

**Jacob Morgan** 00:00

or intro when I actually record everything. But for now I have a Molly Fletcher, author of four books, one of the world's only female sports agents, female Jerry Maguire \$500 million in contracts is what I'll just share to introduce you. Anything else that you want me to mention?

**Molly Fletcher** 00:17

No, I mean, I think that's great. I mean, and if you want another one and another time, then that's all that, you know. That's great. Yeah,

**Jacob Morgan** 00:23

I'm going to do a longer one, like when people first tune into the podcast, I'm gonna have you know, more of the things we'll talk about the books and all that kind of stuff in there. Okay. And then yeah, I'm excited to talk to you. I heard you on the David Novak's podcasts and David Novak I had as a guest on this show as well. And I was like, oh, man, that's a great interview. So

**Molly Fletcher** 00:43

yeah, he's, he's a really nice man. He really isn't good guy.

**Jacob Morgan** 00:47

He is. Yeah. Have you known him for a while?

**Molly Fletcher** 00:50

Well, I spoke at a yum brands event years ago. And then Tim is a really good friend of mine from story brand. And I think Tim's working with David quite a bit.

**Jacob Morgan** 01:00

Okay. That's the connection. Okay, cool. All right. Let

**Molly Fletcher** 01:03

me just crack this one door real quick and fixed.

**Jacob Morgan** 01:06

Okay, sounds good.

**Molly Fletcher** 01:22

All right. How long? Typically? Yeah, totally. What How long do you typically like to go?

**Jacob Morgan** 01:29

So we block off an hour. I mean, it's 1110. Now, so I'd say maybe, like 4550 minutes, something like that. Perfect. probably similar to what you did for David, I think yours was like 48 minutes or something?

**Molly Fletcher** 01:40

Absolutely. That sounds great. Alright, um,

**Jacob Morgan** 01:43

it's really meant to be casual. I mean, I have some things that I want to talk about. But if there's something that you want to bring up, or something that I haven't touched on, you can always stop me and we'll and we'll get to that too.

**Molly Fletcher** 01:54

Okay, that sounds great. And your audience, just real high level. So I.

**Jacob Morgan** 01:59

So the show is called leading the future of work. So we get a big mix of top level executives at big companies, entry level employees, mid level leaders. Anyone in the workforce interested in leadership and work? Okay. Yeah, yeah. I'd say probably similar audience to David Novak show.

**Molly Fletcher** 02:19

Cool. All right. I'm Roger.

**Jacob Morgan** 02:22

I'll jump right in if that works for you. Let's do it. All right. Hello, everyone. Welcome to another episode of leading the future of work. My guest today is Molly Fletcher. She is the author of four books, one of the world's only female sports agents known as the female Jerry Maguire, and she has negotiated over \$500 million in contracts. Molly, thank you for joining me. Absolutely treat to be with you. Yeah, as I was mentioning, I still eat from David Novak's podcasts. I was listening to people who listen to the show know, David was a guest as well. And I heard your interview with him. And I learned a lot from it. I thought it was a great interview. And I thought, well, we got to get Molly on here as well. So I'm so glad that you agreed to be guest.

**Molly Fletcher** 03:04

You know, it's a treat. I'm a big fan of Dave. It's too good man.

**Jacob Morgan** 03:08

Yeah, he is. Why don't we start with a little bit of background information about you. Take us back to baby Molly, how you were raised where you grew up? How did you become a sports agent? And for people not familiar? What does a sports agent actually do?

**Molly Fletcher** 03:25

Sure. Well, you know, I grew up in Michigan with two incredible parents, you know, older brothers who are five years older than me, identical twin brothers, who treated me a whole lot more like a little brother than a little sister, total tomboy and had just a really, really special upbringing. Really incredible family. And for that I'm very, very grateful because they continue to shape my decisions and values and have been and continue to be an enormous part of my days. Literally, we talk several times a day, and then play tennis at Michigan State after graduating I said, Look, I want to be in the sports business. I moved down to Atlanta to try to find a job in sports and sort of did some odds and ends job ads and and jobs along the way and, you know, negotiated a gig to free to teach tennis at an apartment complex in exchange for my rent, which gave me a little bit more wiggle room because you don't make any money

in sports out of the gates. And so, you know, I found my way then into a small agency in Atlanta, we had a few clients and I was Lenny Wilkens driver during the Olympics, I would drive Lenny to all of his appearances. He was the head coach of the Dream Team. And so I would drive Lenny around and when the Olympics ended, I remember thinking how are we gonna grow what's our growth plan to get more clients, more coaches, more baseball players more athletes? And you know that the agency the President was pretty competent, he said all referrals, you know, we got Our clients through referrals. That's how we've grown. It's worked great and, and I suggested we get more aggressive. Let's go recruit these guys. And thankfully, he blessed a business plan and I was off to the races recruiting baseball players and continuing to grow about 1516 years later to about 300 athletes and a team of agents helping us serve each of them. To your other question, Jacob, what are those days like? I mean, every day is different. I mean, you can imagine with NBA coaches, college coaches, broadcasters, golfers, I mean, you got guys and gals everyday waking up, you know, getting injured, healthy, released, fired, traded, called up called down missing cuts, making cuts. So it is, you know, it's a 24/7 deal. That's very fluid. But it's also most importantly about maximizing a remarkably unique window of time in an athlete, or coach life, coaches life, and I took that really seriously.

