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## "Quotes"

*"Each person holds so much power within themselves that needs to be let out. Sometimes they just need a little nudge, a little direction, a little support, a little coaching, and the greatest things can happen."*

~Pete Carroll

*"To excel at the highest level - or any level, really - you need to believe in yourself, and hands down, one of the biggest contributors to my self-confidence has been private coaching."*

~Stephen Curry

*"Behind every great athlete is a masterful coach that inspires the athlete to evolve into the strongest performer they can become."*

~Cathy Engelbert

*"Everyone needs a coach. It doesn't matter whether you're a basketball player, a tennis player, a gymnast or a bridge player."*

~Bill Gates

*"Coaching works best with high potential people who are willing to make a concerted effort to change."*

~Marshall Goldsmith

## Building Strong

A while back, a local morning news reporter began a healthy living series. Besides launching spots on doctor visits and meal plans, she also retained a personal trainer to help her create...and keep...fitness goals.

Tell me. What is it about us that makes *watching* people exercise so much more enjoyable than *doing* it yourself? Full-confession time, I'll admit, this was the case for me. It actually was comical at times to check in on the 5am boot-camp sessions. This reporter's usually jovial public personality was stripped away on more than one occasion, bringing the real and raw to the fore as they went through the paces. (*Okay, it wasn't completely raw; there was still some filtering. After all, it was morning TV!*) But, as they worked out, sometimes the coach modeled; sometimes she did the maneuver with the reporter; and sometimes she watched, critiqued, supported, and/or repositioned the reporter to develop good form, avoid injury, and see results. Through her many methods, it was the trainer's job to help our reporter build a stronger body on her healthy-living journey.

Well, join us for this month's edition of **EA Insights** as we explore some of the misconceptions around professional coaching. No, we're not talking personal trainers here. However, just as a trainer may make all the difference to a person's physical targets, a coach can be extremely instrumental in one's effort to reach career and professional development goals.

Are you ready for a little workout? Keep reading!

All the best,

*June*

June Melvin Mickens  
Executive Advantage, LLC

## 4 Coaching Myths That Hinder Success

June Melvin Mickens  
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When you're serious about becoming physically fit, you engage a personal trainer.  
When you're serious about investments and retirement preparation, you engage a financial planner.

When you're serious about honing your craft as an athlete, you engage a sports coach.

Then, why is it that, when you're serious about making career strides, you try to wing it by going it alone or relying on a little input from this one and a little from that one? Might it be that you've bought into one of the misconceptions about coaching?



Let's try to debunk a few common coaching myths in hopes of freeing you to move forward successfully in your career.

### **MYTH #1: I have a mentor; that's the same as a coach.**

A mentor may do some coaching, and a coach may do some mentoring, but the roles are not synonymous.

A *mentor* usually is a senior person in your field who imparts wisdom and advice. This person helps you learn the ropes, often by sharing his/her own path or by giving you perspective-based information gleaned from his/her experiences along the way. In this setting, you learn by gaining understanding about how s/he did things, and you attempt to take that knowledge and apply it to your circumstances.

On the other hand, a *coach's* job is to help you improve in more individual and practical ways. How s/he did things career-wise really is of little import. You are the focus. The goal is to help you understand your situation, the people in it, your reactions to it, and your options because of it. The coach helps you to see yourself more and more clearly -- the parts of you that you know and those aspects that may be blind spots -- all with the end game of your development and goal achievement.

### **MYTH #2: Participating in coaching is a sign of weakness.**

Seriously, tell that to Michael Jordan or Tom Brady or Bill Gates or countless other superstars in their fields. You see, what these folks understand is that, when you're in the thick of things, you can't always see what's around you and/or recognize your responses to it and the associated impacts. That's where the coach comes in. S/he has the 64,000-foot perspective that you may lack down in weeds. S/he has the objectivity that you may miss in the heat of the moment. As a result, the addition of coaching support helps even the exceptional to become more talented because, with the relationship, you to grasp and leverage strength areas and to identify and plan accordingly for areas that are less well-developed.

### **MYTH #3: My company has added coaching to my personal development plan; so, why bother because this means I am on my way out.**

On the contrary, being "volun-told" to get coaching by your employer is actually a gift! That employer has just given you the chance of a lifetime. What do I mean?

Coaching represents a financial investment that has been made by your employer. If you were not worthy of such an investment, if the powers-that-be did not see value in you, such an opportunity would not have been offered. So, view this as a chance to learn and grow and show progress over time that, if you take it seriously, just could make you a greater asset to the team.

However, there are scenarios in which coaching, though an investment, really is a box that an employer's checking off to demonstrate reasonable efforts before a person's release. Nonetheless, that needn't negate the opportunity for you, even if wrapped in less-than-desirable packaging! Use that gifted coaching time to get to know yourself better, to learn about what contributed to your successes as well as your failures in your current role, and to plan strategically for moving into a new environment without toting all of your old problem baggage with you. View this offer of coaching as the chance to truly start afresh, if that is what must happen.

### **MYTH #4: Only executives need an executive coach.**

The term "executive coach" may be misleading. Yes, indeed, executives do retain coaches. But, so do mid-level managers, and supervisors, and high-achieving line staff, and students. You need not be in the C-suite to gain the benefit of the insight, introspection, challenges, encouragement, and practical application that is involved in a trusted and robust coaching relationship.

Well, are you serious...about you? If so, now is the time to explore professional coaching. And, you can start by reaching out to us at [Executive Advantage](#). Let's talk about who you are, where you want to go, and how, working together, you can move in that direction. [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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*"Real-time feedback and coaching promotes learning."*  
~Jennifer Hyman

*"Coaching helps you take stock of where you are now in all aspects of your life, and how that compares to where you would like to be."*  
~Elaine MacDonald

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

*"My best investment, as clichéd as this sounds, is the money I've spent developing myself, via books, workshops and coaching. Leadership begins within, and to have a better career, start by building a better you."*  
~Robin S. Sharma

*"[W]ith the right kind of coaching and determination you can accomplish anything[.]"*  
~Reese Witherspoon

*"Starting a business is similar to an athletic endeavor, like serving a tennis ball. Telling you how to do it is useless. You actually get better through a combination of practice, coaching, and repetitions with money on the line."*  
~Andrew Yang