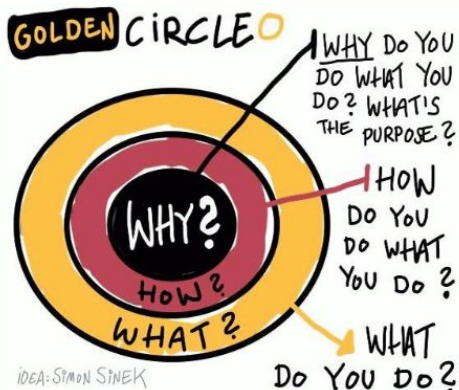


Start with Why by Simon Sinek

Think you might want to read this book?

If you borderline love the idea of a purpose-driven company, then *Start with Why* should be your next read. If the idea doesn't quite spark the red heart-eyed emoji, and you simply like the idea, then pick up this book for a quick skim or chapter hop. If you're unsure of how you feel, and you want to better understand the idea of a purpose-driven company, then take a few minutes to watch [this video](#) to further understand the concept below.



If you do dive into this book, be prepared for Simon Sinek to walk you through many examples of organizations in which Why was the main driver and served as the tipping point for success (e.g., Southwest Airlines, Harley-Davidson, Apple). A great example of this phenomenon is Costco, who is so grounded in Why that they have a zero dollar budget for advertising and don't have a single person devoted to public relations. Cautionary tales like TiVo and AoL are unpacked as examples of companies that got the What right, but missed the Why and as a result have failed. If you

gauge how interested you are in the philosophical underpinnings of organizations and then choose the concomitant level of commitment, you will whet your appetite and ultimately strengthen your skills as a leader.

What would Socrates ask?

- Is the Why of schooling clearly understood by everyone?
- How well do independent schools/school districts communicate the idiosyncrasies of their Why?
- If the Why is clear in schools, should we focus on the What and How in communication?
- If the Why of schools is to educate children, does the What of education have to include the same students going to the same location at the same time and same number of days each year?
- Should all school initiatives be grounded in Why?
- What are the aspects of school that increase trust for all?
- What if all school sports were played with no score?
- What would be the benefit of asking job candidates to send in statements of philosophy before posting a job description?

Statistics

- Over 90% of all new businesses fail in the first three years.

Concepts

- Most companies answer the question: “Why are your customers your customers” with answers about quality, customer service or price. The reality is that companies that focus on What they do, really don’t know the answer.
- Companies that focus on What they do rely on manipulations, such as sales, buy one/get one free offers, and gifts to keep customers.
- The difference between repeat business and loyalty is that repeat business is business that happens multiple times, and loyalty is when people reject a better product or price because they value the relationship with someone else.
- Customers of Southwest Airlines were so loyal to the company that they sent donation checks after September 11, 2001.
- We have a need to belong, and a company that starts with Why can offer that type of relationship.
- “Go with your gut” and “Follow your heart” are both really about your limbic system.
- “The role of a leader is to create an environment in which great ideas can happen.”
- “... only when individuals can trust the culture or organization will they take personal risks in order to advance that culture or organization as a whole.”
- “Great organizations become great because the people inside the organization feel protected.”
- The Vision is the public statement of intent - Why the company exists. The Mission is a description of the route - How to get there.

Quotes from the author

- “People don’t buy What you do, they buy Why you do it.”
- “Apple introduced their iPod by offering us “1,000 songs in your pocket.... Their advertising didn’t offer exhaustive descriptions of product details; it wasn’t about them, it was about us. And we understood Why we wanted it.”
- “Knowing Why is essential for lasting success and the ability to avoid being lumped in with others.”
- “It is our inability to verbalize the reasons that may cause us to doubt ourselves or trust the empirical evidence when our gut tells us not to.”
- “You can’t convince someone you have value, just as you can’t convince someone to trust you. You have to earn trust by communicating and demonstrating that you share the same values and beliefs. You have to talk about your Why and prove it with What you do.”
- “... the goal is not to hire people who simply have a skill set you need, the goal is to hire people who believe what you believe.”
- “Great companies don’t hire skilled people and motivate them, they hire already motivated people and inspire them.”
- “Average companies give their people something to work on. In contrast, the most innovative organizations give their people something to work toward.”
- “Companies with a clear sense of Why tend to ignore their competition, whereas those with a fuzzy sense of Why are obsessed with what others are doing.”

- "... loyalty is when people are willing to suffer some inconvenience or pay a premium to do business with you."
- "Energy motivates but charisma inspires."
- "A clear sense of Why sets expectations. When we don't know an organization's Why, we don't know what to expect, so we expect the minimum. But when we do have a sense for the Why, we expect more."
- "Learning the Why of a company or an organization or understanding the Why of any social movement always starts with one thing: you."
- "Imagine if every organization started with Why. Decisions would be simpler. Loyalties would be greater. Trust would be a common currency. If our leaders were diligent about starting with Why, optimism would reign and innovation would thrive."

Implement tomorrow?

- Ask your leadership team and/or teachers to circle one of the two choices and then fill in the blank: "I am inspired/not inspired to come to work because _____." Follow this exercise with a discussion about the Why of your organization, and whether or not it is healthy and how clear it is to those involved.

Referenced books with the potential to impact leading and learning in education

Author(s) Last Name	Title
Whybrow	American Mania: When More Is Not Enough
Restak	The Naked Brain
Gladwell	The Tipping Point
Rogers	Diffusion of Innovations
Friedman	The World is Flat

The applicability of this book to education is



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