**Jacob Morgan** 05:58

So what does a sports agent actually do? So you manage all aspects of an athlete as far as telling them? I mean, does it include managing personal finances, helping them figure out what team they should be a part of? Like, what what's included in your role?

**Molly Fletcher** 06:12

Yeah, for sure. Well, I mean, you know, it depends a smidge on the sport, but I would say, you know, let's take baseball as an example. And, and at the highest level, I would start by saying that, you know, there's three main ways that people help athletes, I mean, one is marketing, you know, which includes all kinds of things, of course, you know, obviously, their primary contract or their contracts, and then their finances and, you know, we always did two of those three, we did the contracts and the marketing and not the finances. And and I always encourage athletes, you know, have have an external resource doing that have the checks and balances, have some people holding each other accountable. They're so you know, what does it entail? I mean, negotiating their contracts is obviously doing that with their team, with their network, with their university with their equipment sponsors, if it's a golfer, and you know, anticipating those opportunities, and then maximizing those opportunities for these guys, I mean, these are unique times for them to make an enormous amount of money in a short window of time, and the clock is always ticking because they're physically ticking, right. And then the marketing deals, right, if it's a golfer, you're doing their hat, bag, ball, shoe gloves, sleeves, you know, your back of the neck bags, I mean, all of it. And with, you know, other kinds of athletes or coaches, it's all there, you know, sort of off the field and even some of the endemic deals on the field. So they're their deals, you know, with the endorsement companies for their cleats, their spikes, bats, batting gloves, all that kind of stuff.

**Jacob Morgan** 07:44

my limited knowledge of sports agents comes from the show ballers. Did you see that show on HBO with the rock?

**Molly Fletcher** 07:53

I have? You know, I haven't watched every bit of it, of course, but yes, absolutely. And I've certainly had a lot of people reference that.

**Jacob Morgan** 08:00

Yeah. Okay, so you were part of this tiny agency, and you helped to grow. But I'm assuming that when you were going to these athletes, it was a tiny agency, nobody knew you. Nobody knew the agency. Why would they sign with you? Like, what was your pitch? Like you would go to an athlete? And they'd say, Who are you like, what agency? How did you get them to sign with you to grow the business?

**Molly Fletcher** 08:24

Well, one of the biggest and most important pieces of being I think, successful in business in general, and certainly in the agent space is relationships. And I think it's time it's consistency. So I was, for example, right? When I started, I was down at Georgia Tech. I mean, I didn't start with a rod and Jeter right? I needed to get, you know, these young guys coming out in the draft. So I was consistently down leaning on that fence with scouts and coaches and parents and building strong relationships. And I think pretty quickly players and parents and scouts realized she's authentic, she really wants to help me maximize this window of time. She cares, she's consistent. She's gonna be there for me, she has a company behind her to help support, you know, our needs as well. And so, but like every business, it's show relationship intensive, and it's about being authentic. And I think they knew like it wasn't, certainly wasn't about me being at the country club, talking about the guys that I was working with, like, maybe is some people's intent. It was about truly saying, Okay, you're an 18 year old, you're a 20 year old who's worked for a period of time to get to this place, and we have to maximize that and, and recognizing with every athlete and coach that you're going to go through all kinds of things good and bad. And I'm going to be right there beside you through all of that. I had built a team as I continued to grow pretty quickly around me to make sure that we were supporting all aspects of an athlete's life. And and so I You know, it depended on the to answer your question, Jacob is dependent on the athlete or the coach and dependent on their world. But I'm a big proponent of getting in the head in the heart of the people that you're selling to that you're calling on that you want to connect with. Understanding their gaps, solving for those gaps and sometimes solving for them before they see in themselves. I always have the thing I used to say to my agents act like you have the business before you have the business, right, like in other words, behave in a way that sends a message to the people that you want to work with, that this relationship really matters to me. In fact, it matters so much. I'm going to give you a little taste for what this might look like. So those were important behaviors certainly.

**Jacob Morgan** 10:40

Can you for people listening? Who were some of the athletes that you represented that people might be familiar with?

**Molly Fletcher** 10:47

Yeah, so baseball wise, I mean, guys like John Smoltz, Mark DeRosa Wes Helms, Brian Moeller, we had a lot of baseball, guys and gals, you know, broadcast wise, Ernie Johnson chip carry, you know, NBA coaching wise Doc Rivers, Billy Donovan, Nate McMillan, you know, college coaching wise, Billy went to the college level is though, golfers, Matt kucha so, you know, we had a stable of great, great talent. But most importantly, I would say, truthfully, they were good people. And that was a big deal,

because it's a 24/7 deal. And you gotta you gotta like them, because they're calling you at night. They're calling you on the weekends. I wanted to look down at that phone and, and like the people that were calling me.

**Jacob Morgan 11:35**

So early on, you say you spent spending time at the dugout leaning up against the fence? I mean, what, what were you saying? So you know, the first time you went down there, you go down to the dugout, you see athletes practicing, you see their parents there, what what was your like, your line? Would you scope them and say, Hey, your your son's got a pretty good arm there, or like, how did you get into building that relationship?

