

CHRIS: All right, Stan and I are looking forward to this discussion with Keith Krach today. Keith is a friend of ours. Stan's [known him] for years and I spent a good amount of time with Keith since leaving the military. If you don't know Keith by name, you certainly know what he's accomplished. He's a brilliant guy, a thoughtful leader who's now led in several different domains over his career. But you're going to hear a humble leader, humble personality, talk about the importance of teams, the importance of the people you put around you.

Despite his success, he refuses to put himself on any sort of pedestal, which is a really unique trait. So, a great discussion. And I said, you know, Keith's career - if you've never heard him speak or familiar with the name - Keith spent 10 years at General Motors as young professional out of Purdue, went back to Harvard to get his business degree, was the youngest VP in the history to that point at General Motors. [He got] into the robotic space, left General Motors, went into to other parts of tech for a bit. And then in 1996, he founded Ariba... that went public in 2000.

An amazing launch there as an entrepreneur and founder. He went on then later to found, and take public, DocuSign, which all of us use, you know, on a weekly, if not daily basis in today's world, and carve that out of a space that just didn't exist at that point.

So is that sort of visionary leader that can see opportunity and need around the world and also the ability to go in, found it, build it, take it public, lead it. I mean, just, he's that multidimensional senior figure. And at a point in his career where Keith could literally just do whatever he wants, he was asked and chose to go back into public service, as the Under Secretary of State focused on economic development, for the US globally. So, he spent the last two years in that position, just recently coming out of public service. And at a time when given the pandemic, Keith had to live in essentially an isolation from his family. He's got two young children as long as well as some older children, a spouse who's been with for forever.

So, a real sacrifice that he made on behalf of the mission.... So, it's a great discussion. We're sure you're gonna get a lot out of this just like we did. And many thanks to Keith and his team for finding the time to make this happen.

STAN: Well Keith, we've been excited to have you on because you're in a unique individual, which you know, and of course I've had the honor of being your friend for a number of years now. So, I've had some specific insights. But I... want to get it a couple of key points upfront as Chris described, you started in General [Motors], but you actually started your father's machine shop as a young boy, as a welder.

And I remember you talking about that, then you, after Purdue, you went to General Motors, a big bureaucratic organization, were the youngest Vice President, then you go and co-found basically a technology company with extraordinary success. Then you lead DocuSign, which is a new kind of company, again to extraordinary success.

And I remember when you were doing that, we had a conversation one time when I was giving a talk where I described you as one of the few leaders I've known in business, that we could put a

uniform on tomorrow, and they would be effective as a general officer in the United States Army. And I still think that's absolutely true.

And of course, then the government called my bluff. They brought you into the State Department in a senior level position and you were extraordinarily successful. Now those are four pretty different environments, pretty different challenges. And I would say that you must be very good at what you do.

So, here's the question. What is it that you do?

KEITH: Well, I think number one, Stan, is build a high-performance team and surround myself with people that are smarter than me. And you know, what I've really discovered is that when you build that team, it's different temperaments... and convictions, because diversity of thought is the catalyst for genius.

I think one of the other things too, you know, that I've experienced throughout my career is I'm always jumping in water over my head. I've been doing it my whole life, but it gets addicting. It's an adrenaline rush. And so, my comfort zone has expanded and you know, the most important lessons that life is my 95 year old Mama Krach says, "are not written in a book."

So, these are things you can only do getting bloodied in the ring. And, you know, the other thing that I have a passion for is actually challenging the status quo. That's the beginning of transformational leadership because it begins with that. And then you've got to inspire, mobilize, energize, unify, you know, this high-performance team for a noble cause to leave a profound and long-lasting impact.

So, I think it's that people side of the equation. I'm a people collector. And I think the most important skill, whether you're in a business sector, public sector, educational sector, is building trusted relationships, and building that network.

As you wrote in your book, you know, leadership is so much about having that network, and it pays so many dividends in so many different ways.

STAN: I really want to pull on that thread a little bit if I could, Keith, because I have met hundreds of people who all say that they are good friends with Keith and, you know, they're all right.

