

What is the common thing that Martin Luther King, Jr., Steve Jobs, and the Wright brothers have? At first glance, not so much. They worked on different things for different motives at different times.

However, there is a thing that connects the four of them: they all knew that no one accepts a concept, project, or product except they understand why it occurs.

This, as author Simon Sinek claims, is a thing you'll see in all great leaders and successful businesses. See it as a sense of purpose. People work best and motivate others when they know the reason why they're doing what they're doing. This doesn't signify struggling to get money. It signifies doing a purposeful activity, a method that usually leads to financial gain.

However, how do you lead in this manner? In this book, we'll be looking at a framework that displays how organizations can be made for success and how people can be motivated.

Chapter 1 - Success is the outcome of a design and not of short-term patches.

There's a popular tale about a group of American automobile makers who went to Japan to check the country's car plants. The assembly lines they observed were very much the same as the ones they have in their own factories; however, there was one important difference. In the United States, a line employee used a rubber mallet to tap the edges of car doors to make sure they fit. In Japan, this work didn't appear to occur.

When the American executives asked their Japanese guide on how these plants functioned without this condition, their Japanese guide smiled sheepishly and replied by saying "we ensure it fits when we produce it."

The key point here is: Success is the outcome of design, not of short-term patches.

Different from their American counterparts, Japanese car makers weren't looking at an issue and trying to make out a makeshift answer – they were engineering the result they needed from the start.

This has a few clear benefits. Firstly, a properly-designed door is likely to both last longer and be more physically sound in an accident. Secondly, if you've designed the door properly, you don't have to purchase mallets or employ workers to wield them. That removes a lot of waste and saves you a lot of money, time, and stress.

However, that's not how things function in a lot of businesses. What the American carmakers were making with their mallets is a symbol for the manner in which a lot of businesses worldwide are led. Challenged with an outcome that doesn't fit with their initial plan, leaders frequently turn to perfectly effective short-term patches to reach their aims.

This might make things move slowly; however, it's not the best method. The most successful organizations don't require mallets – they make products and companies according to a plan. In other words, they make things fit by design and not by default.

All the instructions leaders give, all the course of actions they set in place, and every aim they set starts with the same thing – a choice. Some choose to hammer doors into place; others begin somewhere really different.

In these chapters, we'll be looking at the second route. As we'll get to know, this is what assures long-term success. It all starts with an easy but powerful question: Why?

Chapter 2 - Manipulating consumers lead to short-term gains; however, it weakens businesses' long-term viability.

Between the years 1990 and 2007, the American automobile company GM witnessed its market share in the United States declined from 35% to 24%. Challenged with rivalry from Asian companies such as Toyota, GM attempted to enhance its sales by giving customers cash-back

deals. It started selling more cars; however, there was an issue: by 2008, it was losing \$729 for each car sold. This wasn't sustainable, and that's the key point here.

The key point here is: Manipulating consumers lead to short-term gains; however, it weakens businesses' long-term viability.

Manipulation appears in different kinds. Generally, it's anything that drives consumers to purchase— think clearance sales, two-for-one deals, advertising hype, or pleas to authority in assertions such as “Four out of five dentists choose Trident.” It's a popular tactic – and in the short term, at least, it's really effective.

Unfortunately for businesses such as GM, it hardly pays in the long run. Consider one of the most common kinds of manipulation – the “price game.” Reduce your prices low enough and people will purchase your products. This is catnip to sellers. There's a fantastic short-term benefit however, it immediately becomes a habit that's difficult to kick. The lower your costs, the more hesitant your customers will be to pay more. The outcome: slimmer margins that can only be balanced by more sales, which in turn needs even lower costs.

Even businesses that sustain profitability while dropping their prices have a tendency to suffer. For instance, Walmart has a very healthy end result. But, its reputation is destroyed. The only means of generating money while giving consumers continuous deals is to reduce costs elsewhere. Nowadays, Walmart is tarnished for its substandard treatment of underpaid and overworked workers in its US stores.

Worse, manipulation might be able to push sales – individual sales –however, it doesn't lead to loyalty. You can notice why when you think of how rewards function. When you lose your kitten and propose a prize to anyone that returns it to you, for instance, you're not attempting to form a relationship with the finder – you only need your cat back.

That's not a sustainable foundation for a business. When GM reduced its financially harmful policy of proposing cash-back deals, customers left the company and began purchasing cheaper Asian vehicles. The only reason that had tipped the scales in GM's favor was a transactional reward. Once that was taken out, there was nothing to depend on.