**Molly Fletcher 11:58**

Yeah, I mean, I always like to know something that they wouldn't be surprised that I knew, I always like to have a piece of information or a nugget or a thought that would blow them away that I even knew. So maybe it was that I knew from the Boston Red Sox cross checker that he was number two on the board. Maybe I knew that, you know that he had just started throwing a slider, and he was getting a hold of it and locating it really wow. You know, it was knowing something that would surprise them that I knew that made sure they knew, obviously, as a female that didn't play in the big leagues. I had to overcome that too. And sometimes it was about demonstrating to them that I understood their world and the business. It you know, it was understanding potentially where the player was slotted and what that looked like from a draft perspective of where that meant he might settle in at that, that he could be, you know, drafted by the Astros. And here's who we know, and here's what I'm thinking could happen and where his slot could drop him from a cost perspective and how we wanted to handle the conversations with scouts. Yeah, and so it was, you know, it was truly, it wasn't, candidly, Jacob, it wasn't about selling, it was about adding value. You know, it wasn't about it wasn't about trying to close the deal. It was about trying to demonstrate to them that I knew what they were worried about. I knew the market and I could make their world better. And I think if you do that every day and do it consistently, after a period of time, they go, You know what, all these other people, they're just pitching me all the time. And, and she's actually making my world better. She's adding value. She's giving me information. And she's not necessarily asking for the business right away. You know, I believe you got to give, give, give, give, give, and then, you know, maybe maybe you ask,

**Jacob Morgan 13:51**

yeah, and I like that approach. And it's probably very, very relevant for leaders out there to who it seems like one of the lessons is to get to know your people, and don't don't just focus on who they are as a worker, but focus on who they are as a human being, what they care about what they value, I think it's an important lesson. So for you from that kind of sports agent perspective, you know, you're at the dugout, I mean, you're talking to parents, you're talking to coaches, you're talking to the athletes themselves. How long does it take to build that relationship? Or how long did it take you like you show up day after day? They recognize your face, and it's like, Oh, hey, Molly, like Good to see you again. How long did it take for you to finally make the pitch and say, Hey, by the way, yeah, I'd love to represent you.

**Molly Fletcher 14:33**

Yeah, you always gotta make the ask. Right. I mean, I think there's lots of questions you can ask along the way that are asking without asking that get you the kind of information that you need to understand if you're chasing the right business, right. If they say, oh, no, my dad was a big league guy. I'm using his guy right now. You know, you got no shot, right? Yeah. So, you know, if it was a guy that was coming out in the draft, I mean, you could you could start a year two years before I draft, if it was a big league guy, the bigger the name, the longer it took, right? The bigger the guy, the closer he was to free agency. The closer he was to arbitration, the longer it took a PGA Tour player, the bigger the name, the more established, the longer it took. I mean, it's like business itself, right? The bigger to the deal. The longer it takes. The bigger the athlete, the bigger the coach, the longer it takes. So it's a long sales cycle, no question.

**Jacob Morgan 15:27**

You said, you develop a knack for asking without asking. So instead of just, you know, saying, hey, I want to represent. So how did you What was your technique for asking without asking to get the information you needed to determine if you should make the ask?

**Molly Fletcher 15:40**

So like, for example, I had a guy that I went after, for a long time. And I remember that it was actually a mistake that I made where I didn't, I didn't ask early enough. And so the example of what you would ask if it's a guy that you're trying to get to switches, what do you love about the agents that you're with? That gives you an opportunity to open the conversation with, they might say to you? Well, actually, I don't, he doesn't call me back. He never comes to see me play. I'm not really sure he's the right guy. Now, you know, you got an opportunity if he says, It's my brother, I love him. Now, you know, you got no shot. So I think in all of our businesses, we've got to identify what are the safe questions that we can ask that give us get us into their world help us understand them better, and then build enough of a built build value in their life in a significant way over a period of time, that then when we go to ask for the business, yes is easy. Right? I recruited Matt kucha for years and or for a period, it wasn't actually yours, but it was for a period of time. And I poured into him added a lot of value for he and his wife, and, you know, all kinds of different things. So that when I asked for the business, when it felt like it was the right time, it was a pretty easy yes for him. And I think that's how we want those conversations to go, the foundation has been laid and it's strong.

**Jacob Morgan 17:07**

It's crazy that you said it could take a year months, more than a year, two years, three years. So this is a lot of people complain about not getting a deal after like a couple of days or a week. I mean, you're out here spending a year to who knows how long trying to get these deals. So it's crazy. The amount of work that that's required. Have you ever been turned on? And I already know the answer this, obviously, you've been turned down where you've made the ask some people have told you no. Can you share a story about how does that work? Like you go and you ask for the sale? Or hey, look, we'd love to represent you. And what did you say? No? Sorry, we're good. And what do you do after you get told no?

**Molly Fletcher 17:50**



Well, my philosophy on No, in general is that it's just feedback. That's all it is. And so we want to take that information, take that feedback, use it, roll it up to show up better for the next conversation, the next moment, the next situation just a little bit better. So you know, I think you've always got to find the good in these moments. I mean, if I gotta know, I know, there's 750 Big League guys. There's hundreds of college coaches, there's 125 guys out on tour that are making an interesting living. There's however many lays on LPGA, right? I mean, so No, at the end of the day is just feedback, we got to learn from it, we got to understand what we could have done differently or better. And then we got to move on. I never though, would outright ask an athlete for the business without having a strong relationship with them in the first place. So so there was no, no, I'm not doing that. Because the relationship was so good. If anything, it was over a great dinner and a couple bottles of wine. And I love you, but I can't leave my guy, right. But it wasn't like, you know, the way a dude might get rejected from a pretty girl at a bar.

