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Why do you get up in the morning? What inspires you to do what you do? Is your career aligned with a meaningful purpose? Most people don't have good answers to these questions. Maybe that's why we often feel unfulfilled, restless or apathetic about our work. Today, people want more than to make a living, we want to be part of something bigger than ourselves. Simon Sinek says we must align our work with a why, a purpose, a deeper meaning. He says that "starting with why" will transform us into better leaders, managers or entrepreneurs. The companies who "start with why" rise to the top of their industry like Apple, Starbucks and Southwest Airlines. They don't just sell great products, but have a deeper cause that people can feel and are magnetically drawn towards. Simon Sinek is an author, motivational speaker and strategic consultant. His name became well-known in business circles when his first TED talk (TED.com) went viral, reaching over 50 million views. He later expanded that speech into this best-selling book Start With Why. On his website (SimonSinek.com), Simon describes his WHY or purpose like this: "We imagine a world in which the vast majority of people wake up inspired, feel safe wherever they are and end the day fulfilled by the work they do." That sounds like a great future to me! So let's jump into the first lesson from this book… Imagine a circle with 3 rings. The outer ring is WHAT, the middle ring is HOW and the inside of the circle is WHY. Each of these rings represent the levels that we can operate at, from the superficial to the profound. Most of us are stuck at the outer levels of WHAT or HOW, but truly great companies and leaders always operate at the level of WHY. Here's a quick explanation of each level: What – Everyone knows what they do and is able to talk about it. For example, "We sell computers" or "I'm a massage therapist." How – Some people know that how they do things is also important. For example, "We sell computers with 24/7 customer service." or "I specialize in traditional Norwegian massage." Why – Few of us can tell others why we show up to work (besides money). Yet this is the key to our long-term success. Very few people or companies can clearly articulate WHY they do WHAT they do. When I say WHY, I don't mean to make money—that's a result. By WHY I mean what is your purpose, cause or belief? WHY does your company exist? WHY do you get out of bed in the morning? And WHY should anyone care? Most businesses believe that customers choose them because they have a superior HOW to their competition—a better product with more features or better service. In fact, one of the most often-repeated marketing ideas is to find some unique selling point in HOW you do things to differentiate yourself from the competition. For example, a typical computer company's ad might say "We sell computers that are high quality and good value." Simon Sinek says that while this strategy can win sales, it doesn't inspire long-term loyalty from customers and employees. Apple became a great company through starting with WHY, rather than WHAT or HOW. According to Simon, Apple's why is "To challenge the status quo." They communicate this mission with everything they make. Their clear WHY inspires many people to become fans and evangelists. They buy most of what Apple sells despite higher prices and regardless of whether it's a computer, MP3 player, smartphone or earbuds. Apply is fundamentally not a computer company like Dell or HP. They are a company that challenges the status quo. In fact, it doesn't even occur to most of us how strange it is that a computer company successfully entered so many different industries. After totally changing how computers work with the Mac, they went on to reinvent the music and mobile phone industries too. The Golden Circle says most of us focus on the outer layers of WHAT we do and HOW we do it, but truly great leaders and companies focus on the core—WHY they do what they do. Apple has succeeded in so many diverse industries because they have a WHY that transcends just making computers well. A lot of business advice comes down to giving incentives to our customers and employees. Simon calls these "manipulations." Customers are often urged to buy through incentives like coupons, discounts and limited time offers. While these tactics can work in the short term, they may kill a business in the long term. Offering a big discount will provide a bump in sales that looks good on a quarterly report. However, discounts can also train customers to never buy at the full price and instead wait for the next big sale. This means using too many manipulations is a sure way to turn our product into a low-profit commodity. Notice that many of the strongest brands like Apple, Disney and Nintendo deliberately avoid large or frequent sales. Rather, their strong focus on their mission inspires customers to buy year-round. Employees are often prodded to work harder through incentives like bonuses and raises. But trying to keep great employees through incentives is an uphill battle. If money is the only reason your employees are staying, then all of them are always one better offer away from leaving. On the other hand, employees who feel proud to work at a company because it shares their values will remain loyal. For example, would most animal shelter workers quit their job simply for a little more money? When you start with why, then your strategy for attracting and keeping great talent is different. It's about providing people with a feeling of doing something worthwhile in the world and belonging to something important. This is true leadership. The psychologist Viktor Frankl survived the Nazi concentration camps of World War 2 and then wrote a book about his experience called Man's Search For Meaning. Frankl says the prisoners who survived were the ones who could find meaning in the middle of the suffering. Those who couldn't find meaning gave up or committed suicide. Later he discovered the lessons he learned inside the camps were invaluable for his regular therapy patients. Frankl wrote, "What man actually needs is not a tensionless state but rather the striving and struggling for a worthwhile goal, a freely chosen task." He said it is critical for our mental well being to find meaning through significant