And that's kind of an amazing description. And you use the term networking and Chris and I really want to pull on that because we experienced in the counterterrorist fight, particularly in Iraq, where what people thought was our core competence, which would be going in the door and engaging targets, and doing things that barrel chested, you know, freedom fighters do.

When in reality, the core competency that we had to have was building a network, bringing different elements together. Talk about the essence of networking, and then talk about the essence of being a networker.

KEITH: Yeah, so just on the network side itself, you know, I've had the opportunity to build a number of networks.

The first one was the Ariba network... where we invented B2B commerce. Now \$7 trillion worth of commerce goes through [the] Ariba network on an annual basis. The DocuSign Global Trust network is probably now about 800,000 companies and over a billion users. And then you have the Clean Network that we built, you know, at the State Department, and it was alliance of democracies, represents two thirds of the global GDP, was 60 nations, like-minded nations, 200 telcos and dozens and dozens of clean companies.

And, you know, in Silicon Valley speak, we would say there's key four key aspects of building a network. The first of all is maximize the number of nodes. That means maximize the number of members, because the power of a network is the number of members squared. That's called Metcalfe's Law.

The second is to reduce the friction between the nodes. And that means being able to onboard really quickly, and so much of that is built around trust, and defining that standard for trust, because people partner from people they trust, they buy from people they trust. It's a basis of every relationship.

The third thing is, maximize the value for each one of those. Maximize the value for those members. What do they get out of it?

And then the fourth one is fastest way to build a network is build a network of networks, of course. And you know, there's so many different benefits to a network.

For the Clean Network, for example, one of the core value propositions, is, it was like a security blanket against the Chinese Communist Party's doctrine of retaliation, intimidation, and retribution. So, it was security blanket. There's strength in numbers and there's power in unity and solidarity. And that's what a network gives you.

From a people standpoint, if you think about it, the way to get these kinds of networks going, whether it's the Ariba network or the DocuSign Global Trust Network or the Clean Network or the military network that you were talking about, it starts with a network of friends. Because you've got to see that network originally, and it always starts off with known relationships where that trust is. Every kind of a network begins with the people's side.

So, the question is what's one of the most important military skills, business skills, government skills? It is building those trust relationships. And the other thing I say [in] all those areas, time is important. You don't have a lot of time. So how fast can you build trust, divided by time, is a key leadership skill.

CHRIS: Keith to maybe tie together a few points you've made here. This is exactly the way the world should be working. And, you know, in my view, Stan's view, you've obviously lived it,

and in built around it, but not everybody spends all day every day thinking about what you just described.

And there's really some nuance in there. You said you liked to challenge the status quo, Stan and I've seen you do that multiple ways. When you enter a new organization, looking at that sort of leadership trait through a networking lens, you're describing two important components that few leaders, in my experience, blend together the way you have, and frankly, the way Stan did in the military, which was understanding there's a human network - but when I say networking, I'm not just talking about the extrovert at a cocktail party who seems to know everybody - that's one skill. We're going to build a network of humans that know and trust each other.

There's also the infrastructure, right? When I was in the SEAL teams on 9/11, I didn't have a laptop as a mid-grade officer. We just didn't think in that distributed, "what I've had to go somewhere else and plug in?" And so, there's an entire suite of infrastructure that has to be put in place as well. So, I'm just curious how you blend those together in your mind, or more importantly, how do you coach other leaders on your team to find the balance between those two? Because it's a steady back-and-forth as you grow those two aspects of an effective network.

KEITH: Yeah. I mean, I really think it is. And it begins with that people's side, but there's gotta be a mission in mind. I always say, if you want to be able to inspire a team, you need three things.

Number one, you need a noble cause. You know, for example, the Clean Network and, where you guys were doing over in the Middle East, it's called national security. It's called protecting people's lives. It's called preserving a democracy. There's nothing more. Preserving people's freedoms. And there's nothing more noble than that.