**Jacob Morgan** 19:02

Okay, so it wasn't okay, so it wasn't as vulnerable or exposing for you. Okay, got it. And then without

**Molly Fletcher** 19:10

you could be recruiting somebody early on. And they could not pay attention to you when you're at the field or the core to the course. And you just have to pick up on those moments and recognize that there's a huge blue ocean of opportunity out there that that you want to go after.

**Jacob Morgan** 19:27

And when you're told no does the relationship vendor do you keep the relationship? Have you ever had somebody tell you? No, that then later became a yes.

**Molly Fletcher** 19:33

Absolutely. That's a great question, Jacob. Yes. I mean, I had a golfer once that I went after, and I recruited him pretty hard. He was a stud for about a good solid year. And then he went a different direction. And, and I stayed in touch with him. Unfortunately, his dad died. I love this guy and his dad died and I sent him a note and you know, his mom had really great art and I went to her Don't show and bought a piece of art because I truly and authentically really liked Nick this player. And so long story short, though he signed with an agency, and then after a year, it just wasn't right. And I'll never forget, I was standing in Puerto Rico, actually, my phone rang and it was neck and I was like, Hey, man, what's up? And he said, I've made a mistake. I said, What do you mean? He said, I shouldn't be with these guys, would you consider representing me? And I said, Of course, I would love to. And you know, we move forward to that way. And so I believe that if you were going after someone, and you do care about them, and you do want to make their world better, I'm not sure that can come to a screeching halt, if you're being authentic about it. Yeah. So no, unless, no, I always tried to stay in their world to to understand what was working to support them in ways that they might need at times throughout their career. And sometimes that came back around and I was able to support them in a more professional role.

**Jacob Morgan** 21:03

When you think about leadership and business and work, what are some of the lessons that you think can be applied for leaders as far as building relationships as far as knowing how to make the ask negotiating? And then you give a lot of talks for organizations? How do you bring in what you've learned from being a sports agent into that business world?

**Molly Fletcher 21:24**

Yeah, well, so much. I mean, I think, you know, for 20 years, it was truly a front row seat to peak performance. I mean, it was a front row seat to the way the best, behave, prepare, recover, navigate, change adversity. It was a front row seat to it every day, all day long. And one of the things that I saw, so consistently, so consistently, is there is no room for complacency in sports, because there's always somebody right behind you that's dying to take your job. And he can see your stats, you know, in the business world, everybody's not necessarily I mean, you're seeing some of the stats, but you're not seeing everything. Right in in sports you're seeing you're seeing it all. Because everything. Yeah, you're what you're seeing, you can see their shooting percentage, you can see their fielding per USD everything. Yeah. So, you know, there, I actually just launched a course called up your game, and we identified what are the eight critical components to really up level your game in life. And you know, to me, they're things like Limitless Mindset, curiosity, purpose, discipline, resilience, competence, energy, right? And then certainly relationships connection. And so we go deep in my course on all eight of those, but those, you know, mindset, and and a lot of keynotes that I'm giving now that is a big gap challenge, if you will, for people right now. Because mindsets huge, and our ability to perform at our best.

**Jacob Morgan 23:01**

Yeah, and I like you know, the difference, like you said, in the sports world, everybody can see your stats, but in the business world, nobody can see your stats. So it's, it's it's very, it's different. And yeah, you probably see people in the sports world who are no room for complacency, constantly working. But I think you don't see as much of that in the business world, there is a lot of complacency. There is a lot of like, I'm good, we're just going to do things the way they always were. Because you don't feel like anybody's coming for you the same way that they do in sports. Right? That's right, which is creates a very interesting environment.

**Molly Fletcher 23:36**

No question. I mean, no, you're right. And and I think in business, you can see some stats, right? If it's a publicly held company, at the highest level, if it's a, you know, maybe a sales team, and they have kind of a leaderboard type deal, you can still see some but it's not at the magnitude of sports. And so it it is a it is a constant driver to know and what I also found Jacob that thinks important, particularly for business people is to understand that what I found with the best the LeBrons, the serene as the, you know, Cobis it's not the drive actually to achieve things. Right. And I talked about this in my recent TED Talk. It's not the drive to achieve things trophies, super boring. It's the drive to get better. They aren't motivated candidly by the rings, Tom Brady has plenty. He's motivated by the desire to get better every play every game every season. And that's a mindset shift that I think can be powerful for business people too was to to have this belief. I had you know, Arianna on my podcast, course had women's coach at Connecticut. All right, UConn, and and I mean, Geno's been to 22 Final Fours. He's been to 14 consecutive Final Fours. He's won 11 National Championships like Dude, that's insane. Yeah. And



so I said to Gino, how have you done it? And he was like, Oh, I just, I'm all always curious about how I can get better. And, you know, that's a powerful mindset that I think we can all take into our own lives.

**Jacob Morgan** 25:08

Yeah, I couldn't agree more. You mentioned one of the people you worked with was Doc Rivers, obviously, a lot of people know head coach to the 70. Sixers. So I'm curious to get somebody like that, right? Very known. I'm sure tons of people are going for doc, right, some of the world's biggest agencies, everybody's trying to recruit him. What what did you say to him? Or what did you do for him to end up working with you? Like, how do you build that better relationship? Because I'm assuming sports agents, they all know the name of the game is to build relationships. And so you're trying to build a relationship. But so is everybody else? What did you do differently? For him to want to work with you and your team?