work, caring relationships or courageous suffering. Hear more of his wisdom in our summary of Man's Search for Meaning by Viktor Frankl. Business advice usually tells us to use customer incentives like discounts and employee incentives like bonuses. But the way to inspire long-term loyalty is through sharing a common cause or purpose. We like to be around people who share our values and beliefs. That's why we choose some people to be our friends and not others, out of 7 billion people on the planet. Increasingly, this is also how we're choosing which companies we do business with. Why do many people freely choose to get tattoos of the Harley Davidson logo? Because the company represents some core values or ideals they hold. The logo itself has become a symbol of something greater than one single corporation. In a sense, it now belongs to all those who share those same values. Almost 100 years ago, Edward Bernays wrote the book Propaganda. (He is known as the creator of public relations and also happened to be Sigmund Freud's nephew.) Even a century ago, he was saying that business had become more difficult and each product was dozens of competitors on the store shelves. Bernays said the solution was for companies to not only sell their product, but also "sell what they stood for." For example, today we see many companies trying to appear environmentally friendly. When we're faced with two nearly identical products on a store shelf, we will often choose the one that promotes values we hold dear. Discover more lessons on public relations in our summary of Propaganda by Edward Bernays. In an increasingly competitive world, we can stand out by promoting certain values. This attracts very loyal customers who share the same values. We prefer to do business with people who are like us. According to experts, new products become popular in a surprising way. It turns out that only 15% of the population tries out new things when they are first available. These people are called the early adopters or innovators. They are the crazy ones camping outside the store to buy some new gadget on the first day it is launched. Before a product can spread to the majority of the population, it must first win over this group. (This pattern is called "The Law of Diffusion of Innovation," explained in more detail in books like Crossing the Chasm by Geoffrey Moore.) Many companies get this backwards. They fail because they try to win over the large majority of everyday people first. The problem is that most of us don't like being the first to try out new products or technologies, no matter how good they sound. If you have a new product, then you must first target your marketing at the early adopters. You can inspire them to use your product with a strong WHY message. You see, unlike most people early adopters are not motivated by utility or practicality. They want to be at the cutting edge of new trends and ideas. That's why they will buy new technologies when they are still impractical, unreliable or overly expensive. The billionaire entrepreneur Peter Thiel says "The perfect target market for a startup is a small group of particular people concentrated together and served by few or no competitors." When he and Elon Musk founded Paypal, they knew they had to gain traction with a small group of early adopters first. So they focused on winning over eBay PowerSellers to their new payments platform. Once the most committed eBay members were using PayPal, more and more people quickly came onboard. Learn more great business lessons in our summary of Zero to One by Peter Thiel. When marketing a new type of product, it's critical to first win over early adopters with a compelling reason why your product exists, rather than a dull message about how your product is useful. Leadership requires two things: a vision of the world that does not yet exist and the ability to communicate it. Great organizations start with a leader who personifies their WHY. In the early days of Apple, Steve Jobs was Apple. In great startups, everybody can look to the founder and immediately feel the values that are supposed to be guiding their actions. However, as a company grows bigger and leadership gets passed down to new CEOs, the WHY often grows fuzzy. This is when legendary companies fall from greatness. The solution to avoid this happening is to write down the WHY clearly so everyone knows exactly what the original mission, cause or calling was. Simon Sinek says to do this with verbs rather than nouns: For values or guiding principles to be truly effective they have to be verbs. It's not "integrity," it's "always do the right thing." It's not "innovation," it's "look at the problem from a different angle." Articulating our values as verbs gives us a clear idea – we have a clear idea of how to act in any situation. One of the greatest businessmen ever was Sam Walton, the founder of Walmart. He always exemplified his core values of frugality and simplicity, even when he became the richest man in the world. In his book Made in America, these values jump out of every page. Sam Walton grew up in a small American town and never forgot his roots. He always got his hair cut at the small local barbershop and drove his hunting dogs around in an old pickup truck. When a reporter asked why he did this, Sam sounded astonished—where else was he supposed to get his hair cut? About being wealthy, Sam wrote "It's great to have the money to fall back on […] But if you get too caught up in that good life, it's probably time to move on, simply because you lose touch with what your mind is supposed to be concentrating on: serving the customer." However, after Same left the company, recently Walmart has became fuzzy on many of those early values, so it has suffered many bad PR incidents. Learn more about how Walmart reshaped the world in our summary of Made in America by Sam Walton. In the early days of a company, the founder exemplifies the values and the WHY. This provides direction to everyone underneath them. But it's important to write the WHY down clearly so it doesn't become fuzzy after the founder leaves. This book hits on a very important idea over and over again. It says we need to focus more on the meaning, purpose or reason behind what we do. When we become clear on our WHY, then we will become better leaders. We will stronger companies that our employees love to be part of. We will create a work where more people feel significant and fulfilled. So… what is your WHY? What purpose would fill you with energy every day you wake up? What common purpose can unite you with your coworkers, employees or customers? Think about that deeply and write it down! Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution — You must give appropriate credit , provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made . You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original. No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation . No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. Home > Book Summaries > Book Summary - Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action Great leaders and organizations can create sustainable change because they inspire others. In the process, they create loyal followers who stick with them through thick and thin, so they can create success again and again. In this book, Simon Sinek explains what it means to start with WHY, and how it can create true, lasting success for you and your business. In this free Start with Why summary, you'll learn about the "Golden Circle", and how starting with WHY can create a loyal following and bring you past the tipping point to success. You can motivate people through carrots and sticks, or manipulations. In fact, they work so well that they are used everywhere in sales and marketing, and have become the norm in our society. Although they work, their effects are short-term in nature, and are costly over time. Generally, manipulations work well for one-time transactions (e.g. a reward for returning a lost dog), but they do not build loyalty. Forms of Manipulation Here are some examples: Fear is one of the most powerful forms of manipulation. Marketers and politicians play on our fears, like fear of illness, death, and loss, with messages like, "you must buy or do this, or beware of the consequences…". Peer pressure. The use of celebrity endorsements, or messages like "4 out of 5 doctors prefer this solution", "over a million satisfied customers have tried this", are all manipulations using peer pressure. They appeal to our fear of being wrong, or being left out. Price. When the price is low enough, people will buy. However, dropping prices means less profit, and may not be sustainable in the long run. Promotions like "buy 1 get 1 free" or cash-back incentives, are also used rampantly to boost short-term sales. To make people want to go the extra mile, you need to touch them in a different way. Great leaders – like Steve Jobs, the Wright brothers and Martin Luther King – inspire people with a deeper sense of purpose or belonging. When you develop a lasting relationship built on loyalty, followers who will stick by you even when you slip up, or when better options emerge. The Golden Circle helps us to understand why we do what we do, and it's closely related to how we're built biologically. The most impactful and inspiring leaders and organizations communicate from inside-out. They start with WHY, and the WHATs are merely proof of their beliefs. Inside-Out Communication Sinek breaks this down further into 3 parts: the Clarity of WHY, the Discipline of HOW, and Consistency of WHAT, all of this you can find out in more detail from our full 12-page summary. You need all 3 components, and you need them in the correct sequence: A strong WHY offers reasons for people to buy, and gives you flexibility to offer a wide range of WHATs as a manifestation of your cause. For example, Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak created Apple to start a revolution, not sell computers. Apple stands for thinking differently, for challenging status quo, for simplifying technology so individuals could have the same power to create as big companies. Its earliest fans and supporters weren't just buying computers – they were buying what Apple stood for; and because Apple's WHY was so strong, people could relate to a wide range of their products, from the iPod to Mac. Obviously, good products are important, but you don't need the best or perfect product. You need a good-enough product with a strong WHY. Why & the Human Biology All human beings have a biological need to belong, and we are willing to go out of our way to get that feeling. In fact, our limbic brain, which is in charge of our decisions, is also the part of our brain that's in charge of feelings, like trust and loyalty. That's why, when we "follow our heart" or make a "gut decision", it involves our emotions-centered limbic brain and such decisions "feel right". In fact, the Golden Circle explains 3 levels of certainty in our decision-making. Decisions that start with WHY literally win hearts and minds. And, when we're inspired by a product or brand, it even becomes a mirror of who we are. To build loyalty, you need to (a) inspire people with WHY, (b) adopt inside-out communication with an alignment of your Why, How and What. Get more details in our complete Start with Why summary. What does the Golden Circle mean for us? Essentially, you can apply it to • Create a following; • Create a tipping point; and finally • Create lasting success Two people given the exact same job could view it very differently – one could find it laborious and boring, while the other feels pride and joy. One could give up in face of obstacles, while the other perseveres to success. The difference is in their WHY or sense of purpose. Sinek illustrates this using several examples, like the Wright Brothers and their quest for man's first flight, Martin Luther King Jr and the American Civil Rights Movement, the Endurance expedition to explore the Antarctica, and more. We'll now outline some of the key components leading to lasting success – get our complete summary for a detailed, visual overview. Build Trust People start to trust you when they understand your beliefs (WHY), and can see that your actions (HOW) and results (WHAT) are aligned with your beliefs. Find those who Believe Common values and beliefs hold people together and build a strong and trusting organization. Start by finding people who are passionate for your WHY (your belief, cause or purpose), before assessing if they have the right skill sets and experience. Then, create the right environment where people feel a sense of belonging, and feel safe to take