

Speaker 1:

Hey everybody. You're in for a treat today. Mark Miller is on the podcast. Mark impacted my life long before I think he ever realized it. He was teaching Evangelism as a Chick-fil-A sales and marketing guy at Willow Creek Conferences. And I thought that was the coolest thing because I knew what Chick-fil-A was all the way back in the day before it went to the strange lands of Chicago and New York and everywhere that's not Atlanta. Mark gave me so much wisdom today, particularly about what key marks of leadership in prevailing organizations are present. Now if you have had a year like mine in 2020, you know developing your leaders for an unforeseen future is absolutely critical, so I think you're going to get a lot out of today's episode, and I'm glad you tuned in. Let's have a listen.

Speaker 1:

Well, hey everybody. Thanks so much for joining us again today. And thank you, Mark, for joining us. It's a treat to have you on. We're recording this on a Monday. And God has this amazing sense of humor. It's the first night, tonight will be the first night, Adrian, my wife, has been out of town in I can't remember when. So it's my night to cook, which meant that Chick-fil-A is the menu.

Mark Miller:

Thank you. Thank you very much.

Speaker 1:

The kids said, "Oh, dad, Mom's not home. Can we just go to Chick-fil-A?" So and I think I have eight bajillion frequent chicken points or whatever they are from hosting all our youth groups at the house and just ordering lots and lots. So we're going to have Chick-fil-A tonight. And right now, we're going to talk to Mark, who's sold a lot of chicken, but more importantly, helped a lot of leaders. And many of you who are listening may know Mark or know of him. I've known of you and heard your teaching way back when I was a pastor and you were helping with some Willow Creek events that happened. And I'd love it if you'd just take a minute to tell people a little bit of your story, how you ended up where you are, and where you're focusing your energies right now.

Mark Miller:

Well, I joined the corporate staff for Chick-fil-A over 40 years ago. I was the 16th corporate employee, and started in the mail room in the warehouse, packing boxes. Prior to that, I did have a short stint as a Chick-fil-A team member in one of the local restaurants, but I was awful, and so I quit. That was my strategy. It made perfect sense to me as a kid. I quit because I thought that would be better than being fired. And then I said, "What's next?" And so I said, "Well, I can't work in the restaurant. Maybe I could work at the home office," which today, I say is no reflection on the other professionals there. But to me, somehow, that made sense over 40 years ago. And Truett Cathy interviewed me. Again, you might think that's strange. Why would the head of an organization like Chick-fil-A be interviewing a punk to work in the warehouse?

Mark Miller:

I learned I was interviewing to be number 16, and so if you've only got 15 employees, it makes perfect sense for the head guy to be doing the interviews. And a combination, I tell people, Truett's lack of discernment and God's grace, he gave me the job. And I started in the warehouse, and I have worked all across the business over the last 40 plus years. I got to start some things because it was really not about

my talents or gifts, it was, let the kid do it, let the kid do it. And I'd say, "I'll do it." So I started our corporate communications group. I started our quality and customer satisfaction group. I worked in restaurant operations. I led the training group, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. So I've just had a hard time holding down a job over the last 40 plus years.

Mark Miller:

But to your point, what am I working on now? It's what I've been working on for almost 40 years. I can't tell you that's what I was doing when I was in the warehouse. And we didn't have language for it 35 years ago. But as I look back and try to connect the dots, we have been trying to help our restaurant operators and our corporate staff build a high performance organization. And that's the journey we continue on today.

Speaker 1:

So I want to just for kicks, drop back 40 years ago. Is that back in the day when most of the Chick-fil-As were in the mall?

Mark Miller:

Yes, they were all in shopping malls.

Speaker 1:

Back when shopping malls were a thing.

Mark Miller:

They were all in the shopping malls.

Speaker 1:

And all just kind of Georgia, maybe South Carolina, North Carolina, just right in there.

