



Accountability



Have you ever been a coach? For a sports team? A team at work? A friend? I coach the Air Force Academy equestrian team in addition to my business and executive coaching roles, and I find many similarities. Coaching both athletes and business people involves encouragement, goal setting, deadlines, and some gentle reminding when necessary.

Whether it is in the boardroom or the locker room (disclaimer: I have never been a coach that involved a locker room) an integral part of both coaching and leading is harnessing talent, and providing a mechanism for accountability. Accountability - following up and following through, is integral to any business success, and sometimes we need others to help keep us focused and improving.

One of the tips in [last month's article](#) was to create goals that are SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely. What happens when we set easy goals? Grabbing and getting the low-hanging fruit – achieving the easily attained goals – are great initial motivators. This explains why I occasionally include on my Productivity List tasks such as "Take Vitamins" and "Fill Gas Tank." Some days we need the sense of accomplishment that builds confidence and momentum to propel us forward. Other times, we simply set goals that are quick to achieve for other reasons – fear of failure, or perhaps more commonly than we realize – fear of success.

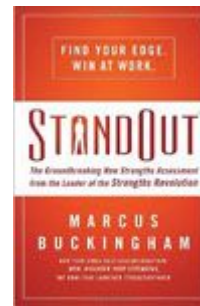
Thomas Hood, a 19th century British author and playwright wrote "Half of the failures in life come from pulling one's horse when he is leaping." (I liked the

Mary's Updates



Over the last couple of months, we've uploaded lots of video to [my YouTube channel](#). Enjoy watching the clips of my keynotes, interviews, testimonials, etc. Many of them are also available on [my website](#).

Mary's Book of the Month



[StandOut: The Groundbreaking New Strengths Assessment from the Leader of the Strengths Revolution](#)

by Marcus Buckingham

Buckingham promises to discover and activate your unique competitive advantage at work every day by defining and refining your innate roles. StandOut goes beyond most assessments by taking readers to the next step and provides practical advice on what to do to maximize the strengths you have. Using a combination of themes and roles, Buckingham narrows down our strengths to nine roles. He advises us to use our top two roles to go beyond our comfort level.

The roles are defined as:

- Advisor, "What is the best thing to do?"
- Connector, "Whom can I connect?"
- Creator, "What do I understand?"
- Equalizer, "What is the right thing to do?"
- Influencer, "How can I move you to act?"
- Pioneer, "What's new?"
- Provider, "Is everyone okay?"
- Stimulator, "How can I raise the energy?"
- Teacher, "What can he or she learn from this?"

equestrian reference.) Hood's caution about fear of success holds many people back in their business lives as well as in their personal lives.

Being any kind of coach requires recognizing when goals need to be adjusted and overcoming barriers. Barriers can be mental, physical, or a simple lack of proper equipment. For instance, do you and your employees have the right tools to meet your goals? Whether that tool is equipment, software, training, or simply fostering an environment of trust and pride in project ownership – without the proper tools, you and your team are hampered. Perhaps there are mental barriers such as Hood's fear of success or fear of failure. Maybe you worry about growing too large too quickly, or you might be concerned about managing the extra personnel. Planning and setting measurable goals helps identify possible problems as well as creating solutions.

An often overlooked aspect of goal-setting is the post-goal plan. Do you take the time to make new plans when reaching initial objectives? For example, popular New Year's resolutions are to lose weight, eat healthier, and exercise. An essential part of sustained success in weight loss is what happens when you reach your goal weight. There must be a plan for success to be long-term. Coaches help people push toward their best potential by guiding them forward, and great companies constantly renew, reinvent, and reinvigorate themselves and their products for their best success.

What else can you do to continue to move forward? How do you build capacity within your office or company? This may involve hiring additional personnel, implementing client management software, adding additional office or production space. How do you adjust your business plan as you meet and update your goals?

Coaches hold people accountable, help them overcome barriers, keep them focused, and ensure they meet their goals. All world-class athletes have coaches to help them. Do you have help? Who is holding you accountable to meet goals?

The most successful exercise programs occur when people commit to a workout buddy, join a regularly scheduled class, or belong to a team. Having other people rely on you means that you show up and work out.

If you find that you are not meeting goals, have trouble staying focused, miss deadlines, or slip off track, find a trusted friend or colleague to act as your accountability partner, like a workout

By consciously applying our role strengths every day, Buckingham promises greater productivity and job satisfaction.

This is a great book for managers and team leaders. I read everything Marcus Buckingham and learn something every time.

Twitter and Social Media

Remember when you post on Facebook, you can adjust and control who views that post or photo by clicking on that drop down arrow next to the POST button and changing it. As Gina Schreck advises - not EVERYONE needs to see EVERYTHING.

Pet Tip:

I believe the animals in our lives should receive presents during the holidays, not BE the present for the holidays. Sadly, many families give up their pets soon after the new year because they misjudged their ability to care for or want a pet.

My friend, Elise Tidwell from high school started Take Me Home Pet Rescue www.Takemehomepetrescue.org in Dallas, TX. If you can, please help Elise find home for these pets. If you can't and would like to help, they are registered, like a wedding on Amazon [here](#).

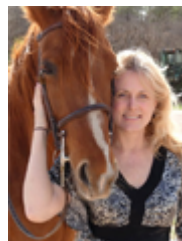
There are great rescue groups and shelters trying to find home for pets all over the country. Please explore these options at www.petfinder.com

Please spay and neuter!



Scooter is one of the adaptable dogs at Take Me Home Pet Rescue

Thank You for Reading this Newsletter



Know anyone who is planning an event needing a speaker, or a business that needs a push forward? Please [contact me](#). I greatly appreciate your referrals!

Mary C. Kelly

Connect with Mary

buddy for business. Whoever you choose, make sure that they understand their role in your success, and do the same for them.



Set goals, brain-storm, make constant adjustments to continuously improve, and keep each other on track for 2012!

Please make comments on [my website!](#)

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