risks, seek advice, and depend on others for support. Rally those who Believe Common values and beliefs hold people together and build a strong and trusting organization. Start by finding people who are passionate for your WHY (your belief, cause or purpose), before assessing if they have the right skill sets and experience. Create a Tipping Point Focus on the 15-18% of innovators and early adopters who believe what you believe, and want to incorporate your ideas and products into their lives. To inspire and create loyalty, you need charisma and conviction, which comes from the clarity of your WHY. You can then amplify your WHY to reach enough people (the book explains what this entails, in 3 layers or dimensions). You can get more details from our complete Start with Why summary Create Lasting Success Most of us, or our organizations, will reach a point when our WHY gets fuzzy, and is not longer aligned with our WHAT. The book elaborates on examples like Wal-Mart and Starbucks, with some recommendations on how to maintain your alignment as you grow. Finding your WHY is a process of discovery, and the hardest part is not just to discover the WHY, but to stick to it and have the discipline to maintain balance and alignment with your HOWs and WHATs. If you'd like to get more insights, examples and tips, do check out our complete book summary bundle which includes an infographic, 12-page text summary, and a 24-minute audio summary. The book is full of additional examples to help you understand how the concepts are at work all around us. You can purchase the book here or get more details from startwithwhy.com. If you want to start discovering your why, then read our Find your Why summary. Or, check out another of Simon Sinek's book : Leaders Eat Last summary. Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action is written by Simon Sinek—an author, speaker, and consultant who writes on leadership and management. He joined the RAND Corporation in 2010 as an adjunct staff member, where he advises on matters of military innovation and planning. He is best known for popularizing the concepts of "the golden circle" and to "Start With Why". "Those who are able to inspire will create a following of people – supporters, voters, customers, workers – who act for the good of the whole not because they have to, but because they want to." "The danger of manipulations is that they work…Just because it works doesn't make it right." "For values or guiding principles to be truly effective they have to be verbs… we have a clear idea of how to act in any situation." "For a logo to become a symbol, people must be inspired to use that logo to say something about who they are." "There are leaders and there are those who lead." "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." "When we are selective about doing business only with those who believe in our WHY, trust emerges." "The role of a leader is not to come up with all the great ideas. The role of a leader is to create an environment in which great ideas can happen." "Loyalty to a company trumps pay and benefits…It's the cause we come to work for." Click here to download Start with Why book summary and infographic Start with Why Summary Bundle Includes: A 1-page infographic in pdf A -page text summary in pdf A min audio summary in mp3 Available for download or via web app Buy Now for $13.97 See all bundle details February 18, 2016July 27, 2022 Niklas Göke Business, Communication Skills, Creativity, Entrepreneurship, Leadership, Management, Startups, Success, Work 1-Sentence-Summary: Start With Why is Simon Sinek's mission to help others do work, which inspires them, and uses real-world examples of great leaders to show you how they communicate and how you can adapt their mindset to inspire others yourself. Read in: 4 minutes Favorite quote from the author: Simon Sinek's first TEDx talk from 2009 is now the 3rd most watched TED talk of all time, sitting at well over 25 million views. I first came across it in 2012 and was instantly hooked on the idea. The reason his mantra is so magnetic is that it's incredibly simple, yet very universal. Many of history's most inspiring leaders seem to have internalized his idea of the golden circle and communicate it the right way. Here are 3 lessons you should take away from Start With Why: If you want to inspire others, always communicate your why first. Excited employees are the best resource for any business. You don't need sleazy sales tactics when you start with why. Buckle up, it's about to get inspirational! Download PDF This is Simon's key idea in a nutshell: "People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it." Every company in the world knows what they do, which is why it's the first thing they tell people about. But rationale is a weak way of trying to get us to make decisions, probably the weakest of them all. That's because emotions trump reason every time. When we make a decision based on a strong why, we own it. Only when we know why we do things, will we feel a sense of belonging. That's why it's a much more powerful way of getting us to decide. Once we are sold on the cause of an idea, we'll go above and beyond to support it with our money and time. And in the cases of some movements, even with our lives. Great leaders and companies naturally get this right. They start all communication with why they do things, eventually followed by how they do things. And they reveal what it is they actually do very last. Apple is a great example. First, they tell us why they're here to shake things up, then they tell us how (with easy-to-use, beautifully designed products). Finally, we find out what they make: computers, phones, tablets, and mp3-players. By the time they get to their what, we're long sold on their cause and are ready to support them in every way we can. If you want to inspire others, start by telling them why you do things, instead of what you do, and you'll see a massive change in engagement. Lesson 2: Excited employees are the backbone of the best businesses. Which business wouldn't want their employees to go above and beyond for the company's success? To do this, start by building your business around a cause. Then, assemble people who share your why. Instead of relying on big paychecks, threatening deadlines or highly qualified graduates, look for the people who are