**Molly Fletcher** 25:49

Yeah, I mean, you know, I think one of the things that's important when you're recruiting these guys, is to break it down into the stages of their career at some level, depending on where they are in their journey. And to help them understand as I progressed, in my career, that there's nothing you're gonna go through, that we haven't navigated for another coach before. And, you know, I remember recruiting Tom Izzo as an example. And so was a guy that, you know, had won a national championship at Michigan State. And, and I sort of did this, you know, act like you have the business before you have the business, you know, add value to his life, bringing them endorsement deals, bring him appearances, bring him speaking engagements to when all of a sudden they wake up and go, you don't even represent me. And you're doing all this for me. And the guy that does isn't? Can we have a meeting? Can we talk about what else you do? And is this how you work?

**Jacob Morgan** 26:44

Right? You did all that stuff for free before you were even getting paid?

**Molly Fletcher** 26:48

Yes. I mean, I did that stuff. I had to do that stuff all the time. Because if I mean, think about our own lives, if somebody continues to add value to your life, you start to pay attention to him. And when you're bringing coaches 1015 2050 \$100,000. And you can do that as an agent without representing them, they start to go, oh, wait, she just brought me a 20,000 or speaking engagement, a \$50,000 endorsement deal. This is kind of interesting. I think I might look at these guys to help me do what I do. So that's why, and look, I mean, this isn't applicable in every business, right? You can't start managing money for a client if you're a wealth manager before you have them. But what I would say is, there are things that we can do when we're trying to get business. Yeah, and part of it is getting creative. I think one of the most important things that's often overlooked from a sales perspective is creativity. Right? Being creative about finding the gaps in people's lives. So you can I'll give an example I had, there was a a year where there was five young guys that all came up in the Braves organization at the same time. Okay, and I visit a local station in Atlanta to do an interview with these guys. And I asked Smoltz if he would host it, if John would, you know, John, you're trying to get some reps behind the booth, right, which is what he's doing now. What if you interview all five of these rookie guys, and we film it, and we put it out as like a 30 minute special on a local station. So I get the station to come up, I get all five of

these superstar rookies up to the office. Well, of course, what an unbelievable opportunity for me to, to get in their head and heart, understand their gaps. Add a little value maybe. So I'm standing there at the end of our time together a couple guys. And one of the guys says to me, something about Carrie Underwood come into town and how he his wife loves Carrie Underwood. We left the meeting and a day later, I called him and I said, Hey, would you be up for backstage passes to see Carrie and meter with your wife and two seats in the front row? And he was like, wow, what do you mean? Wow. Like it's so now they know you listen, you care, you add value. So but all that was was, candidly an opportunity for me to get all five of those guys in the room with a veteran guy that they respect the heck out of ask a lot of questions to identify the gaps in their lives and then begin to the minute they walked out of that office, I had a list of things for every single player, have the kinds of things that I could do to make the world a little bit better?

**Jacob Morgan 29:20**

That's amazing. It's but you know, some people might be listening or watching this and thinking, Well, you know, there's a lot of like working for free there, right? There's a lot of like, give people speaking engagements before you're getting paid help people get sponsorships before knowing you're gonna get anything out of it. I'm sure there have been plenty of times where you've done all this for somebody and you didn't get anything in return. Right? So how does that make you feel? And how do you keep going when you get somebody a sponsorship and they're like, great, Molly, thanks. See you later.

**Molly Fletcher 29:51**

Well, number one, I tried to go after the guys and the gals that I thought value that that I knew were good human beings that wouldn't take take take taken last, they had a heart and a soul and and probably understood that, that maybe there was a way to connect more deeply after that. Okay, so I think part of it is chasing the right business knowing who you're dealing with, are they the kind of people that you think you align with from a core values perspective period. So that was where I would start. But, you know, I think that you, you also truly in your heart of hearts, want to help them. I mean, you have to do it, because you, you like them. And you, I'll give you another example, I was working out at a gym around the corner from our office, and I would go and one of these young guys, he was a young guy with the Braves, and he was working out there too. And he was just a great guy. And I was doing a baseball camp for one of my other players. And I went up to him when we were working out and we were just kind of like goofing around and having fun and, and I said, Do you do a camp for kids? And he said, No, but I want to. And I said, Well, look, would you want to jump into this camp that we're doing with one of our other guys, I said, you know, it'd be great experience for you to get a little taste for it. Well now, and he was like, wow, that'd be I would love that. And so that was a light left, I got him involved with a camp he gave back to kids gave me an opportunity to communicate and build a relationship with them. And then at the end of the camp, and kind of as the season approaches, he switched. And he said, Hey, you know, would you do something like this just for me in the future. And, you know, I just like the way you communicate and the way you anticipate my life, and, you know, I want to sweat so, but that was from a place of authenticity of wanting to include him in something that I thought as a young local guy would be good for him to do, but also as a place. It was a it was an easy and a light lift for me, too.

**Jacob Morgan 31:50**

Can you share a time when you did do a lot of that work? And it didn't turn into anything?

**Molly Fletcher** 31:55

Yeah, Andruw Jones, right? So I recruited Andrew Jones centerfielder for the Braves for like, almost two years. I mean, wow. planes to all star games, appearances, all that kind of stuff. So

**Jacob Morgan** 32:08

you invested 1000s of dollars into this 10s of 1000s. of dollars.