Mark Miller:

We had already begun to expand to a national footprint, but there weren't many restaurants. I think when I started there were probably 75 restaurants, and so we had a few scattered here and there. We'd make a deal with a mall landlord to go into a location in, say, Atlanta. And part of that deal would be, well, you've also got to go to this one in Texas because these landlords had multiple malls. And so that's why we spread pretty broadly for a regional chain in those early days, because we would go to Racine, Wisconsin, or we'd go to Clackamas, wherever, in the beginning, even though we were focused in the Southeast. That's what those landlords, the opportunities they provided for us.

Speaker 1:

And the 75 restaurants then. How many now?

Mark Miller:

About 2500.

Speaker 1:

Wow. Wow. That's awesome. What a good story, and we could spend forever talking about the culture of Chick-fil-A and all that. I'd love to focus a little bit of time today though on a book you've written, Chess Not Checkers. I'm terrible at checkers. I'm less terrible at chess. So I like the title just because of that. But tell me about that book. I've said this to many authors over the years. I have never given birth to a child, so don't claim to know that, but man, the labor in writing a book, having done a few, I don't know how you do it if you don't have something burning down inside you you've got to get out. And I'd love to hear. Was that the case for you? And what was that thing you had to get out? And how did it come out in the book Chess Not Checkers?

Mark Miller:

Well, let's go back, a little bit of context. As I said, we've been on this journey for decades of trying to figure out how to steward the opportunities that we have before us. And for decades, literally for decades, we focused on growing leadership capacity. And leadership capacity is a really good thing, and you always need it, and it will always be a focus area for us. But what we learned about 20 plus years ago is that there is something called human capacity limits. And if we just kept helping the individual leaders grow, they could still hit a ceiling because there's only so much they could do by themselves. So then we started trying to help those men and women build leadership teams because we said, "This is a strategy to grow your leadership capacity."

Mark Miller:

And so both of those had been very effective for us. But in 2010, we were in a long range strategic planning meeting. And one of my favorite questions of all time was asked during that meeting. It's: What do we want to be true in a decade that's not true today?

Speaker 1:

Oh, wow. What a [crosstalk 00:07:35] question.

Mark Miller:

And I just think that's a great question for our lives, and for our families, and for our relationships, and for our finances, and for our career, and for our faith journey. I love that question. And so in the context of that long range planning, I made the case that we always need leadership capacity. And teams at that point were proving themselves as a way to grow that capacity. But I said, "Here's the dark side about leadership teams, is that they harness the talent, the passion, and the energy of generally about a half dozen people." And that's a really good thing to have that focus and have that unity, and have that increased leadership capacity.

Mark Miller:

I said, "But what about the 85% to 90% of the men and women who don't sit around a leadership table?" I said, "I think there is tremendous untapped potential in that group, tens of thousands of folks." And in the case of our operators, they've done a very good job, and continue to this day to attract a high caliber individual. But the truth is, in many of those situations, they were just functioning as hired hands. They're just doing what they're told, when they're told, how they're told. We said, "What if we could create a context in which we could harness their talent, their passion, their energy, and their creativity?" I said, "I think the future for us is with a cornerstone of leadership capacity, let's now try to build a high performance organization." And so that was the conversation when the leadership team said, "That sounds like a really good idea."

Mark Miller:

And then Tim Tassopoulos, who's now the president of Chick-fil-A, looked at me and he said, "Do you know how to build a high performance organization?" And I said, "I have no idea, but it sounds like a really good thing to do." And he said, "Well, you better figure it out." And so I did what you'd probably do in a similar circumstance, is I put together a team of really, really smart people. And we weren't the first to explore this topic, but we wanted to figure out what's true. And how do we translate it to be culturally relevant and applicable in our context? And what we've discovered is when we do go through that process, that it tends to serve leaders beyond Chick-fil-A. So we started that journey in 2010, and what we discovered became the book, Chess Not Checkers, that we released in 2015.