The other thing you need, is you need an enemy. You know, I learned in the State Department, you can't really use the word enemy. We call it, you know, competitive rivals, but in a business world, you call them enemies. I'm sure out in the field, you guys call it the enemy. Because that, that gets the blood boiling and it stops the water cooler talk and all that kind of stuff. In the business world, I say, if you don't have an enemy, make one up.

And then the third thing you need is you need a plan. And I think that's when the, you know, the second part, the infrastructure part, plays such a vital role. You need your tools, you need those supply chains, so to speak. And it's a little different in every situation, but at the core, it's the people side.

STAN: Let's talk a little bit about risk because we're going to get to risk and resiliency. And the first is, suppose you have a noble cause, and you have an enemy, and you have a plan, and you announce that to your team or your board of directors, whoever's support you need. And there is this sense of fear. There's this sense of intimidation and it creates this inertia.

How does a leader first identify it and then how do you take it on?

KEITH: Well, you know, nothing ventured, nothing gained. You miss every shot you don't take. You want to be smart about it. You want to be able to analyze the upside of the downside of that risk. But, you know, I think what a lot of people don't understand is that inaction is actually making a decision.

I always say also, if you're not moving... if you're not, uh, making a few mistakes along the way, you're not moving fast enough. And you know, this is where if the situation changes, you got to read and react, you got to take that sour sack of lemons and turn it into a sweet lemonade. And you know, so I think one of the key things is how do you get your team or people to take risks?

Because most people probably are risk averse. And I think the more experience you have, and I call it jumping in water over your head, expanding your comfort zone, the more risk you're willing to take on. And you know, it was interesting for me because in Silicon Valley, this is the land of risk-taking and the only way you can be a failure is not to fail.

I mean, that's like a badge of honor. And you look for folks like that because, you know, I think people understand that you learn the most when actually you had failures... you know, under your belt. I'm battle scarred in the business way, I guess, along those lines.

And then I went to the State Department where... in government, is really one of the most risk averse environments that I've ever seen. And I'm a student of human nature. I still don't understand it. And I had a lot of discussions with folks because when people come into the State Department, they take this foreign service exam, this tough thing, and they know that they have to rotate countries every three years, they have to have a dangerous assignment, but then for some reason it kind of gets a little bit squeezed out of them overtime. So how do you get them to take that risk? And, you know, I don't buy it that, "Hey, we're not incentivized to take the risks." I mean, you came in as a modern-day Magellan.

This is where I think leadership comes in and it gets back to that network discussion, it gets back to that team discussion. If you're going in there as a team, it's much more comforting, to know, you know, one for all, all for one. I've got your back. And then there's a leader who's not afraid to talk about their fears, their failures, and their flaws. And about the time where they, you know, they failed or they took a risk because you know, people are thinking in their mind, "Oh man, you know, I'm probably the only one thinking about this. I probably have more fear than anybody else."

No. I mean, a great leader is going to have fear every time. And I think there's comfort around that. And I think there's comfort when you have a strong arms around you and real hearts to rest upon.

CHRIS: Keith, maybe back to this idea of being a disruptive leader, which a lot of people like to talk about, but not everyone is comfortable with. Having seen you do that multiple times and inside of a big government system, which can be incredibly static by design, how do you look at that? Can you talk about your first few weeks or months inside of State Department as an example or others that come to mind? What are you looking for out of the gate, so you know

where to apply that disruption without creating unnecessary risk, but speeding things up where they need to be sped up?

KEITH: Yeah. I mean, you just ask questions and do it in a very curious way, and don't be afraid to use a sense of humor. I was probably actually quite irreverent in the State Department. I'm just coming in there and going, "Not only do I not know anything, I don't suspect anything," you know. And you just try to get people in a safe environment. It's amazing when you ask the questions and you keep peeling back the layers of the onion you go, "Why, why, why?" then you learn a lot.

And you know what I found so many times is that when I asked, you know, the third wire or something like that, it would be like, "Whoa, whoa, why do you do it this way?" You know? And it's like, "Well, it's been done this way." Well, that just doesn't work. If you look at... and Stan and I have talked about this, this playbook that I always operate off of... we use the same playbook at the State Department and there's five team rules.