**Molly Fletcher** 32:12

Yes. 100%. Wow. And we were sitting at dinner and and I said, Man had this been fun. And it was kind of time to he was approaching free agency and good guy. And he said, you know, my like, I just I can't, I can't switch. I just can't do what I mean, the guy that I've had has been with me since I got off the boat from Curacao. I just can't do it. Which totally get fine. And the mistake was really on my part. I mean, I should have asked him, What do you love about the guy you're with? At the very beginning? And he would have said, Oh my God, it's like a data brother. He was there. When I got off the boat from Curacao. I could never leave him. I would have known he was good. Right? So there, there was times I tried to anticipate those moments. And I think the more established I got, the more clarity I had earlier on which which was always helpful.

**Jacob Morgan** 33:10

Yeah, that's interesting. But I think for leaders, that also is a good lesson, or even just employees right to to invest in the relationships and you don't have every relationship you invest in, even in your personal life is going to turn into a good one. And like you said, Every relationship is a learning moment. And you need to learn which relationships are worth investing. So what did you look for? Because I think this is very relevant, something a lot of people struggle with, I struggle with this sometimes as well. What do you look for in the people where you kind of get that signal? This is a relationship worth investing in? And what are some of the red flags you look for when it's like, this is not this person is a taker? I don't see a relationship here time to move on?

**Molly Fletcher** 33:53

Well, I think you can look at that question. You can think about that question in a bunch of different ways. I mean, I think it from a business perspective, I wanted to look at the opportunity that existed was the guy or the gal young in their career, did they have a lot of upside? Were they going to be out there for a while? Was there an opportunity to capitalize on that with them? And for them, you know, I didn't want to go after a guy that was in, you know, the last year of a multi year free agency contract and he was about to retire. That didn't make sense. So. So number one, it sort of depended on where they were in their career and being professional and prudent about about that. You know, and then I think it was, who are they? I wanted to always ask my other players, you know, about an athlete or coach. I mean, I wanted to have guys in clubhouses where if I went into town, I can take them both to dinner, you know, guys had on the PGA tour that, you know, if we were if I was coming in on a Tuesday, we're gonna walk a practice round that I could walk with both of them and spend time with both of them or On the LPGA player that I could be with both of them, you know, I'd say the third bucket, there would be expectations, if inside of some of these conversations, I was hearing things that would lead me to

believe that their expectations and the reality of what I felt like I could deliver weren't aligned, I needed to run, because the last thing I'd want to do is walk into a relationship where the expectations were unrealistic in my view, and theirs were at us at a certain level, and I was going to under deliver, and now I was going to have somebody out in the market that felt like I hadn't delivered to them. So ensuring and any red flags that I might see where were their expectations, the way they were potentially viewing themselves in the market, and comparing themselves to others, was different than what I felt like was a reality to deliver.

**Jacob Morgan 35:50**

And what about from a personal perspective? So business perspective, obviously, you're looking for upside, you're looking for potential? What about from like, that human perspective of I could work with this person I want? Like, if it was Saturday, and I got their phone call, I'd want to pick up.

**Molly Fletcher 36:03**

Yeah, for sure. And those are the only kind of people I hire, right are people that I that I want to go have a beer with, right? That I want to have a glass of wine with that I want to go on a walk with, I mean, and so personally, for me, whether it's friends, whether it's people, that I love and care for that work for me, whether it's vendors, or whether it's people that my husband, and I, you know, go to go to dinner when I want, I want to be around people who are curious, who are relational, who are disciplined, who are confident, people who have great energy, you know, I wrote a book called The Energy clock, because to me, energy can solve quite a few problems. I like people that are solution oriented, right? That don't tell you what they can't do, but tell you what they can do who are authentic and loving, you know, people who are kind and compassionate. You know, people who are real, I, you know, I'll tell you, I mean, when you speak, I speak about 100 days a year, and you can hear all kinds of stuff, what you know, of you, you got to put people around you that will tell you the truth, too, you know, so you want relationships that are that are authentic, and where there's that safety with one another to share the truth. So those kinds of things are things that come up for me.

**Jacob Morgan 37:27**

What if some people are thinking, You know what, Molly, I don't have 10s of 1000s of dollars to invest in a relationship? I'm, you know, at a company, it's corporate? How do I invest in that relationship without giving somebody backstage passes to Carrie Underwood tickets and private flights to all star games? Like, what? What do you do if you're not in a position where you can spend so much for the relationship?

**Molly Fletcher 37:52**

Yeah, for sure. And I, you know, I speak to a lot of, you know, pharmaceutical sales teams or things like that, and, you know, or financial, and there's a lot of things that you can't do. And that is unique, I mean, that business model of the agent model is extreme on the perspective, right of the of the amount of recruitment that has to potentially, you know, occur. And there's a lot of things that you can't do, I mean, you can't buy at some level and give in the business world, I think that's the opportunity at the deepest level to get creative, you're on the phone with them. And they tell you that they're so excited, because they're planning their spring break with their children, and they're going to Disney will get in their world, maybe maybe you put a put a little packet or send them articles or information on the top 10 restaurants

there, maybe you you know, help connect them to a place that they can get, you know, discounts or coupons or fast passes or whatever it might be, but listen deeply to the people that you're selling to or that you want to connect with. And then anticipate those moments in their lives and get creative about how you can add value and sometimes it's just, it's just information. Right? It's It's It's things of that nature. But it all starts with curiosity, right? When I moved to Atlanta, Jacob, I didn't have any money. I had 1600 bucks in my pocket. I was living on my friend's couch and I had no job. And so I go to this, I find out that this apartment complex was going to need a tennis pro, but the manager of the property didn't know it yet. Long story short, I called my buddy at Wilson Sporting Goods and begged him to send me a box of Wilson stuff. I went to the pizza place across the street from the restaurant and asked if they'd deliver 15 or 20 Free pizzas a month for me to take to the tennis clinic. And then I'd written these tennis tips in Michigan for a little kind of magazine in Lansing. None of those things cost any money. and I delivered those to her one day after another. And then finally she said, this tennis pro we have he's great, but he's leaving. He never did anything like this. This is fantastic pizza tennis tips, Wilson stuff. She was like, can you be our tennis pro. And I lived at that property for free for nine years. None of those things cost a penny. But it was about recognizing and getting in her head and heart and saying what she worried about. She's not really worried about a tennis pro. She's worried about keeping her occupancy up and keeping her residents happy. Yeah, I

**Jacob Morgan** 40:33

love that creative. So who paid for the pizzas?