Speaker 1:

And you discovered that not just trial and error. Right? I mean, you studied other companies. You studied other cultures. I tell people all the time, I'm terrible at inventing wheels. I'm horrible at it. But I can go find a wheel and figure out what's good about it, and build on it. It sounded like that's a little bit of what happened. Walk me through some of that.

Mark Miller:

Well, that's exactly what we did, is we spent time with a lot of world class organizations. That has proven to be a very profitable strategy for us, and even continues to this day. When I get off this call, I'm meeting with a team from Stanford that's helping us with a book for '22 on leadership effectiveness. And they helped us with the book on execution. And we go out and we try to figure out. What are the global best practices? Let's start from a position of truth. I think that's why the work we've published has actually gotten some traction. None of it is a figment of our imagination. It's what is true. And our process and the value we add, I believe, is that translation. And we want to make it approachable, and we want to make it applicable.

Mark Miller:

I found one example of an outstanding model for higher performance organizations that had 14 pieces to it. And I said, "That's not approachable and it's not applicable, at least not in our world." We sell chicken. Right? So we're always trying to figure out. What is the essence here? And we want everything to be simple without being simplistic. And we push, push, push, push, push to make it as simple as possible. And we don't want to take one step too far because then you lose it all. And so our process is both discovery translation, and we come up with something like Chess Not Checkers. But spend time-

Speaker 1:

Sounds like sermon preparation.

Mark Miller:

Well, you'd have to be the expert on that.

Speaker 1:

No. I can tell you how not to do it. But you get something complex and you've got to make it culturally applicable and keep it simple and understandable. Yeah.

Mark Miller:

So I think that is our value. But in this case, just to answer your question, we spent time with a lot of world class organizations. And we try to cast a broad net because we're looking for timeless truth. And we're looking for universal truth. So when we're talking to the Navy SEALs, okay, we don't want to be guilty of producing something that only works in an elite military organization, so we're going to talk to a world championship sailing team as well. And we're going to talk to for profit and nonprofit. On this interesting, this most recent book on execution, we were spending time with the Mayo Clinic, Cirque du Soleil, Seattle Seahawks, Clemson football, Southwest Airlines. That's pretty typical, Apple, Starbucks. Over the last 20 years, we've intentionally sought out global best practices. And so last piece, I wanted to answer that because after we get all that, we do the translation I'm referring to. And then in virtually every case, I can't say this is true, I've had the privilege to work on nine books, and we didn't do this with every one of them.

Mark Miller:

But with the majority, we then take what we believe to be true, that we've attempted to translate, and we actually field test it. And we put it in our restaurants, and we monitor their performance to say, "Does this work?" Now we know it started as truth, but we could've messed it up. We could've made it too simple, thus becoming simplistic. We might not have the right language. We might not have the right tone. We may have oversimplified it and have to put something back in. And so with Chess Not Checkers, we actually taught this content to a group of restaurant operators and let them implement the ideas in the book. I think it was actually 11 months that they ran this play. And then we brought in the business insights and the finance team to create a control group and actually come back and tell us. Did this add value and did this work? And they said yes.

Speaker 1:

When you were researching, and you're saying, "I wonder what makes a high performing team high performing?" Did you have anything that you thought you'd see that you didn't?

Mark Miller:

That's a great question. So let me confess something about my process that drives my team crazy. I work really, really, really, hard not to form an opinion early because I don't want to create any unnecessary confirmation bias. If I believe something is part of the answer, you can probably find it. And so on this last project, because it's very fresh, we were nine months in, and the team just demanded like, "What are you thinking? I mean, you've been studying, you've been listening. We need to know because we want to spend the next few months actually testing is what you think right or not." And so on the high performance, I was pretty disciplined I think. I mean, I did not form an idea early. And so I don't know that I really have a credible answer for that.

Speaker 1:

What was a big surprise that you discovered?

Mark Miller:

Biggest surprise. Well, I think we challenged a little bit of conventional wisdom that ... And we'll probably in a minute review kind of the things we learned, but ultimately, a high performance organization is known by their execution. They deliver. They get it done, whatever it is.