And, and the third team rule is that you always want to increase the standard of performance in your product, your processes, and your people. Otherwise, you're just stagnating. And I think, you know, the other big thing that you really want to announce [to] the team out of the gate is the only thing that won't change is, that there's always going to be change. Right. And I think that's the most powerful word in any language, because without change, you don't develop, prosper and grow. And you want to improve otherwise, you know, why are you there? And it's no fun. And to set these big audacious goals, small goals don't inspire people. And you want to set those big ones and it works. It actually works every time. In some cases, it takes a little longer than others. You got to bring people along the way. And then there's simple things: human nature things, like people support, they help create those kinds of things where everybody can see where they're making a difference.

And when they do that, put them on a pedestal, right where they belong. And in the State Department, you're not going to be motivating people with stock options and big bonuses and stuff like that. Although that was one of the things I said first day, "I'm going to see if I can get you guys stock options," but I wasn't able to do that. Maybe next time.

Anyway, but people want to know they're making a difference and people want that recognition.

STAN: Keith, this is interesting because you've talked about people. Now, you had people in Silicon Valley, you had people at General Motors, and then you get to the federal government where often they are described as lethargic or resistant to change or uncommitted to their mission. Is that what you found?

KEITH: Yeah. But it was also really interesting because I brought in 12 people from the private sector. Most of them from Silicon Valley, all results-oriented executives, and I teamed them up with these career guys, and it was actually a great love affair. And I looked at it as a 60-60 deal. Both parties were getting the best part of the deal. And here again, I think it gets back to that

diversity of thought as a catalyst for genius. And that was one way to be able to inspire these guys.

You know, it was a real study in human nature. But I can tell you one thing, that, when you look at the foreign service officers or civil servants, you know, these guys are mission driven. They've worked their tail off. They give up a lot. And, you know, one of the things that I would always say and always say in front of them, just like you see somebody who serves in the military, you thank them for their service. And if you see a civil servant or a foreign service officer, thank them for their service because, they're really making some great sacrifices and we wouldn't have our democracy without them.

And by the way, the mere fact of me saying that so many times in front of... I could see the look of their eye. And so many people came up afterwards and said, "Hey, thanks for saying that. Nobody's says that." Which just struck me as odd because it just seemed like common sense to me. I think that having those guys come in from the private sector to be... I don't want to say they're necessarily, "wild men and women," but you guys who weren't afraid to challenge the status quo. I think that changed the culture in the group I was responsible for... all the economic diplomacy.

CHRIS: Can you talk a little bit about that as a leader, or maybe for that broader team that you brought in, some of the wake-up calls to the differences in how you can communicate? Back to that infrastructure question in the government versus in the private sector where there's classification, there's less sophisticated communication set-ups around the world, surprisingly. How did you adapt to that? Were there some rough patches to figure out?

KEITH: Yeah. You know, the whole classifications ... complicates things quite a bit. You just deal with it best you can. Obviously in terms of productivity tools and communication tools, [the government] is a few years behind, maybe a few decades, I'm not so sure. I think we had a positive impact on that. And then with the pandemic too, that really put a crunch on things. With that there's need for more communication. So, you know, we obviously did a lot by video and it actually worked out pretty good because there's the, you know, I always love to end a staff meeting with a round table, where everybody goes around the room and says whatever on their mind.

It works great. It's like Hollywood Squares when you're doing it on a WebEx or something like that. Written communications becomes more important. One of the things that I would do every Friday is I would write a letter to the, you know, 3000, E-family members, the guys in my organization and make it a combination of putting folks on pedestal. We'd have the "E-excellence award," all that stuff. Talk about our overall accomplishments. And I'd usually ended up with something philosophical or a poem or something like that, that really related to those times. So, to keep that human. We did a lot of video too, where I was doing videos all the time and we sent it out to the troops and all that kind of stuff. The communication thing is really important and you've, you've got to have a plan and you have to have a cadence, so people can expect that constant communication. And it was really critical during a pandemic.

