



Fabulous People: Mike Del Prado

Mike Del Prado is the president and chief executive officer of [Executive Option](#), a minority- and U.S. veteran-owned company in Las Vegas that delivers end-to-end solutions for complex, high-risk initiatives and high-value projects to its partner clients. Learn about Mike Del Prado...

Hometown: Although I was born in Peru, I considered myself a native Californian given I lived there for 35 years. After living in Nevada for the last eight years, I now consider it my home.

First job: I was 13 when I got my first job. I lied about my age to be able to work at Six Flags Magic Mountain, which was one of the major employers in Santa Clarita at the time. As a teenager, I enjoyed the perks of visiting the park whenever I wanted, employee discounts and a fun environment.

Favorite ways to spend your free time in NV: I consider myself somewhat of a foodie. I like to take advantage of living in Las Vegas where I can indulge in the variety and quality of cuisines offered in the Valley. I enjoy everything from hole-in-the-wall to Michelin-star-rated restaurants.

Your biggest accomplishment and why: I have many proud accomplishments, but one of the biggest was my solo trek to Machu Picchu. I began the three-day excursion of the Inca trail when it was still permitted to venture alone, with no provisions. I didn't spend a lot of time in the ruins since one of the most memorable aspects was the people and their generosity/hospitality. Along the way, I met a local indigenous man who allowed me to stay in his hut and offered me a humble meal and shelter. Overall, it was a unique experience that immersed me in the culture and environment of Peru.

The biggest obstacle you overcame: In the course of building myself professionally, I traveled the world a lot. I was sometimes away for weeks at a time. Being required to leave my family every week was truly something I had to adapt to. My job entailed involving myself in high-pressure, stressful environments, which would leave me working nights alone for 16 to 18 hours just to kill the day. In the end, that alone time and obstacles I overcame made me what I am today, professionally. I **now** I own my own office building here in Las Vegas, and I get to go home every day to spend time with my family.

Someone who inspires you and why: I don't have one singular person, but I have an experience that stuck with me. While working on a difficult project in the mountains of Armenia, an engineer offered me words of support. A lot was going on at the time, for example, political turmoil, harsh weather, challenges implementing a new system, and being unable to talk to my family due to bad reception in the region. The engineer told me an old proverb, "Success has many fathers, and failure has only one." Although I'm reminded that one can't blame anyone but themselves for their failure, as a leader you must take independent accountability for failures but also share the successes with everybody that is involved. This has been impactful to me and how I lead my team.

Advice to someone pursuing a career path in what you do:

- Dive into the action. I suggest that those searching for a career should take the time to plan. Plan each step, consider different routes, and keep setbacks in mind to ensure you have a plan to overcome them. Thinking 10 steps ahead and having a contingency plan is what can allow people to be prepared for any situation.
- Go outside the box. To be successful, especially in the tech industry, people must be willing to expand their thinking. It is important to be open to unique ideas in any career as it drives innovation and enables collaboration.
- Don't fear failure. The interpretation that someone needs to be perfect in their career can lead to insecurities and hinder personal growth; we learn through our mistakes and collaboration. Because I've been confronted with difficulties, it enabled me to help cultivate others. I think it's helpful to take other people's lessons learned and use them to continue evolving.

Favorite quote: “Be more afraid of an army of sheep led by a lion than an army of lions led by a sheep.” This speaks to the quality of leaders and the mentorship they provide to their teams. A great leader cultivates a great team allowing them to flourish by empowering them and through constant collaboration.

Something someone would be surprised to learn about you: I used to own Toe to Toe Boxing Gym where I worked with amateur boxers as a trainer certified by the California State Athletic Commission.

What makes someone fabulous: Exceeding expectations and overcoming adversity is what truly makes someone fabulous.