Speaker 1:

Sure.

Mark Miller:

Whether it's FedEx and UPS, and the package shows up on time, or it's a professional sports team. I spent time with a guy from the Seattle Seahawks, and people make their block and the plays work, and we gain yardage. So we challenge the conventional wisdom that if you do all the process stuff, execution is automatic. It's not automatic. You do the other things to position you to execute. But there's still things you have to do to execute.

Speaker 1:

Absolutely.

Mark Miller:

Some people want to think, well, it's just the fruit. If you do things, you will execute. No, you're just better positioned to execute. And so we're still, even to this day, talking to leaders about, it's great that you're doing these other things, but you also, there are some disciplines. There's some fundamentals around execution that are much more difficult, if not impossible to do, if you haven't done these other things. Execution is never automatic. It always requires focus and diligence.

Speaker 1:

I tell my kids, we have seven, so we're going to see probably seven totally different careers play out. Right? And they're asking me, "When you interview people, you do searches and you help people. How do we get going on our career, whatever it's going to be?" And I'm like, "Look, this is pretty simple. If you do what you say you're going to do on the schedule you promise, at the cost you promise, you're automatically in the top 5% of whatever career you choose." Maybe that's an overstatement, but I just don't see it very often.

Mark Miller:

Well, here's the way we say it. Greatness hinges on execution. Greatness hinges on execution. If you go to Disney, and back when people used to go to Disney, and if the place were dirty, and the lines were long, and the people were surly, and the rides didn't work, you would care less about their world class orientation. Or if you go to Chick-fil-A, and the people aren't friendly, and the place is dirty, and the food's not hot, you wouldn't care about our corporate purpose. I mean, at the end of the day, you have to execute, you have to deliver. And the moves we've talked about are enablers of execution. They're not guarantees of execution.

Speaker 1:

So my youngest, who's 10 now, we joke that we think, "What was their first word?" I know what Macy's first sentence was. She would point to something and just say, "Do it." That was the whole sentence. I don't even know what she meant. They're like, "Do it." And it's kind of a joke around our office, like, "No, do it." So before we go into the moves that are Chess Not Checkers, let's dive in a little bit on execution. How do you get, okay, we've got a good process, we've got a good system set up, what are the secret ingredients to actually doing it?

Mark Miller:

Well, I'll answer your question with an asterisk, and I'll say because I've been dealing with this for decades now. And I think your question is right, but understand a maniacal focus on execution rarely works over time.

Speaker 1:

Interesting.

Mark Miller:

And I know leaders that wonder why they can't consistently execute. It's because all they're focused on is execution. Again, there are three moves that actually precede execution. But I'll answer your question specifically because we just released a book in March called *Win Every Day*, which is about execution. Just kind of cut to the chase, there are four moves, we'll talk about them in a minute. We wrote about that in *Chess Not Checkers*. We then went back and did a deep dive on each move to provide more resources and information to leaders. And so the last of that series, called *The High Performance Series*, is *Win Every Day*, just came out.

Mark Miller:

And there are three actually fundamentals of execution. The first is that individuals have to make a commitment to pursue mastery. If you want to execute at the level we're talking about, you can't make people do that. You can say, "Do it," but it's still a discretionary game at the end of the day. Right?

Speaker 1:

Sure.

Mark Miller:

The level of focus, attention to detail that's required, is an individual decision. And so you've got to get individuals to say that to the best of my ability, I'm going to try to do the right thing, the right way, every time. And we're quick to say that's actually not the expectation, it's the goal. And the organization, specifically leaders' responsibility, is to help people hit that goal with greater and greater frequency. So individuals have to make a decision. Secondly, individuals have to own the numbers. We can't find a high performance organization in the world that is not a measurement culture.