STAN: You spent almost two years in government, you were away from Metta and the kids almost that entire time complicated by COVID. But the reality was, it was like being deployed to combat. You just couldn't be with the boys, particularly. How do you explain to them what you're doing and why?

KEITH: Well, I've got a great wife and so she made me out to be a hero. So, without her, I'm really nothing. By the way it's pretty incredible, even though they're in third grade, they're really savvy. I just kinda like would walk through it, but really mostly, you know, ask them how they're doing, and all that stuff that, you know, they kind of get a kick out of seeing daddy on TV and all that kind of stuff.

But after a while they get bored, you know, and just kind of put it in their terms. And I think they knew that I was serving my country, and my wife Metta was really great about, you know, this is just something your dad has to do. And we've been very fortunate and, you know, he's been able to live the American dream and United States has done so much for the family.

He really wants to pay back the country. I wouldn't trade all that stuff in for all the world. It's really nice to know that, you know, all five of the kids regardless of their age, understand that.

CHRIS: That's a great example for them. A broader question for you, Keith, just around your collective professional experiences. I'm sure you have countless people that have been under your wing throughout the years, getting future mentorship and maintaining relationships over time.

How do you approach that idea? How do you mentor others? How do you instill the idea of mentoring into your younger leaders and how do you personally make time and bandwidth for that as busy as you are?

KEITH: Yeah. And obviously mentorship is a real passion of mine. And Stan, I thank you again for being in our pilot episode of the Global Mentor Network, which is really... it's really just grown since I've been off in government.

And I really believe in the mentorship model here. Again, the most important things are not written in a book. I've had the good fortune of having great mentors in my career. And, you know, my belief is, I have this mental model, I call it the hybrid mentor matrix, where you want to have a number of mentors.

And then you think of all these leadership characteristics. So, on a Y axis, it's all these leadership characteristics and in the rows, or in a column, it's all these different, mentors there's that you had along the way. And it's like a Chinese menu. You pick up the best from Column A, the best from Column B and the best from Column C.

And you know, the mentors - it's a really special relationship. It's not about creating favors or anything like that. And you want to find mentors where you have a great chemistry with them. They want to mentor, and they're willing to talk about those fear, failures, fear, and flaws.

And you know, the thing that I have found is that I actually probably learn more from the mentees that they might learn from me. So, it's a real 60-60 deal, and you're always want to be better people. And it's also such a great way to pay back. And I think, you know, people ask me, you know, what will be the legacy of your life? It won't be the companies that I built, but it will be the people, I think, that I've mentored and that lives on. I've learned that lesson so many times.

STAN: Wow. Keith, on a very personal note, although we've already been pretty personal with you already, how do you manage yourself? Because one, you were living alone for much of the last two years at an incredible work pace. And you and I are pretty close in age.

So, how do you just maintain your energy? Your cycle? How do you stay available to people? How do you manage Keith?

KEITH: Yeah, it's a really good question because, I don't do social distancing very well. And I lived alone and, as you know, Stan, I had life-sized cardboard cutouts of Metta, and five kids. They talked to me after a while.

STAN: Chris, you got to see this. When Annie and I went over to visit Keith, they literally are life-size cutouts. It is really creepy. And Keith does talk to them, which is even creepier.

KEITH: Yeah, well, you might not have heard him talk back, but they do. You know, so much of it is like a balance in life and you know, I've never been able to maintain the balance on a daily or weekly basis, probably as much as I would like. It probably more comes in, you know, years perhaps? Because I've always had like... my ventures usually last about five or six years. Now, these last couple of years in government, I'd say that was probably equivalent to a six-year adventure. But it's the times in between that you go back and you put the chips back in the bank, especially with family, personal.

You sharpen your saw, you get ready, you rest, you get ready for your next adventure. I'm probably more of a sprinter than a marathon person. And, you know, during these last couple of years, it was 16, 17 hours a week, seven days a week. And you know, there's an infinite amount of stuff to do. And, you know, I think one of the key things in terms of having an impact is having that great team, not being afraid to delegate, but also not being afraid to do any job.

