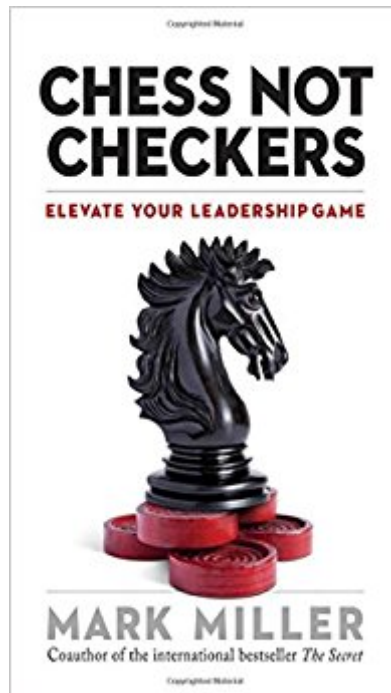




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# Chess Not Checkers: Elevate Your Leadership Game



## Synopsis

As organizations grow in volume and complexity, the demands on leadership change. The same old moves won't cut it any more. In *Chess Not Checkers*, Mark Miller tells the story of Blake Brown, newly appointed CEO of a company troubled by poor performance and low morale. Nothing Blake learned from his previous roles seems to help him deal with the issues he now faces. The problem, his new mentor points out, is Blake is playing the wrong game. The early days of an organization are like checkers: a quickly played game with mostly interchangeable pieces. Everybody, the leader included, does a little bit of everything; the pace is frenetic. But as the organization expands, you can't just keep jumping from activity to activity. You have to think strategically, plan ahead, and leverage every employee's specific talents—that's chess. Leaders who continue to play checkers when the name of the game is chess lose. On his journey, Blake learns four essential strategies from the game of chess that transform his leadership and his organization. The result: unprecedented performance!

## Book Information

Hardcover: 144 pages

Publisher: Berrett-Koehler Publishers; 1 edition (April 6, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1626563942

ISBN-13: 978-1626563940

Product Dimensions: 5.7 x 0.7 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.9 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 243 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #98,619 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #168 in [Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Strategy & Competition](#) #382 in [Books > Business & Money > Processes & Infrastructure > Strategic Planning](#) #451 in [Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Systems & Planning](#)

## Customer Reviews

“Don't let the highly absorbing story here fool you — *Chess not Checkers* is a truly fascinating and eminently practical guide to improving your organization's functionality and performance at all levels. Any leader looking to effect critical change will come away with a new understanding of what changes to make and how to make them!” — Marshall Goldsmith, New York Times and global bestselling author of *What Got You Here Won't Get You*

There's no doubt that "As our opportunities and challenges grow ever more complex, leadership has never been more valuable. With his creative and accessible new book, Chess Not Checkers, Chick-fil-A's Mark Miller has successfully demystified the essence of modern leadership. Recommended to current and future leaders alike."

•Muhtar Kent, Chairman and CEO, The Coca-Cola Company

"Engaging as well as enlightening -- good storyline -- believable characters with real life challenges. I highly recommend this book to any organization looking for a higher level of performance. The four staples of high performance will stand the test of time."

•Clint Hurdle, Manager, Pittsburgh Pirates

"In Chess Not Checkers, Mark Miller has written a compelling and insightful guide to building a high-performance organization. Through realistic examples and instantly recognizable personalities, Miller has distilled four powerful lessons to benefit leaders at all levels of their careers. The book is entertaining as a novel yet packs profound insights into what it means to lead and succeed in today's business world."

•Chris Heller, President, Keller Williams Worldwide

"Mark Miller is an expert on leadership. His new book, Chess Not Checkers, is headed to the best-seller's list. Check it out! It's that good!"

•Pat Williams Co-founder and Senior Vice President, Orlando Magic and author of 21 Great Leaders

"To excel as a high performance leader, one must first think like a high performance leader. Mark Miller does a brilliant job of outlining the critical shift leaders must make if they want to move from playing small and simple to succeeding in large complex environments."

•Linda Lindquist-Bishop, World Champion Sailor, and President, Courageous Thinking Inc.

The ever-increasing complexity we face requires a new way to think and work. To effectively lead an organization, bestselling author Mark Miller says, you have to play chess, not checkers. He shows how this mentality enables you to marshal all your available resources, including every employee, to strategically address challenges and opportunities.

This was similar to some Lencioni leadership narratives. It tells the story of a new CEO in over his head who lands a world class leadership coach who teaches him how to play "chess not checkers" - an evocative metaphor that gave me a lot to think about. The book is an easy and fast read. The narrative story could make the material more accessible to people who don't enjoy reading leadership material. I personally would have benefited just as much from an executive summary. The principles are great - the story adds little if anything to them (unlike a few of Lencioni's narratives, where the story actually helps illustrate the principles in action). Overall, a solid book for

anyone seeking to lead an organization that is growing in size, scope, and complexity (or needs to), though it would not be my first recommendation for leadership development.

A great comparison that helps convey a frequently missed key to leadership. Just like in chess no two people are the same. Frequently we miss great opportunities by not knowing our people. Learning about our people helps us grow and helps them grow. If we invest in our people we grow and they grow. The more investment in our people the greater their growth and our organization will benefit. But most importantly our people will continue to grow and thereby we all will improve!

Chess Not Checkers came at the right time. As part of an organization that is needing to make the change from playing checkers (thinking tactically and immediately) to playing chess (thinking strategically with the longer view), this book gave me the insight I needed to move forward in my leadership. I'm recommending this book to the leaders in my organization and passing a few copies around to encourage all of our leaders to think this way. I greatly recommend this book to any leaders or inspiring leaders who feel that they are always firefighting. This is the book you need to read.

I have been a fan of Mark Miller's for quite some time and was not disappointed with Chess Not Checkers! It is easily read, easily understood, and easily communicated. While not necessarily presenting new concepts or ideas, it presents them in a manner that captures both the mind and the heart. As I was reading, my head was spinning with ideas and thoughts as to how to utilize the analogy and principles to lead our organization to greater success! Since reading, we have requested the book be read by all of our leadership team and plan to utilize it, along with the related video series and Field Guide, in a Leadership Summit already on the calendar. I strongly recommend this book be a "must read" for all levels of the organization. There is much to be gained!

This was a great book to lead my staff through chapter by chapter. It allowed us to address some broken parts of our organization in a direct and effective way. It reminded me of the importance of mentorship and healthy leadership to lead an organization forward. This book challenged and inspired me to greater courage as a leader. It's time to stop chasing and reacting, and start leading with strategy and vision. Mark Miller hooks you in with a relatable storyline and then confronts you look into your own leadership mirror. I highly recommend this book for you and your team.

Chess Not Checkers was not what I was expecting around a strategy book. Instead of the usual strategy books that take you from inception of a strategy to what a full blown strategy session entails.....This book instead is a story that walks you through the troubles a certain company has in developing a strategy (actually multiple problems) and gives you a good feel as to the attitudes and business sense of each team member. Very easy read.....

This book tells a story that most leaders can relate to because we have all had similar struggles but we may not have known how to overcome them. This book gives some practical down to earth ways of doing just that. I would recommend it to anyone who is trying to build a strong leadership team.

Great book that is very well written! Mark is a captivating writer who really knows how to put leadership principles into practice. Mark has great credibility based on his Chick-fil-A experience and has shared some of his "secrets" with the rest of us. This book is the next in a 5-part series that has proven to be extremely valuable to me and the leaders that I have the privilege to lead. I really like the idea that "leaders are the architects of the future".

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