Mark Miller:

And individuals have to own those numbers. They have to care about them. They have to monitor them. They have to work to try and improve them. They have to celebrate when they're there. They have to feel sad when they're not. I mean, they have to own personal ownership of those numbers. And then number three, the individual needs to make a commitment to help others win. And this is when it begins to affect the culture. These three fundamentals are all personal behaviors. But the first two are focused on me, and that third one is focused on you and my other coworkers. And they're doing the same for me, and that changes the whole vibe of this. We're in this together.

Speaker 1:

Totally. Well, so leading up to those three things are these four moves, chess moves, if you will, that the whole *Chess Not Checkers* is built around. And I'd love to hear what those moves are, and then maybe a

little bit of an explanation of each one. I don't know if there's a story that comes to mind, or ways certain teams are making each of those moves.

Mark Miller:

Okay. Well, let me just give them to you real quick, explain them, and then we'll go wherever you want to go from there. And if your audience might visualize a pyramid, we've been experimenting for years on how to draw this. And this is the way that seems to help most people get it. And if you think at the base of the pyramid is the first move to bet on leadership. And we didn't always depict it that way, but again, we're looking at the four things that all high performance organizations have in common. They're all well led. They all focus on leadership. They all bet on leadership. We chose that language because it is a bet. And I'm assuming that many of your listeners have invested in an emerging leader and found out that he or she did not have the potential that you thought they might have. Or you invested in that leader and they left your organization, so you might say you lost that bet.

Mark Miller:

Our leaders said, "It's a bet you have to make." It's calculated, you're not willy nilly, bet the farm. But the best organizations, they are well led, and we can't really find any that aren't. So that's that foundation, and it's what enables you to do the other moves. See, a lot of people, back to the example of execution, if you can't execute well, one of the potential root causes is you're not well led, and you don't have sufficient leadership to sustain the whole process.

Mark Miller:

So the second move, again, moving up the pyramid, is high performance organizations act as one. They act as one. This is about alignment. Crazy levels of alignment in high performance organizations. Now some people listen to this, they're going to say, "Well, what are they aligned around?" This actually, this might qualify to answer your previous question. My biggest surprise is the answer varies from organization to organization.

Speaker 1:

Oh, really?

Mark Miller:

The power seems to be generated from the alignment more so than what you're actually aligned on. Now there are probably only six or eight things in the consideration set, but some are aligned around vision, some around mission, some around purpose, some around values, some around key strategies, so you can see they're different things. And some are aligned around a combination of those, but the fact that we are all aligned together is where the power, again, resides.

Speaker 1:

I mean, you can see it Biblically, you can see it even in sinfulness. Right? So you go to the Tower of Babel. Everybody's speaking the same language. They're all working toward the same goal. And it slipped by me forever, but God looks down from Heaven, and I guess he's talking to the angels. And he says, "If they all work together, nothing will be impossible for them." And they were not doing a good thing, so he scattered, and different tongues, and all that. And it kind of reminds me, tell me true or false, I've heard a leader that both of us have worked with in the past say, "People ask me all the time,



'What's the best strategic plan for a church? You've studied them all. What's the best one?'" And my answer is, the one that everybody agrees to work on together. Doesn't matter.

Mark Miller:

Yeah. It's crazy. It's crazy how powerful alignment is, and it is so elusive. I mean, you think about, pull back a minute. How many high performance organizations can you name? And I bet, you're well traveled and well read, and you probably can't name 20. There aren't that many. Well, because it's really, really hard. And even some of this that sounds simple is hard, such as: How do you keep an organization aligned, particularly as it grows? And I believe alignment actually begins with selection. Who do you select? How do you orient? How do you onboard? How do you train? How do you recognize? How do you reinforce? Yeah. So it's really powerful, and for most organizations, it's elusive.

Mark Miller:

And if you want to try something fun, ask a leader about a time they were fully aligned, or at least closely aligned. And I've done this many times, and they light up, and they start telling you what it was like. And I say, "Well, how aligned are you today?" And they're [inaudible 00:27:13], it just goes ... I say, "Well, what happened?" And most of them will say, "I don't know," because back to the base. One of the things leaders are supposed to do, and not leader, because it's too big, see, I tell our leaders, "I hope you're going to lead something so big you can't do it by yourself, because if you do it by yourself, it's not much. I want you to have something that you need help with."