**Molly Fletcher** 40:37

He I put a coupon from the restaurant in the newsletter that they delivered to the front door of every apartment. And he agreed in exchange for me stuff in the coupons to give me 15 pizzas for free

**Jacob Morgan** 40:48

having oh my god, I love it. Oh, wow,

**Molly Fletcher** 40:51

it was gigantic trade out.

**Jacob Morgan** 40:53

Yeah, that's awesome. I love that. You know, one of the things that I think a lot of people are also scared with is getting turned down. And can you share a little bit about when you do get turned down? How do you mentally like, how do you and I'm thinking about this in a corporate setting, right, you ask for a promotion, you get turned down, you apply for a job, you get turned down, you try to build a relationship or connection with somebody at work, you get turned down, it doesn't go well. And in that context, a lot of people really struggle, they get down on themselves, they beat themselves up, they think well, I'm never gonna go out on a limb again. Or I'm never going to get promoted, or I'm never going to get a job. How do you mentally go through these periods where you get turned down to get past them? And I'm sure you've seen this with athletes as well, right? They lose a game they lose a match? How do they approach defeat? To get back in try harder and win?

**Molly Fletcher** 41:52

Well, I mean, you're talking about resilience, right? And resilience is integral to winning in life and in business. I mean, I think there's a couple things. One is, why do you do what you do in the first place. Because if you have a clear sense of purpose around your work around your mission in life, if you will, then you go to that place, when you've got to get through the hurdles, and the speed bumps, go to that when I would watch athletes go to days of rehabs or early batting practice or stand on the putting green until the sun was down. It was because they knew one day, they were going to maybe drain a pot and their wife and their children were going to run out, they knew that they were going to buy a house for their parents, they knew that they were going to finally reward that coach that's been beside them since they were 13. They had a bigger purpose. And and they would go to that. That, to me is integral, I think that you also got to pull back and say, What's the story? I'm telling myself? And is it serving me? Is it taking me where I want to go? Or should I tell myself a different story that in fact will take me where I need to go that aligns with, in fact what I want most. Now, I'm not suggesting this as easy. But what I am suggesting is it's possible and it's important, you know, and so when when, when Dan Janssen was trading for his last Olympics, he was telling himself, I hate the 1000 meter. I can't break the 36 second barrier in the 500 meter, that's my best race because nobody's done it. But I want to break a world record. He was telling himself a story that was limiting his performance. But it was a mindset problem, really at the core with Dan, it wasn't a performance problem. Long story short, he said and wrote and trained himself to say I love the 1000 meter, he won a gold in the 1000 meter at the Olympics, because for 11 straight months, every day, all day, he stared at this. And then he wrote 35.99, which was once milliseconds faster than 36. He broke the 36 second barrier in the 500 meter four times before the Olympics, but he changed his story, and it changed his performance. So when we go through hurdles and speed bumps, and when we have challenges, we have to first say, what's the story? I'm telling myself around that? And do I need to tell myself a different story than in fact, takes me where I want to go? You know, Billy Horschel, he just won recently. But Billy was on my podcast and he was telling me that he played a plaque practice around with Tiger Woods. And guys love plant. I mean, what a treat, right? I mean, you're playing with one of the best in the world ever. Of course, he's playing, playing a practice round with Tiger and and he was telling Tiger how he prepares for his tournaments. He said, You know, I, you know, I hit every fairway. I'm at every green and regulation. I'm draining every pot and I finish on Sunday with a trophy over my head and I won the tournament. And Tiger goes, Dude, that's awesome. He's up and do me a favor. visualize yourself in the Roth, visualize yourself having to drain a long putt to make the cut, visualize yourself in a trap, and you got to get up and down to make the cut. Visualize yourself and tough moments and then visualize yourself recovering. To me that is such a big, you know, we always talk we hear about visualization and, you know, visualizing greatness, if you will. And I think that's great. But we also have to visualize ourselves coming back. Right and recovering from the tough stuff, too.

#### **Jacob Morgan 45:28**

Yeah. I love that. That's great advice. Yeah, the mindset, the internal story that we tell is important, because it's easy to beat yourself up. But it's much harder to I think, lift yourself up when things aren't going well. And then we only have a couple minutes left, and I wanted to maybe spend the rest of our time talking about negotiation. So you negotiated over \$500 million in contracts. I had Chris Voss on the podcast a little while ago from, you know, I'm sure you know, Chris, from negotiating as well. What were your techniques that you use to negotiate successful deals? Because we're always negotiating in our lives, a higher salary for a job? What did you find was most effective? And do any stories come to



mind? Where a certain amount was offered? And how you were able to increase it? And what you did to do it?