already motivated by the same reasons as you are and inspire them even more. Who would you rather have working for you? Excel pro Johnny, who's only here to collect his consulting fee? Or Lisa, who needs some time to learn, but wants to see the world change in the same way you do? Hire people for their cause, not their craft, and watch your business bloom. Lesson 3: When you start with why there's no need for sleazy sales tactics. Why do companies use sales funnels, red discount signs, limited time offers, and social proof to trick you into buying their products? Because they work! But sadly, these kinds of psychological manipulations are just as short-lived as the joy these businesses get from making yet another sale. They don't create trust, but evoke skepticism and they sure don't create trusting or loyal customers. When you start with why and just communicate from the inside out, you'll build a group of customers that trust you, true fans, 1000 of which can make your business last a lifetime. They'll always prefer the product of their favorite creator or company over cheaper or even better solutions, because they believe in you and your why. So don't waste time with sleazy sales tactics, spread your why and let true connections follow. Start With Why Review Simon's TED talk made me question a lot of things. It's one of the many bits and pieces that got me started on the path I am on today – towards freedom and work I'm passionate about. So first of all: go watch his talk – it'll change your life or at least your perspective on it. After reading the summary of Leaders Eat Last already, this had to get a re-run. The set of blinks is short, and I'm really curious to see more of the examples that were used there and in his talk, I'm very much inclined to get the book. He also offers a course, which looks interesting and includes a hard copy of the book. If you want to see Start With Why in action, look at the intro video of the course – Simon is a master of communicating his why. Reading the summary on Blinkist will get you a few extra bits and pieces after watching his talk. But going straight from the talk to the book makes sense in this case if you ask me. Who would I recommend the Start With Why summary to? The 18 year old high school student at the brink of college, who has a chance to start pursuing a great career early once he finds his why, the 48 year old business owner, who wonders why her employees lack drive recently, and anyone who hasn't found their why. Last Updated on July 27, 2022 This book has an average rating of 4.3 based on 25 votes. Skip to content Learn faster. Grow easier. Save time. You want to grow your business skills and knowledge—but there's too much to learn, too many distractions, and never enough time. Growth Summary fixes that. Simply tell us what topics matter most to you—from productivity and marketing, to sales and content creation. And we'll deliver bite-sized, actionable insights from hundreds of top business books. So instead of feeling overwhelmed, you'll absorb powerful ideas in minutes, not days. Get Started Ever read a book that inspired you, only to forget most of it just two weeks later? ☹ The problem is not you—it's passive learning. 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Before Mindless scrolling and distractions Procrastination on valuable books Forgotten knowledge and insights ☹ Passive reading with minimal impact After Interactive learning that engages 15-minute micro lessons Tools to remember everything you learn Hands-on exercises to drive real change Get Started Trusted by over 6,300 members worldwide Get 1% better every single day with bite-sized insights from world-class experts on: Business Entrepreneurship Sales & Negotiation Marketing & Branding Copywriting & Ads Investing & Financial Literacy Leadership & Communication Skills Technology & Artificial Intelligence Content Creation & Social Media Online Business & E-commerce Psychology & Decision Making Business Ideas & Innovation Self Help & Personal Growth Motivation & Success Productivity & Time Management Self Discipline & Habits Stoicism & Philosophy Procrastination & Focus Get the key ideas from top business and psychology books in 30 minutes instead of 10+ hours. Listen and learn anywhere—while commuting, exercising, or relaxing. Follow expertly-crafted lists of the best books on entrepreneurship, sales, habits, and more. Put learning on easy mode with visuals that simplify complex ideas instantly. Find your next favorite book, matched exactly to your business goals. Immediately apply strategies with clear, actionable steps. Quickly refresh your knowledge of powerful frameworks and strategies using easy quick-reference guides. Make insights stick using quizzes based on the science of active recall. Get Started Trusted by over 6,300 members worldwide who save time and grow faster with Growth Summary. "Growth Summary has saved me so much time! I learn faster and get more out of every book." - Sarah M., Member "A fantastic resource for busy people who love learning. I feel like I'm investing in myself every time I use it." - Mark T., Entrepreneur "The audio summaries are a lifesaver. I can listen while commuting, and it feels like a mini-masterclass every day." - Emily R., Freelancer You're already investing your time and money into learning. Growth Summary can help you avoid wasting that on books that aren't worth it. Savings Calculator Books per Month: Your Savings: 240 hours per year $480 per year (Based on saving 10 hours and $20 per book read) Growth Summary costs just a fraction of what you're probably ALREADY spending! Doesn't it make sense to sign up today and start growing your business faster? Struggling business owners will spend time to save money, whereas successful business owners will spend money to save time. Why is that an important distinction? Because you can always get more money, but you can never get more time.