



My trip to Chicago was super. Spoke before the CAP group of the NAELA bar association, lawyers for the elder population. We talked about succession planning in advance of the release of my new book, Life After Law. The discussion was both lively and very meaningful.

Then, my wife and I walked up and down Michigan Avenue, the Magnificent Mile. I always enjoy this walk, going into some of the finest stores around. The weather cooperated. And we saw the new film, Hope Springs. It is a touching film dealing with a tough subject of a 31-year marriage. Be prepared to be uncomfortable, but it is a fine film to see.

Please take a few minutes to complete [our brief Management Succession Planning Survey](#). I'll share the survey results with you.

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Eyes to See, Ears to Hear

Qualities of a Good Coach

The person who gets the most out of coaching uses the coach as "outside eyes and ears." Coaches hear and see things that even the best performers can't detect about their own performances. In endurance coaching, anyone can design hard workouts that exhaust you. In lawyer coaching, anyone can tell you what to do even if it is beyond your comfort zone. But a good coach will help you understand where you want to go, devise a plan that is within your ability and that will get you there, and then be your mentor and accountability partner to assure your success.

Your Coach is Your Ally

Just because coaching eyes and ears are available does not mean that we make best use of them. Some people are busy, fighting the alligators and snakes that plague them on a daily basis. While they need an ally, a coach, to help them set their priorities, they often are so deeply involved that they can't see the forest for the trees. Even when they talk with a coach, agree on their priorities and set dates for completion, their very

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next day seems to explode on them, causing them to revert to past behavior patterns. Such people can still eventually be helped by a coach.

The "Know It All" Individual Who Ignores the Coach
By contrast, the "know it all" individual misses the real benefit of coaching by being fixed on their own ideas and perceptions. They cannot connect with the coach as ally, deciding together what should be done next for career advancement, and then being accountable for the completion of the next step(s). Rather than follow this process, the "know it all" person typically walks away from the script they've participated in developing because they "know it all" and make snap decisions on their own, disregarding the coaching process that they enlisted in the first place.

Learn to Accept the Coach's Challenges

I am reminded of a personal experience when my wife wanted me to take up skiing, which I was reluctant to do. She even scheduled a ski school session for me over the Christmas holiday. Before then, however, I had the opportunity to take skiing lessons from a friend, thoroughly upsetting my wife. I ultimately realized why I had acted as I did: my friend asked me to learn to ski and offered to be my teacher, saying I could go into a school on the mountain later if I still wanted to. My wife told me to and said she would "put me in school," rejoining me later in the day; I resented the "order," being told what to do. In reality my wife was simply pushing me to achieve, as a coach would do, and the best approach - with wives and coaches - is to accept the challenge and strive to meet it. The truly successful person wants and needs a target, and a coach can provide eyes and ears that help you achieve it.

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"On a personal level, I'm not scared any more. The recession reduced my wife and me from a comfortable two-income family to a one person income and a capital drain. When I first called Ed, I truly was counting the months until we would have to put the house on the market... The things we have put in place and will continue working on guaranteed my business picking up."

FW
Northern California

"Ed was coaching me during our firm reorganization when disaster hit! Key personnel departed and I was panic-stricken. Not only did he honor his commitment to 24/7, but his advice enabled me to refocus my priorities. Now, I'm eating, I'm sleeping, and I'm smiling thanks to his guidance."

KH
England



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