Therefore, what's the alternative? Let's see!

Chapter 3 - Companies such as Apple don't only sell devices— they uphold their customers' beliefs and values.

When you look at it, Apple is only another computer company. Just like Dell, HP, or Toshiba, Apple has some systems that function well and some that don't. All four companies have the same access to resources, talent, and media channels to advertise their products. Logically speaking, it doesn't count which company's product you select— they're all very decent.

However, that's not how it functions. In the real world, people pay more for Apple products and stand in queue for hours for the newest iPhone. What is the reason for that?

The key point here is: Companies such as Apple don't only sell devices— they uphold their customers' beliefs and values.

This is one means in which Apple is different. Different from its competitors, it isn't connected with one product category. This is rare. Normally, you would suppose customers to purchase their computers from a single company, their cell phones from another company, and their mp3 players from a third. Apple has been extremely successful in all three market categories.

There's a good cause for this: the why matters more than the what. Let's explain that more.

The majority of the businesses have a direct pitch. They explain what they do, mention why they're better than their rivals, and end things up with a call to action. If Apple were like the majority of other firms, its pitch would be each: "We produce great computers, they're beautifully made and user-friendly —you want to buy one?"

However, that's not what Apple mentions. Here's its real message — the pitch that has made it one of the leading successful businesses of all time:

"All the things we do are about challenging the status quo. We believe in thinking differently, and we attest this by creating beautiful, user-friendly products. Oh, also, we produce great computers. Want to buy one?"

See the difference? There's no manipulation or free thing. As a matter of fact, the stress isn't actually on products at all. Apple isn't saying to us what it produces— it's telling us why it does what it does.

This is an ideal illustration of beginning with why. Apple isn't claiming that we should purchase a Mac or an iPhone because they're better and cheaper than competitor products, or because they've been recognized by celebrities. It's saying to us that if we also trust in creativity and thinking outside the box, Apple is the perfect company for us. In other words, it "gets us" – it views us as people with beliefs and values instead of just only consumers.

Therefore, why is this type of message really persuasive? In order to answer that question, we have to examine human biology.

Chapter 4 - Our rational brain doesn't influence our choices.

This is a tricky question: what is the reason you love your partner? Usually, we'll answer that by saying something, "Well, I don't know – she's funny and clever." However, there are millions, even billions of funny and clever people in the world with whom we don't desire to share our lives with. Or we might say something, "He makes me whole." However, how on Earth do you find a person who does that?

These aren't the actual motives we fall in love – they're efforts to explain something that's almost indescribable. There's a cause for that.

The key point here is: Our rational brain doesn't influence our choices.

If you check the cross-section of the human brain, you'll discover three parts. The neocortex is seen on the outside is the most lately evolved region. This is in control of rational thought and language. The two middle parts constitute the limbic brain. These are in charge of feelings such as loyalty, trust, and decision-making. Significantly, these older parts don't have the ability for language. This is the reason why it is so difficult to explain why you love a person.

Also, it clarifies the reason companies fail to connect with customers. Let's assume you're attempting to sell a TV. You describe its cost, specs, and features. All this data is a good approach to engaging the neocortex; however, here's the difficulty: People can process huge amounts of complicated information; however, the information isn't what drives actions.

If you wish to change actions, you will have to access the limbic brain. Consider an illustration from the laundry-detergent industry.

For a lot of years, American companies did commercials asserting that their detergents made people's whites whiter and their brights brighter. On the face of it, this was a concrete value proposition – that, in the end, was what market research had revealed consumers required from their detergent. Due to the reason that researchers had asked consumers what they required, they used their whole time talking about how their product is effecting. Some asserted that protein was the miracle ingredient; others indicated their patented color enhancers.

However, that's not the reason we clean our clothes. We believe that every detergent makes our clothes clean – that's only what they do. Later on, as an anthropological study discovered, when we remove our clothes from the machine, we don't hold them up to the light to check how white or bright they are. We just smell them. Feeling clean counts more than objective cleanliness.

The entire detergent industry was acting on a wrong assumption. That only goes to demonstrate why it's important to start with why!

Chapter 5 - When Innovations are supported by a minority of real believers, it spreads far and wide.

Can you think of spending \$40,000 on a new kind of TV that could be the next huge thing; however, might only be a failure? No? You're not the only person. Just a small minority accepts new products and ideas; however, this sliver of the consumer population is essential to the success of companies and organizations hoping to spread to a mass audience.

The key point here is: Innovations go far and wide when they're supported by a minority of real believers.

