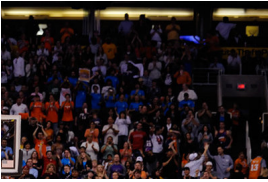


## Reading the tea leaves: Is Mark Warkentien a candidate for Phoenix Suns GM position?

Written by  
Saturday, 27 April 2013 09:16 -

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Talk about reading the tea leaves and wondering if they're just simply tea leaves...

Yesterday, some [Suns](#) bloggers received a LinkedIn request from longtime NBA executive Mark Warkentien to 'connect'. For those who don't know anything about LinkedIn, it's a business-oriented social networking site that hooks up like-minded business folks. The application find people like you and suggests virtual hookups, then it's up to you to initiate the connection.

Warkentien [currently lists himself as Director of Player Personnel for the New York Knicks](#) , with prior affiliations to the [Rockets](#) , [Nuggets](#) and [Cavaliers](#) .

Three-plus decades as a Team Builder in a myriad of major-college and NBA environments; three collegiate Final Fours at UNLV, 1000+ NBA wins while never experiencing a losing season as teams won Division Championships in Seattle, Portland, Denver and New York.

Absolute professional goal is to procure a NBA Championship ring to go along with NCAA Championship ring won at UNLV in 1990.

Warkentien was NBA Executive of the Year in 2009 when Denver went to the Western Conference Finals with [Carmelo Anthony](#) leading the way on the court.

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A year later, he was out of a job along with Rex Chapman as Denver turned to Masai Ujiri to try to keep Carmelo happy in Denver when Anthony wanted a bigger market. Ujiri ended up trading Anthony, as you all know.

That summer of 2010, Warkentien was on Lon Babby's list of potentials for the GM position. Warkentien requested permission from the Nuggets to talk to three teams that summer, none of whom hired him. He eventually left Denver, made a short stopover in Houston, and landed in New York.

As he said above, he's been in the NBA for a long, long time and never experienced a losing season.

Interestingly, Warkentien makes several references on his LinkedIn profile to high attendance figures in seasons he was part of NBA front offices. With the Suns coming off their worst attendance in twenty years, this could be a selling point to Babby and Sarver.

The hiring of Warkentien certainly checks off a lot of items on Babby's list:

- front office experience
- proven talent evaluator
- never demanded full control of all decisions (reading this, Chuck?)
- puts together teams that excite NBA fans
- never presided over a losing team
- never demanded full control of all decisions

Reading the tea leaves indeed...