



Start With Why - The Golden Circle

Why are some people and organizations more innovative, more influential and more profitable than others? Even among the successful, why are so few able to repeat their success over and over? In studying the organizations and leaders who have had the greatest influence in the world, Simon Sinek discovered that these individuals and organizations all think, act and communicate in the exact same way – and it's the complete opposite to everyone else. Sinek calls this powerful idea The Golden Circle.

All organizations can explain What they do; some can explain How they do it, but very few can articulate Why. The Why is the overarching purpose or cause that drives us. It's what inspires us to get out of bed in the morning. Let's define the terms:

Why - Your purpose, cause or belief

Very few people can clearly articulate Why they do what they do. The Why is not about making money. Making money is simply a result of your Why. Your Why is bigger. No matter what you do, your Why is what inspires you to take the actions that bring you fulfillment.

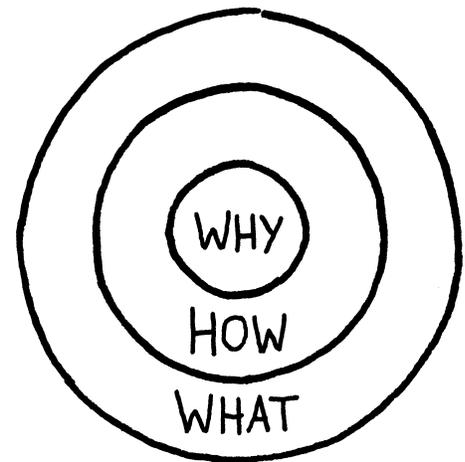
How - The actions you take to realize your Why

Once you know your Why, you must identify your Hows. These are your natural strengths, the actions you take or the guiding principles you live by that allow you to be at your best and bring your Why to life.

What - the results of putting your Why into action

Whats are the tangible representations of what you believe – your products and services. What's are always measurable. They are the proof you are starting with Why.

Most organizations define themselves by What they do – trade stocks, sell life insurance or fight for human rights worldwide. But these are simply the tangible examples of something deeper – a single passion that unites these interests or activities. We inherently know What we do is not enough so, in an attempt to distinguish ourselves, we explain How we do what we do (perhaps by pointing to particular technology, skill sets or unique selling points), all in an attempt to stand out from the crowd. The problem is that it rarely gets us the results we want.



When we operate from the inside-out of The Golden Circle, we determine how the market perceives us. Being able to clearly state our Why allows us to explain the reasons we choose to do the things we do. We live in a tangible world. The only way people know what we believe is by the things we say and do. When we know our Why, we can choose to do and say the things that reflect what we believe.

When our Golden Circle is in balance, meaning all three levels (Why, How and What) are given equal weight, each as important as the other, the combination becomes like our fingerprint. It is our identity, now and forever.

How does this apply to you?

Sometimes it can be difficult to put into words and start talking about it. However, it's just like riding a bike. At first it's wobbly and uncomfortable, but eventually, it becomes second nature. The trick is to stick with it. Here are some questions that can help you think about how Why fits into your context and how you might start applying it:

1. Think about the organization in which you lead. Are you thinking, acting and communicating mainly at the What and How level? What would it look like if you started with Why? What are one or two things you can do this week to make the Why more tangible for yourself, your employees and clients?
2. Do you currently have conversations with employees and clients based mainly on What and How? How can you rephrase your conversations and/or presentations to start with Why?
3. Your organization is one of many that people (employees and clients) can have a relationship with. How can you inspire new or potential employees and clients based on Why?
4. What do you think your individual Why might be? Of all the things you could be doing, what is the reason you've chosen to work in this industry or with your company? Does your personal Why align with your organization's Why?

For resources and tools, or to simply learn more, visit startwithwhy.com.