—Allan Dib, author of "The 1-Page Marketing Plan Why do I need Growth Summary? If you want to start or grow your business, there's no better resource. Our team has spent thousands of hours summarizing the best books for entrepreneurs, business owners, and creators. Each summary is crafted by our team to highlight actionable ideas and key takeaways, so you basically get years of business knowledge in minutes. Is there a limit to how many book summaries I can read per month? Nope! Once you subscribe, enjoy unlimited access to all our book summaries. Happy reading! Will the book summaries be updated regularly? Can I suggest books? Yes, new book summaries are added monthly. Premium members can also suggest books. While we can't cover every title, we consider all requests. Do you have an app I can download? We don't have a standalone app, but our website is optimized for all devices. You can even add our site to your phone's home screen for quick access, just like an app! To add to your home screen: Open growthsummary.com in your browser on your phone. Tap 'Share' on iPhone or the menu button on Android. Select 'Add to Home Screen'. How do you accept payments securely? We accept all major credit cards via Stripe, a globally trusted payment processor used by companies like Amazon and Google for secure transactions. How can I cancel my subscription? You can cancel your subscription at any time in your account settings with one easy click. You can also cancel by contacting us, and if you cancel before the end of the billing period, you won't be charged for the next cycle. Get Started Table of Contents What is 'Start With Why' about? This book explores why some leaders and organizations have greater success than others. Simon Sinek emphasizes understanding the core purpose, or "why," behind actions. He claims that great leaders inspire through a clear sense of purpose, setting an example in various fields. Book Details Title: Start With Why Author: Simon Sinek Pages: 256 Publish Date: January 1, 2009 Ratings: 4.1 (234,810 ratings) Reviews: 10,622 reviews Synopsis of 'Start With Why'Introduction to Leadership and Inspiration In "Start With Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action," Simon Sinek addresses a profound question: Why do you do what you do? Throughout history, certain figures have emerged, altering the course of industries, social movements, and lives. Why did leaders like Martin Luther King Jr., Steve Jobs, and the Wright Brothers achieve unparalleled influence? The answer lies in their ability to start with a compelling "why." These leaders had a clear vision that resonated deeply, inspiring those around them to take action. This inquiry is the bedrock of Sinek's philosophy. Sinek introduces the concept of The Golden Circle, a framework that highlights the importance of understanding one's purpose. The circles encompass three concentric layers: **why, how, and what**. While many organizations can explain what they do, and some can articulate how they do it, very few can pinpoint why they exist at all. The key to their success is the clarity of purpose that fuels loyalty from both employees and customers. Understanding the Concept of 'Why' When addressing **why**, Sinek emphasizes that it's not about profit or money; these are mere outcomes. Instead, it delves into the core reason for existence. Organizations that anchor their mission in a profound "why" produce more innovative and influential results. This principle is applicable in various settings—large corporations, small businesses, nonprofits, and even politics. The shift in perspective transforms how organizations connect with their audience. Those who lead with "why" inspire passion. They don't rely on manipulation; they foster active engagement and loyalty. Sinek asserts, "People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it." This powerful idea showcases how aligning an organization's vision with its values leads to lasting success. Real-Life Illustrations and the Power of Storytelling With diverse examples, Sinek illustrates the power of starting with "why." By referencing the success of Apple, Southwest Airlines, and the Wright Brothers, he demonstrates how clarity of purpose contributes to their victories. For instance, while the Wright Brothers operated on limited resources, their passionate pursuit of flight inspired and motivated their team. In contrast, Samuel Langley, who had ample government funding but lacked vision, ultimately failed in his efforts to achieve flight. Sinek also highlights Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous "I Have a Dream" speech. King concentrated on "why" he fought for civil rights, igniting hope and a shared vision among thousands. The emotional connection created by articulating "why" is shown to be a crucial factor in mobilizing movements and generating loyalty. Sinek argues that manipulation leads to short-term gains but lacks sustainability. True success originates from genuine inspiration. He posits that the greatest leaders are those who cultivate a "why" that aligns with their followers' ambitions and beliefs. The Impacts in Various Sectors The implications of Sinek's philosophy extend to various sectors. In business, it encourages leaders to foster a culture grounded in purpose. Employees motivated by a shared vision perform better. This principle also resonates deeply with individuals seeking fulfillment in their careers and lives. By understanding their own "why," leaders can better inspire those around them. This intrinsic motivation cultivates not only personal growth but also positive change in the organizations they steer. Furthermore, companies that embody their "why" create a loyal customer base. Customers feel a connection beyond mere transactions; they identify with the values that the organization represents. Sinek encourages individuals and organizations to reflect on their motivations. Addressing "why" sparks authenticity in communication and decision-making, ensuring they resonate meaningfully with their audience. A Call for Reflection and Change In conclusion, "Start With Why" serves as a compass for leaders and individuals alike. It urges us to rethink our approach to work and influence. The central takeaway is profound yet seemingly simple: Clarity of purpose fosters inspiration. It motivates not just followers but fosters a community of support and shared values. Sinek's theory is not without critique. Some readers feel the book could have benefited from further detail and diversity in examples. However, the overarching message remains clear: organizations that start with "why" can harness collective belief to foster lasting connections. By continually asking ourselves "why," we strip away distractions, returning to our core motivations. This