Mark Miller:

And so if an organization is struggling with alignment, the first place I go is to leadership. I mean, that's going to be a reoccurring thing. That's why it's the base of the pyramid. So bet on leadership, act as one. The third thing, the third move is they all win the heart, which is about engagement. It's about engagement. And we've tried to simplify that for people. There's a lot out there on engagement and a lot of good stuff on engagement, but much of it is academic. A lot of it is theoretical, and we've just said, "Engagement is how much someone cares." And how much they care is a direct reflection of leadership. You guessed it, leaders create the context, they create the environment. Every year, when Gallup produces their annual survey of the American workforce, and they'll say again this year, "70 plus percent of the American workers are disengaged at work."

Mark Miller:

Invariably, somebody is going to say, "What a sorry bunch of workers we have here in America." And I say that number is not an indictment on the workforce. That number is an indictment on the leaders.

Speaker 1:

That's good. That's good.

Mark Miller:

We create the context. We create the environment. And if people are well led, they're aligned, and they care, you're then positioned to excel at execution. That's the pinnacle. That's the pinnacle.

Speaker 1:

Did you find a team? Or does a story come to mind where there was alignment, and then alignment went away, and then they recaptured it? I'd love to hear it.

Mark Miller:

All the time, all the time.

Speaker 1:

Because I think it's seasonal. Right? I mean, I'll tell you-

Mark Miller:

Well, it's not seasonal in the best organizations.

Speaker 1:

Okay. Well, I think back to when we started our company, that would be me and my dog and my wife, sort of. Right? We were pretty aligned then. It was a staff meeting of one.

Mark Miller:

Got it. Got it.

Speaker 1:

Votes were unanimous. Everybody got along. You start adding people, and even communication. My friend, Tim Stevens, says, "I remember when we got to be a big enough staff that we had the upstairs people and the downstairs people. And we had to fight like crazy to stay aligned during that." So I'm thinking of that kind of thing, like an organization grows, or gets more complex, and alignment wobbles. Where have you seen that happen? And how does it get recaptured?

Mark Miller:

Well, I see it all the time. And what I'm encouraging leaders is, okay, when you say wobble, let's say you've got some new people, and something happened and you didn't get to do orientation, that's wobble. What I'm saying is I see organizations lose it because you'll focus on other things. You'll focus on other priorities. The person that does onboarding retires and you don't replace them. You figure, just let somebody shadow with somebody else. And the best leaders are constantly trying to keep their organizations aligned. And yes, it may wobble. But you don't let it go far. Right? You think about your car. If it gets out of alignment, you can still drive it, but you're tearing up your tires. Right?

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Mark Miller:

And there's some safety implications, and you actually need to get that fixed. So that's why we're saying this high performance organization model, for lack of a better term, this strategy with four parts, its leaders are responsible to bet on future leaders. Leaders are responsible to ensure alignment. Leaders are responsible to create the context and environment where people are engaged. And leaders are responsible to ensure that the organization is focused on execution. So it's a never ending challenge,

and the leaders that take their eye off the ball, they sub-optimize. They don't live up to their full potential, and then you've got to go back and say, "What went wrong?" And it's all fixable. I mean, there are dozens of organizations, thousands of organizations that have had alignment for a moment. But what I don't want to happen in an organization is you're constantly out, and you're in for a week, and then you're out. Or you're in for a month, and you're out, because that's not alignment. That's just chance.

Speaker 1:

Well, okay, let's go realtime for a minute then. What advice would you give? We've got a lot of teams that have had to make the move to remote work. Right? And some industries, remote work is fine. Others, it doesn't work very well at all. But I think on the whole, we were made to be together. Being alone is actually the first thing God says is bad in his first cross words in the Bible. It's not good that people be left alone. So as leaders are trying to lead their teams virtually, have you seen anything that helps alignment? Where should I as a leader of my team focus my efforts now that we're having to do a lot of work virtually?