And you know, as we all know, the most powerful form of leadership is leadership by example. So you gotta be able to roll up your sleeves. And I think we brought a lot of entrepreneur-ism, um to the State Department, you know, along those lines of what it wasn't like a big kind of hierarchy.

I hope people will look back and say you don't Krach was really approachable and he wasn't afraid to roll up the sleeves and jump in the arena and get bloody. I think it was the basics: you gotta make sure you get a good rest and good exercise and keep your faith strong, and then just, you know, FaceTime your kids every night, man, when you're living by herself and your wife and stuff like that.

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Yeah, it comes in cycles, I think. I don't care who you are. It's always a perennial struggle, I think. And to make sure you don't get overly absorbed with the mission and I probably do it every time, but you got to snap out of it. You got to kind of recover and remember what's most important in life.

I saw a lot of things that gave me a sense of mortality too, and I think that puts things in perspective. So, you've got to keep that perspective.

CHRIS: Well Keith, I'll turn it and over to Stan and wrap us up. But I just, I want to say thanks again. And, you know, I don't know another leader that I've seen lead so effectively in so many different sectors with such a sense of grounded humility.

I've learned a ton from you over the years and even more today. So, grateful for your time and your insights.

KEITH: Well, thank you, Chris. I really appreciate it. And I thank you for your service and passing it on. I mean, because what the McChrystal Group is all about is building that next generation transformational leaders and transformational organizations. So, it's a noble cause. And so, you guys have taken, you know what you've done in being the best in the world from a military standpoint, and you've seen the same thing that I've seen, it's just a reverse order and that is that it, you know, all these are universal leadership principles. They're all transferable.

And your metaphors, I think are more exciting than probably mine, but it's all the same stuff.

STAN: Yeah. I'm going to cap it off just by thanking you, Keith. I remember our conversation before you went into government and, you know, I sort of asked you that question, "Keith, you you've done more than anybody could want to do. Why would you do this?"

And you said, "Because I feel like I should." And that's an extraordinary statement. And if every American thought of things in society today, whether they should or shouldn't do something and says, "Those things, which are right, I feel like I should," we'll be a much better place. Thank you, my friend.

KEITH: Thank you, Stan. I really appreciate it. I appreciate all your leadership, everything you've done for the country. You a real hero and we really appreciate that. Thanks for being so kind to me.

STAN: God Bless, Keith.

KEITH: Thanks. And God bless America.

STAN: Absolutely.

CHRIS: So, Stan, I'll dive in. That was a great discussion with someone we both know well. You and Keith have been good friends for years now, and I've had the honor of being around lots of times over the years.

Really interesting to talk to him coming right out of government service. The thing that really jumped out to me was someone of that, you know, he's in his early sixties. He's had an incredibly successful career. He's got two young children. There's every reason in the world not to jump back into that level of government service.

But he did and essentially disappeared for two years doing really important work that's nuanced and off the radar of most. And you know, it's always fascinating to look at a leader who still is willing to play the game and get in the arena, get bloodied up a little bit, as he said.

And just still driven by things other than money or relaxing on the beach or all the things that come with the success he's had. Just a really impressive guy. And, you know, that's not uncommon, but when you see it up close like that, it really makes an impression.

STAN: Yeah. I mean, the thing that jumps out is he championed the Clean Network, which very few people know about, very few people think about American diplomacy outside of some of the problems we had over the last four years, and sort of quietly, Keith has gathered allies around the world, other nations aligned common interests to get secure communications, separate from things which can be tainted by supply chain from China.

And he's brought people into an organization based on trust, which is just an amazing accomplishment.

CHRIS: Yeah. It really is. He did that through a sense of, or with a skillset he'd built in other parts of his career. And I thought it was great in the closing comments there, as he talked about the transferability, I mean, if one thing jumps out about the type of leader that Keith is, he's in the mold of: it's people first, right? Right out of the gates we ask ...when you said, "What is it you do?" He essentially said, "I get good teams around me." Now, he's overly humble. He does a lot more than that, but that's where he starts is by getting the right people.