process not only provides a roadmap for success but also encourages a deeper connection with others. Ultimately, Sinek's insights serve as a reminder that every action driven by purpose has the potential to inspire extraordinary results. From here you can jump to the Spoilers section right away. Below you can search for another book summary: Alternative Book CoverComing soon… Quotes "People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it. And what you do simply proves what you believe"—Simon Sinek,Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action "There are only two ways to influence human behavior: you can manipulate it or you can inspire it.Very few people or companies can clearly articulate WHY they do WHAT they do. By WHY I mean your purpose, cause or belief – WHY does your company exist? WHY do you get out of bed every morning? And WHY should anyone care?People don't buy WHAT you do, they buy WHY you do it.We are drawn to leaders and organizations that are good at communicating what they believe. Their ability to make us feel like we belong, to make us feel special, safe and not alone is part of what gives them the ability to inspire us.For values or guiding principles to be truly effective they have to be verbs. It's not "integrity," it's "always do the right thing." It's not "innovation," it's "look at the problem from a different angle." Articulating our values as verbs gives us a clear idea – we have a clear idea of how to act in any situation.Happy employees ensure happy customers. And happy customers ensure happy shareholders—in that order.Leading is not the same as being the leader. Being the leader means you hold the highest rank, either by earning it, good fortune or navigating internal politics. Leading, however, means that others willingly follow you—not because they have to, not because they are paid to, but because they want to.You don't hire for skills, you hire for attitude. You can always teach skills.Great companies don't hire skilled people and motivate them, they hire already motivated people and inspire them. People are either motivated or they are not. Unless you give motivated people something to believe in, something bigger than their job to work toward, they will motivate themselves to find a new job and you'll be stuck with whoever's left.Trust is maintained when values and beliefs are actively managed. If companies do not actively work to keep clarity, discipline and consistency in balance, then trust starts to break down.All organizations start with WHY, but only the great ones keep their WHY clear year after year."—Simon Sinek,Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action "Great companies don't hire skilled people and motivate them, they hire already motivated people and inspire them."—Simon Sinek,Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action You want to give Start With Why a try? Here you go! Key Examples Martin Luther King Jr.: Known for his inspiring vision of equality, he rallied people through a powerful emotional message. Steve Jobs: Apple's success comes from a compelling "why," which drives its innovation and customer loyalty. The Wright Brothers: They succeeded in flight despite limited resources, fueled by their passion and clear vision. Harley-Davidson: The brand connects deeply with its customers' identities, emphasizing a shared purpose beyond mere motorcycles. Highlights Here are some key takeaways from the book: The Golden Circle model: Starting with "Why" leads to greater influence. Inspiration vs. Manipulation: Inspirational leaders create loyal followers. Real-world examples: Successful leaders often have a clear sense of purpose. Emotional connection: Organizations that resonate with their audience's beliefs are more successful. Long-term vision: Teams must align with their organization's "why" for sustained success. Spoilers Spoiler Alert! If you want to read the book, don't click "Show more" and spoil your experience. Here is a link for you to get the book. The Apple Example: Apple's focus on innovation and purpose drives customer loyalty, rather than just product features. The Wright Brothers' Success: Their passion for flight inspired their team, unlike competitors who had more funding but less vision. MLK's Influence: King's ability to connect emotionally with people created a movement, not just a speech. Common Misunderstandings: Many companies fail because they focus too much on "What" and ignore "Why." Business Impact: Firms that operate with a clear 'why' often outperform their competition. Let us know what you think about this book and the summary in the comment section at the end of the page. FAQs about 'Start With Why' The main idea is that organizations achieve greater loyalty by starting with 'why.'Business leaders, entrepreneurs, and anyone seeking inspiration.A model consisting of 'Why,' 'How,' and 'What' that Sinek introduces to explain successful leadership.Focusing on 'why' engenders loyalty and motivation from both employees and customers.Yes, the principles apply to modern organizations across various sectors. Reviews Many readers praise Sinek's message, citing its importance for both personal and business growth. However, some express frustration at the repetition and the depth of examples. Are you looking for a nice read that perfectly fits your current mood? Here is a free book suggestion tool. It gives you suggestions based on your taste. Also a likelihood rating for each recommended book. Would you like to find the book you will love later or now? Simon Sinek is known for his positive outlook and expertise in leadership. His TED Talks and influential works encourage a greater understanding of purpose in business and beyond. Are you looking for a nice read that perfectly fits your current mood? Here is a free book suggestion tool. It gives you suggestions based on your taste. Also a likelihood rating for each recommended book. Would you like to find the book you will love later or now? Conclusion We hope you found this synopsis of 'Start With Why' enjoyable. The book's insights on leadership and purpose are invaluable. If you're motivated to inspire others or seek inspiration, diving into the full text will enrich your understanding. DISCLAIMER: This book summary is meant as a summary and an analysis, not a replacement for the original work. Contact us if