efforts more effectively. Expect a call from a member of our team. (I promise; we're pushing for 5 minutes or less. We know that you're busy!) Let us know what topics you'd like to read about in upcoming newsletter issues. Tell us about your current business and/or professional challenges. We want to know what's important to you. And, we want to partner with you in turning things around.

All the best,

*June*

June Melvin Mickens  
Executive Advantage, LLC

## What Do You Do When You Don't Like Whatcha Got?

**June Melvin Mickens, J.D.**  
**Executive Advantage, LLC**

*"My job.... It could be better, but it pays the bills."*

*"I had a dream, when I started this business. But, this isn't at all what I planned."*

*"Being a manager would be great, if I didn't have to deal with the people!"*

You've got a career, a business, a position. But, what do you do when you don't like whatcha got?



Seriously, you've worked hard. You've paid your dues. You've dreamed. Now, what do you do, where do you turn, how do you get a handle on things, when that great picture that you painted for yourself looks nothing like the reality you face on a daily basis?

Trust me, finding the first flight out, isn't the only answer. When you don't like what you're facing, consider following these steps:

**Figure out what's really going on.** Take a step back, and look honestly at what really is going on. Get a handle on things, as best as you can, without emotion, without blame, and without guilt. As neutrally as possible, describe the current situation.

- What is the environment? Who are the players, and how are they performing? What's your part?
- What *is* working, and why? What *isn't* working, and why?
- What did you *expect* to do, have, or experience? How does that match up against what you *actually* do, have, or experience?
- Can you distinguish the root cause(s) of what is happening from the symptoms? What are they?

**Consider YOU.** Sometimes people make decisions based on glamour, or others' expectations for them, or misconceptions about what they *should* do with their lives or businesses. But, the question is whether they have ever stopped to consider how they are uniquely wired.

So, it's important to pause and to reflect on who YOU are.

- What do you do well? Where do you struggle?
- As an individual, what brings you so much joy that time stands still when you do it? As a company, where's your sweet spot -- that place where you and your people are just in the zone?
- What dreams do you have for yourself short-term and long-term, and how is what you're doing now moving you in the direction of your dream(s)?

**Work through the alternatives.** After analyzing the situation and thinking realistically about yourself, come up with any and all possible alternatives. Map them out.

- How could this play out? What are the options?
- What are the pros and cons of each possibility?
- How can you craft a more favorable outcome for yourself, your team, or your organization?



**Don't go it alone.** The suggestions above are simple. But, they're not necessarily easy. That is, they're clear; they're straightforward; but, they're hard work.

Think of any great athlete or successful sports team. Though blessed with talent and ability, they all also have the support of coaches and trainers -- people who push and plan and lead workouts. These are people who provide input as they study film and analyze strategy (see what's really going on). They help the athlete continually get stronger and hone form (consider his or her unique make-up). They work with the athlete around game plans (set strategy for the next contest).

Well, just as a support system is critical for an athlete, it's critical for you too. Identify a trusted person who can be there to help you, to support you as you explore, and grow, and achieve, and sometimes fail. But, don't go it alone. Choose the right person to accompany you as you continue on your organizational or professional journey.

*"All coaching is, is taking a player where he can't take himself."*

*~Bill McCartney*

*"There is occasions and causes why and wherefore in all things."*

*~William Shakespeare*

*"There's no thrill in easy sailing when the skies are clear and blue, there's no joy in merely doing things which any one can do. But there is some satisfaction that is mighty sweet to take, when you reach a destination that you thought you'd never make."*

*~Spirella*

*"You are a product of your environment. So choose the environment that will best develop you toward your objective. Analyze your life in terms of its environment. Are the things around you helping you toward success -- or are they holding you back?"*

*~W. Clement Stone*

*"Support the strong, give courage to the timid, remind the indifferent, and warn the opposed."*

*~Whitney M. Young, Jr.*

## 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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