

March Madness

By Judy Hissong, CLM
President, Nesso Strategies



John Wooden was the famed coach of the UCLA men's basketball team. He built a championship program through his leadership approach. And, in honor of the American sporting tradition of March Madness, I bring forward this John Wooden quote:

"Talent is God-given; be humble. Fame is man-given. Be thankful. Conceit is self-given; be careful."

Coach Wooden is talking about mindset, about mindfulness, and about success, in that order. Check your mindset to see what you are giving yourself, in this quote he's talking about conceit. Attune your mind to being humble and be grateful for your success.

We have passed the 12-month mark of wearing masks, regulating our physical spacing, and working remotely. Many of us are thinking 'post-pandemic' now, and what will happen next. I encourage you to check your mindset. Are you thinking about 'madness' and 'crazy'—which is the framework the NCAA basketball world talks about with respect to the annual tournament that crowns a Division I champion? It is not surprising to me that there are several upsets each year - we label it as 'madness' after all.

Mindset matters. A lot. And, it is so much more than "growth v. fixed". Mindset is the difference between tournament winners and runners up. It is the difference between conceit and confidence. And, it is a facet of leadership often unexplored.

Are you wondering about the significance of your mindset?

Here is a simple exercise to explore it:

Set your timer for one minute. Now start with the words 'post-pandemic' and write everything that surfaces when you think of that phrase. Stop when the timer rings. Set the timer again. Now start with the words 'new world of work' and write again. Stop when the timer rings. Look at your two lists - which one is most forward-looking? Which one can you develop into a plan?

Let's go deeper into mindset, this time making it more personal. If you have been socially isolating through this past year, are you anxiously awaiting the opportunity to gather with your peeps and celebrate the "return to normal"? Maybe as if you have been holding your breath for a year? Well, if this was really true you'd be long gone!

What mindset do you have about “returning”? Think about the last time you gathered in a group that included people you knew and some you didn’t. Now imagine that today. Check your mindset about your comfort level. You haven’t been mixing and mingling in groups in a year, how will you prepare your social self for flexing a muscle you haven’t flexed in a while?

Let’s shift one more time to think about your mindset as a manager and leader. What is your mindset about follow up? Is this your job as the assignor or work? Or, is it something you expect of your team? If it is the latter, how does your team know this is your mindset?

Back to Coach Wooden. His mindset was that his teams were champions because he built them as leaders. He developed talent over and over again, with the mindset that he recruited talented players who could win championships. When he had those moments where his mindset shifted, like we all do, he had former players to lean on to remind him. Let’s learn from him, build our bench—both current and former—while developing the mindset we want to own.

For more information and further reading on Mindset, visit our [online library](#).



JUDY HISSONG, CLM

President, Nesso Strategies | Founder, Legal Leadership Institute

Judy understands leadership and teams. And, she knows how to help you maximize the potential of yours. For over two decades, Judy has applied her vast knowledge of team dynamics, emotional intelligence, work/life balance, leadership, and finance to help organizations improve their people, process, performance and, ultimately, profits.

Bachelor’s Degrees in Accounting and Physical Education | Master’s Degree in Sports Management | Former Professional Athlete | Licensed Provider of Emotional Intelligence Tools | Certified Living Your Vision Facilitator | ALA Certified Legal Manager | ACE Certified Personal Trainer | ICF Professional Certified Coach

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619.546.7885 | judy@nessostrategies.com | nessostrategies.com | legalleadershipinstitute.com



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