Mark Miller:

Well, to keep it at the principle level, I will say focused, frequent, authentic communications. And I think people, I heard Andy Stanley do a message years and years ago that stuck with me, and he said that people really do want certainty, but they'll settle for clarity. And I think in these uncertain times, we have got to provide clarity because people will make up their own stories, and that won't be helpful, healthy, or productive. Oh, and by the way, the stuff they make up is probably not going to be true. And so we have really, I'm not saying we have navigated this perfectly, but our senior leaders, they have stepped up communication. They've always worked to be authentic. And we're telling people where we have clarity, rarely do we have certainty, in any context as a leader, but certainly, in this environment.

Mark Miller:

And so even things such as: When are we going to reopen our dining rooms? We don't know that. So that's what we're saying, but then we're saying, "To give you a little certainty, lowercase c, we'll give you 90 days notice, so that you can prepare." But we don't know when we're going to open our dining rooms. And so I think those are the kind of messages ... I don't know what else we do. I'm just thankful that it's a season. And I think if we've got the right mindset, we will learn so much. That is a question that we've been asking, I would argue, we probably didn't start asking it in the first 30 days because we were like everybody else. But shortly thereafter, we have continued time and time and time again. What are you learning? What are you learning? We do not want to waste a pandemic.

Speaker 1:

No.

Mark Miller:

What are you learning? What are you learning?

Speaker 1:

Yeah. That's so good.

Mark Miller:

And I think we can learn a lot. I think we are.

Speaker 1:

Yeah. And it is a season. I did a little study of pandemics recently, and I found there's only one thing that all of them have in common. They all end. Only thing that's in common out of all of them.

Mark Miller:

Well, that's good news. That's good news.

Speaker 1:

Don't know when, can't tell you when. I'd like to have 90 days notice.

Mark Miller:

I know. So let me give you a quick illustration, and hopefully, this'll bring this home for people.

Speaker 1:

Sure.

Mark Miller:

I mentioned at the beginning that some leaders really have a bias towards execution. I might argue, most good leaders have a bias for execution because leaders, we enjoy progress, we enjoy getting things done. We enjoy helping those around us accomplish what they might not have accomplished without our involvement. That's all good. But I literally had a leader, I was unpacking these four, it was one of the very first times. This was years ago, one of the very first times I had shared this. And when I got to execution, he said, "Now you're talking." He said, "I don't care about all that other crap." And he said, "I'm just going to focus on execution." And I said, "Well, good luck with that." I said, "Where do you think the gymnast gets the height, the momentum, and the energy to stick the landing? I mean, you're saying you just want to do the landing. It's the routine that precedes the dismount." Leadership, alignment and engagement is the routine that precedes the dismount. Really hard to do the dismount well, consistently, without the height, the energy, and the momentum.

Speaker 1:

That's good.

Mark Miller:

And so these are the four moves of all high performance organizations.

Speaker 1:

That does bring it home. Well, I thank you so much. It's a busy time for you guys. It's a busy time. And you've made a lot of time for us today. I think it's probably helped a lot of people. The book again, Chess Not Checkers, and you'll find there's a whole series that falls out of that, and we'll put in the show notes, links to all those things and ways you can read more about Mark. If you're not a part of the mail list for the show notes, just go to vandernews.com, and you'll be able to see ... Excuse me. If you're not part of

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the show notes, go to [vandercast.com](http://vandercast.com). And we'll put you on a mail list that doesn't beat you up with a bunch of email, just sends you show notes. Mark, thank you so much for making time for us. And thank you so much for providing chicken dinner tonight. I'm going to cook well, I'm sure of it. I'm going to execute.

Mark Miller:

It's our pleasure.

Speaker 1:

Thanks so much, man. Appreciate you.

Speaker 3:

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