



John Michael Payne

Executive Coach / Senior Career Consultant

As an Executive Coach at ClearRock, (John) Michael Payne works with leaders and emerging leaders to develop skills and implement strategies that can enhance both their professional and personal growth. In his career consulting work, he helps job seekers identify their accomplishments and goals, and successfully navigate the job market. With over 35 years of experience in executive coaching and advising at the senior management/C-suite level, Michael's superpower is his ability to quickly establish trust and rapport with his colleagues, coachees, and stakeholders across multiple generations and backgrounds.

Prior to ClearRock, Michael held executive leadership positions in Diversity Equity & Inclusion, Human Resources, and Organizational Development for ExxonMobil Corporation and Occidental Chemical, and private equity company GEO Specialty Chemicals. His assignments gave him the opportunity to work internationally in Europe and Latin America. Michael also founded Workplace Solutions focused on Executive Coaching and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategies. He's worked across a variety of industries such as energy, communications/media and higher ed helping leaders successfully navigate the unspoken rules of organizational culture.

Michael attended Ohio State and Cleveland State University and received his bachelor's degree in industrial psychology from Cleveland State University. He is a Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR), certified in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), EQ-i 2.0, CCL Benchmarks 360, and DiSC, and received a certification in Diversity and Inclusion from Cornell University. He received his Professional Coaching Diploma from Optimus Coach Academy, is a member of the International Coaching Federation, and is currently pursuing his ICF certification.

Michael and his wife are avid wine connoisseurs and enjoy introducing people to wines produced by African American vineyards.