**Molly Fletcher 46:18**

Sure. Yeah, I mean, a ton, I think, you know, when we teach in negotiation, because obviously, it's a critical life skill, I'm not sure there's a leader in the world that isn't great at it, or to be great at it. You know, number one, practice for me was always getting an understanding the kind of person I was negotiating with, what? Are they financially focused? Are they relational? Are they strategic? Are they logistical? What are they worried about getting in their world, I think one of the biggest mistakes we make we negotiate is we spend way too much time thinking about what we want, and not enough time figuring out the things that drive the person that we're negotiating with, I think we've got to add value to the people that we negotiate with, we got to make their world better people have a lot of choices today around who they do business with, I think we've got to add value to those, you know, we have a preparation technique that we teach, preparation is paramount, right? Because the more prepared you are, the more comfortable you are with the zig and zag of that conversation. And negotiation is just a gigantic, zigzag, no question about it. And so the more prepared, the more confident you are to navigate that, you know, the sort of the waves that come in and out throughout the conversation, you're more confident, and comfortable pausing when you need to inside of these conversations, you know, tactically some of the things that you know, just kind of some quick nuggets for listeners is, you know, shift from defensiveness to curiosity, it's easy in negotiations to get a little defensive, it's easy to want to put your fists up and, and go back at him. But what I always found as an agent was the more connected I was relationally, the people that I was negotiating with, the better the outcome, I believe strongly that when we lay a great foundation, relationally then we and we add value and we prepare deeply. Now we can ask for what we want with confidence. You know, one of the biggest, according to the data, reason people don't negotiate as much as they could, and maybe should, is a lack of confidence. And the reason they don't have confidence is because primarily, they don't practice enough. And so how do we practice negotiating all the time, everywhere, all day, every day. Because, you know, for me for 20 years, I just I did it all day long every day. And the more you do it, the more comfortable you get doing it. Right? So practice is huge. And I'm talking about practice with your yard guy, the window guy practice with anybody, practice at Starbucks, getting an extra shot for free. Just practice. Because the more you practice getting comfortable inside of these conversations, the better that that you'll get. So, you know, I mean, those are just a couple tactical things. Obviously, there's a whole lot to unpack there. But I would say relationships are the foundation practice is key to build the competence and, you know, consistent practice in order to continue to see the opportunities that exist, which are plentiful.

**Jacob Morgan 49:29**

Does a particular story come to mind of when you were offered a certain amount and that you had to negotiate it for a higher amount?

**Molly Fletcher 49:37**

How much time do you have? All the time? I mean, I can't remember a time that general manager or a network executive came in and said we want to pay him above market. Let's go. Yeah, it happened all the time. I mean, yeah, I was negotiating a guy who was arbitration eligible. This is a story that comes up for me because it's kind of it's kind of interesting and we have I had a great relationship with the

team, we've negotiated for four or five months, and we just could not come to terms my player was really confident and what he wanted. So he was sort of ready to go to the mat. Okay. It was the night before arbitration I had I was I had a great relationship with the general manager, we, you know, we add a lot of value we prepared deeply, I knew the market, I knew what he was worried about all these things, the foundation was strong. So we're getting ready to go to arbitration in Phoenix, because we hadn't come to terms, which means I'm gonna have to put my baseball player in a room with three perfect strangers who are then going to decide when he's going to make, which I never liked doing. So I'm going to bed. My phone always used to be by my bed, I don't recommend that. And it's the night before we're leaving. And the general manager called me this is five months into just daily grind of conversations. And he called and he said, this is incredible. Your firm. I said, we are, we are. He goes, Wow. And for about a minute and a half. Nobody said anything. I mean, I just I just sort of said, Yes, we are. We're firm. And it was quiet for a minute and a half, which is by the way, a little bit odd on the phone. Yeah,

**Jacob Morgan 51:19**

I was gonna say that that's probably pretty awkward. super weird.

**Molly Fletcher 51:23**

super weird. And, and then all of a sudden, he goes, unbelievable. You gotta deal and we locked in and, and you know, but that was an example of how important it is tactically to pause inside of these conversations. If you've laid the foundation, and you've prepared and you all these things that we teach inside. And if we've done all those things, then we can ask and pause. And when we do that, it sends a powerful message. Pausing is super powerful in negotiations. And a pause can be a minute and a half over the phone, which is weird. Or it can be a week, a month. A couple days. I mean, but when we lean into that pause, it's powerful.

**Jacob Morgan 52:09**

I love it. Molly, I loved your stories, so much. So many great insights and experiences. I feel like I could talk to you for another like two hours. Where can people go to learn more about you? You mentioned you have a podcast, your books. Let people know where everyone can go to connect with you and get some more your content?

**Molly Fletcher 52:30**

Sorry, yeah, you're sweet Molly fletcher.com. Is, is our website. And then my podcast is Game Changers with Molly Fletcher. And, but all that can be can be sure sort through Molly fletcher.com.

**Jacob Morgan 52:44**

Yeah, very cool. Yeah. I think you had Bethany Frankel is a recent guest on there. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Some great, great interviews in there. I'm a big fan. So I hope everyone goes to check out the podcast and I hope they check out your website and of course, grab your books as well. Molly, thank you so much for taking time out of your day to really appreciate it.

**Molly Fletcher 53:01**

Absolute pleasure, Jacob. Thanks for having me, of course.

**Jacob Morgan** 53:05

And thanks, everyone for tuning in. Again. My guest has been Molly Fletcher. I will see all of you next week. All right, we're all done. Let me push stop record