



TEAMWORK: THE REAL LESSON OF MARCH MADNESS

(3-minute read)

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March is one of my favorite times of year. The NCAA tournament delivers everything sports should be: energy, intensity, and the kind of unpredictability that makes every possession feel urgent. Brackets get busted. Underdogs rise. Seasons are defined in 40 minutes.

But beyond the buzzer-beaters, this time of year always pulls me back to something more fundamental: Teamwork.

Basketball is one of the clearest mirrors we have for how organizations succeed and fail. Talent matters. Preparation matters. Strategy matters. But without teamwork, even the most gifted roster comes up short. You can have the best players on paper and still lose if they won't move as one.



The best teams understand that everyone has a role. The point guard sets the tempo. The center controls the paint. Shooters stretch the defense. The sixth man changes momentum with energy and effort. Not everyone leads in scoring, but everyone influences the outcome. Strength isn't found in individual statistics. It's found in how well the pieces fit together.

The same is true in business. High-performing organizations are not built on individual heroics. They're built on clarity of roles, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to a common goal. When people understand their responsibilities and execute them well, they create space for others to excel. Wins become collective. So do accountability and growth.

Communication is the lifeblood of it all. On the court, players call out screens, switch assignments, and signal plays. Silence leads to confusion, and confusion leads to breakdowns. In organizations, consistent and transparent communication keeps everyone aligned, and when circumstances change, as they always do, teams that communicate well adapt in real time.

Trust is equally essential. A player driving the lane must trust that a teammate will be in the corner, ready for the kick-out pass. Without that trust, hesitation creeps in, and it's costly. In the workplace, trust empowers people to act decisively, fosters accountability, and eliminates the drag of constant oversight. Teams built on trust move faster and perform with conviction.

Teamwork also demands sacrifice. The best teams celebrate the extra pass more than the contested shot. They value the screen that frees a teammate for an open look. The most important contributions often never appear in the box score. In organizations, that looks like mentoring a colleague, stepping up to meet a deadline, or putting the team's goals ahead of personal recognition. True teamwork means doing what's necessary, not just what's visible.

And then there's purpose. Every team entering the tournament shares a clear objective, to win and advance. That singular goal unites players across different backgrounds and personalities. In business, a well-defined mission creates the same alignment. When

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everyone understands where the organization is headed and why it matters, individual efforts naturally serve the larger vision.

No team is perfect. Turnovers happen. Shots rim out. Adversity is inevitable. What separates great teams from average ones is the response: regroup, refocus, rely on each other. Resilience is strengthened by unity.

As the NCAA tournament unfolds, we will watch talented teams fall to more cohesive, disciplined opponents. It is one of sports' most reliable lessons: five players moving with shared purpose will almost always outperform five individuals playing for themselves.

Lasting success is rarely about one star. It's about a group committed to a common goal, executing their roles, communicating clearly, and trusting one another completely.

Whether on the hardwood or in the workplace, the principle is the same: **when we function together, we win together.**

Dave Miller is Vice President of Architecture and Director of Operations at NUTEC, where he brings a team-first



mindset to leading projects and people. Known as "Coach Miller" off the clock, he's spent over 15 years coaching basketball and soccer and remains active as a referee. As a longtime fan of basketball and March Madness, it's no surprise he has a few things to say about teamwork this time of year.