you are the original author wanting it removed. Buy on Amazon: Print | Hardcover | Audiobook The ability to inspire those around you and to achieve remarkable things starts with WHY. Any organization can explain what it does; some can explain how they do it; but very few can clearly articulate why. Those who start with WHY never manipulate, they inspire. Your WHY is your purpose, cause or belief. Every inspiring leader and organization, regardless of size or industry, starts with WHY People don't buy WHAT you do, they buy WHY you do it. Knowing our WHY is essential for lasting success and the ability to avoid being lumped in with others. When your WHY goes fuzzy, it becomes much more difficult to maintain the growth, loyalty, and inspiration that helped drive your original success. Enter your email below, and I'll send you a free PDF summary of Start with Why. Great leaders are able to inspire people to act. And those who are able to inspire give people a sense of purpose or belonging that has little to do with any external incentive or benefit to be gained. "Most businesses today are making decisions based on a set of incomplete or, worse, completely flawed assumptions about what's driving their business." "There are only two ways to influence human behavior: you can manipulate it or you can inspire it." "Though positive in nature, aspirational messages are most effective with those who lack discipline or have a nagging fear or insecurity that they don't have the ability to achieve their dreams on their own (which, at various times for various reasons, is everyone)." "Peer pressure works not because the majority or the experts are always right, but because we fear that we may be wrong." "If a company adds too many novel ideas too often, it can have a similar impact on the product or category as the price game. In an attempt to differentiate with more features, the products start to look and feel more like commodities. And, like price, the need to add yet another product to the line to compensate for the commoditization ends in a downward spiral." "Loyalty is when people are willing to turn down a better product or a better price to continue doing business with you." For transactions that occur an average of once, carrots and sticks are the best way to elicit the desired behavior. Every single company and organization on the planet knows WHAT they do. Some companies and people know HOW they do WHAT they do. Very few people or companies can clearly articulate WHY they do WHAT they do. By WHY, Sinek means what is your purpose, cause or belief? WHY does your company exist? WHY do you get out of bed every morning? And WHY should anyone care? Every inspiring leader and organization, regardless of size or industry, thinks, acts and communicates from the inside out. "People don't buy WHAT you do, they buy WHY you do it." When communicating from the inside out, the WHY is offered as the reason to buy and the WHATs serve as the tangible proof of that belief. "Knowing WHY is essential for lasting success and the ability to avoid being lumped in with others." "Knowing your WHY is not the only way to be successful, but it is the only way to maintain a lasting success and have a greater blend of innovation and flexibility." "When a WHY goes fuzzy, it becomes much more difficult to maintain the growth, loyalty, and inspiration that helped drive the original success." Instead of asking, "WHAT should we do to compete?" you need to ask yourself, "WHY did we start doing WHAT we're doing in the first place, and WHAT can we do to bring our cause to life considering all the technologies and market opportunities available today?" "No matter where we go, we trust those with whom we are able to perceive common values or beliefs." "We are drawn to leaders and organizations that are good at communicating what they believe. Their ability to make us feel like we belong, to make us feel special, safe and not alone is part of what gives them the ability to inspire us." "Companies that fail to communicate a sense of WHY force us to make decisions with only empirical evidence." "Great leaders are those who trust their gut. They are those who understand the art before the science. They win hearts before minds. They are the ones who start with WHY." "If a company does not have a clear sense of WHY then it is impossible for the outside world to perceive anything more than WHAT the company does." "When the WHY is absent, imbalance is produced and manipulations thrive. And when manipulations thrive, uncertainty increases for buyers, instability increases for sellers and stress increases for all." "For values or guiding principles to be truly effective they have to be verbs." "Only when the WHY is clear and when people believe what you believe can a true loyal relationship develop." "The goal of business should not be to do business with anyone who simply wants what you have. It should be to focus on the people who believe what you believe." "When we are selective about doing business only with those who believe in our WHY, trust emerges.' "Trust begins to emerge when we have a sense that another person or organization is driven by things other than their own self-gain." "When employees belong, they will guarantee your success. And they won't be working hard and looking for innovative solutions for you, they will be doing it for themselves." "What all great leaders have in common is the ability to find good fits to join their organizations—those who believe what they believe." "Unless you give motivated people something to believe in, something bigger than their job to work toward, they will motivate themselves to find a new job and you'll be stuck with whoever's left." "The role of a leader is not to come up with all the great ideas. The role of a leader is to create an environment in which great ideas can happen." "If the people inside a company are told to come to work and just do their job, that's all they will do. If they are constantly reminded WHY the company was founded and told to always look for ways to bring that cause to life while performing their job, however, then they will do more than their job." "When people come to work with a higher sense of purpose, they find it easier to weather hard times or even to find opportunity in those hard times." "Energy motivates but charisma inspires. Energy is easy to