He talked about people that he pulled out of industry to come into State with him, but then also working the institution, working the building, getting to know people, getting to understand how they're seeing problems doing that in a self-deprecating fashion as he described, and then going from there.

So, building out the human networks, which, you know, again, a person at his level with his track record could just come in and say, "Here's how we're going to do things." And people would, would follow them out of power of the position. But he, at every point in his career, he chooses not to do that, which is really impressive.

STAN: It's funny. I think he understands, as we learned with JSOC and in the fight against Al Qaeda, we learned that the network was the power. You know, sometimes we search for the

perfect answer or the piece of technology or the product, what Keith understands is in any problem he takes on, if you build an effective give network, the right answers will come from that because you're leveraging so much more wisdom, so much more power.

And, you know, I describe him as a serial networker. He can't help himself. It would be fantastic to see him as mayor of a big city, because the first thing that would happen is all the stakeholders in that city would find themselves roped into a common effort together, which I think would be really impressive.

CHRIS: Yeah, it would be great to see them go down that road. I was glad we were able to talk to him about that difference in, you know, it's not cocktail, networking personality, it's real deep, as you said, you know, a hundred people that call Keith their friend, and they're all being honest.

Even I've interacted with less than you have, I'm confident I could call him and ask him a question and have a coffee. And he's just so he's very generous with his time and that would be a great shift over into politics. Maybe we can talk him into doing that, and he certainly, he knows how to play the game now after a few years in the building,

STAN: Yeah, it's fantastic. And if you think about it, we sometimes confuse the hardware of a network with a real network. You know, we say that because you're connected by wire or WiFi or whatever you're connected with, that it's a network - it's only a network if it actually gets things done, it connects people. If people have trust, if they can use it for things. And so, I think he epitomizes, or reminds us, of what really matters when you're trying to make things happen.

CHRIS: He does. A personal takeaway on this is, and it's true to what Keith has done, but also just a broader observation, I'd love your thoughts on as well, is sort of back to that original point of that draw back into service. I know since leaving the military almost 10 years ago now, time really flies, the number of folks across the spectrum in the professional space, outside of the military that I know have a desire or a sort of a burning gap in what they've done, if they haven't had some time in service and whether that's in uniform or what Keith just did in the State Department or Teach for America, or some sort of pull into serving the country. And I find it grows in sort of a one-to-one ratio with how successful people have done. The more successful friends I've developed in industry that haven't filled that position yet have a stronger desire I think, as they recognize as they accumulate that the things that come with success in business, there's more and more recognition of where it all comes from, the foundations that make this country special and unique.

And so, you know, he's a great example of what others at that level can do, but has been an interesting observation for me after the military to realize how fortunate, you know, folks like you and I are, to have spent so much of our time and life's energy in that space. Many of us are drawn back to it at some point, but that's a more important, I don't want to call it a block to check, because that sort of makes it sound smaller than it is, but the benefit you get from having experienced that firsthand is really immeasurable.

STAN: And for the nation. I think of examples. We are all familiar with World War II, the “dollar a year” executives who came and worked, gave their expertise in production or other things. The people who came in and solved the problem with the Obamacare. Remember that the tech system originally had a big problem and then they had to work their way through it?

I think if we could leverage all the talent in our nation, more seamlessly. It was a network of talent that swarms on problems when those problems are very, very knotty based upon trust and for limited periods of time, to solve that problem, I think we would govern ourselves better.

CHRIS: Yeah. I hope the last year has taught us all a lesson about how important that is. And it's interesting, back to Keith, you know, one of the, I believe is his reasons for focusing on the network that he built out, the Clean Network based on trust was, you know, countering what he saw going on inside of one of our other big global competitors, how the Chinese system was working with Huawei as an extension. That's a very integrated system between, you know, the business space, the government space, et cetera. And he has shown a model where, you know, thoughtful leaders connect based on trust. Those networks can be just as powerful as a formerly organized system.

So, it's a great example of that.

STAN: Absolutely.

CHRIS: Great discussion, to Keith and his team. Thank you for making the time. And we hope you all enjoyed that conversation as much as we did.