

## In This Issue

- **Risk Managers are Leaders: Hone Your Leadership Skills**

Risk management is for decision makers.

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## Risk Managers are Leaders: Hone Your Leadership Skills

Every single athlete at this summer's Olympic Games reached the peak of their game through effort, persistence **and** coaching. Coaching helps people in every position improve skills, demonstrate growth, and achieve their goals.

Natural talents, education and hard work are a terrific starting point. But, they can be insufficient when seeking higher levels of achievement, increased knowledge, and credibility from colleagues or simply to score a bigger paycheck. We all know colleagues who have ambition, knowledge and experience but whose careers have plateaued.

Like Olympic athletes, business professionals who want to see improvement in their day to day performance often seek coaching. Professionals who seek mentors or coaches do not view the step as an admission of inherent deficiencies. Instead working with a coach is an opportunity to identify difficulties, assess to what extent they are hindering attempts at success, and identifying methods for improvement. The final step in the process is to implement best methods for achieving greater results.

Sounds a lot like an effective risk management process, doesn't it?

Many professionals like to think that there are volunteer mentors available who can fill the coaching role for us. Unfortunately, often this is wishful thinking. Frequently the best candidates for volunteer mentoring are already extremely busy managing their own demanding career, contributing to their community and juggling obligations to family and friends.

It is probably inadvisable to rely on family and friends as coaches, too. While they often mean well, and want you to succeed, they rarely have an objective view of what is needed to succeed in your position, with your employer and within the context of your profession. The right coach brings objectivity, understanding of a variety of business practices, knowledge of the traits and skills appreciated in your job and a willingness to work with you for the time necessary to see you succeed.

## Cunnart Associates

London, ON N5W 5X3  
Phone 519-451-7603  
www.cunnart.com

*Why Risk Management?  
Because ##### happens!*

### Contact Us at:

joy@cunnart.com  
or  
rob@cunnart.com

Be a friend - forward to a  
colleague!

When you decide that coaching is your route success, like athletes, you have some work cut out for you.

Typical steps include:

- Begin by identifying your strengths and weaknesses.
- Determine which strengths to build on and which weaknesses you want to overcome.
- Decide who the best type of coach for your needs. To find a coach who you can work with look around. Speak to colleagues who have worked with coaches they can recommend. Check within professional associations to identify leaders who have real world experience along with sound skills and knowledge. Have they confidence and credibility demonstrated through published articles and/or as a speaker at industry events? Is the person prepared to meet with you in person, on the telephone or over the internet at a time convenient to you?
- When speaking with your coaching prospect, be prepared for an open and frank discussion of what lead you to believe coaching is needed, the obstacles you need to overcome, what you hope to achieve, and the timeline you will commit to development.
- Don't rush the process of working through issue investigation, analysis and solution. These aspects become the foundation of your plans for improvement.
- Finally, when you become the expert in your profession, remember to make yourself available, to the extent possible, to help your colleagues.

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