This is known as the law of diffusion, a term that dates back to a 1962 book written by communications theorist Everett M. Rogers. His theory claims that all populations can be separated into five parts, each of which reacts differently to innovation.

Innovators, who constitute 2.5% of the population, are the first people to accept novelty. After that are early adopters which makes up 13.5% of the population. Then we have the more risk-averse early majority and the late majority. Collectively, they make up 68% of the population. The last 16% are laggards –people who simply purchase touch-tone phones since rotary phones are not in existence anymore

Innovators and early adopters are glad to pay a premium or experience difficulties to have a product or embrace a notion because it feels appropriate. This has a bit to do with the real merits of that product or notion and more to do with their own sense of themselves. Although, a lot of people don't make these types of intuitive choices. They don't need a phone or TV that matches their values; they need something that functions and that isn't too expensive.

As Rogers indicated, the irony of mass-market success is that it's not possible to succeed if you're attempting to persuade the practical-minded majority. What is the cause of this? Easy: most people won't try out a thing until another person has suggested it to them. If you need to get to the middle of society, you require a minority of loyalists to spread the word– something they'll basically do if they trust in your why.

This isn't the case in business alone. August of 1963, 250,000 people stood in the roasting sun in Washington, DC, just to listen to Martin Luther King. No invites had been sent out to people and there wasn't a website to check then; however, word had spread. It wasn't only Dr. King who suffered in pre-civil rights America or the only great speaker in the country; however, he didn't stop talking about his believes. His message had been taken up by a small audience who made it their own. By 1963, it had eventually got to middle America.

Chapter 6 - Companies get into problems when they lose the sense of “why.”

Think of a small mid-century retail founding in the United States. The company’s creator became successful during the Great Depression and believes in hard work and justice. He likes to state that, care for people and they’ll take care of you too. The business progressively develops; however, it never loses the prospect of its founding principles. Definitely, prices are cheap; however, that’s not the reason why the company is really popular. What people truly love is its holistic idea of giving back to workers, customers, and the community.

You’ll have probably heard about this company; however, it is likely that you haven’t heard it talked about in this manner. It’s Walmart. So what happened?

The key point here is: Companies get into problems when they lose the sense of “why.”

Walmart’s initial values didn’t live longer than its founder, Sam Walton. After the founder dies in 1992, the huge retail couldn’t find its path. Leaving its previous obligation to the communities in which it functioned, it redefined its purpose as selling more and more at the lowest cost as possible.

This new direction didn’t go so well to the external competition –as a matter of fact, Walmart was in better form than ever. In 2002, Kmart which is one of its biggest contenders filed for bankruptcy protection, and Walton’s stores were selling approximately six times more than their Aim. In general, Walmart was gaining around \$400 billion in yearly sales.

This should have been a peak for Walmart; however, that’s not how it felt inside the business. This is a usual issue. Just like the leaders of other big businesses, Walmart’s leadership had lost its sense of purpose.

By 2008, it was battling with 73 new class-action lawsuits for infringing its workers’ rights and had already paid millions of dollars to solve former cases. Towns and cities that would have formerly accepted the opening of new Walmart stores now fought very fiercely to have the company out of their communities. Neither labor unions nor political representatives had a good thing to say about the retailer.

Walmart's obsession with increasing its income derived from a problem that affects a lot of American businesses: Even if they are financially doing good, they don't feel successful.

When the author went for the Gathering of the Titans, a yearly meeting of America's leading 50 business leaders in Boston, he saw something extraordinary. When asked if their companies had reached their financial goals that year, some 80% of people that were present raised their hands. However, when asked if they felt successful, 80% of the hands went down.

This is one of the dangers of accomplishing a lot. As companies become more and more successful, they become more and more confident about what they're doing and fail to remember the reason they're doing it.

Chapter 7 - Teams concentrated on “what” usually fail, while those that begin with “why” are capable of amazing successes.

Samuel Pierpont Langley everything planned out: he wanted to be the first person to fly. A very-connected senior officer at the Smithsonian Institute, he had friends in top places – people such as Andrew Carnegie and Alexander Graham Bell. His connection had assisted him to get a \$50,000 research funding from the US War Department and gather the brightest thinkers in the United States. Reporters from the New York Times went with him everywhere, and the public was supporting him. Success was almost certain.

However, regardless of his hard work and various trials, he just couldn't get his machine to start. This is the reason.

The key point here is: Teams concentrated on “what” usually fail, while those that begin with “why” are capable of amazing successes.

On the 17th of December 1903, a small group of observers saw a man – not Langley – take flight for the first time ever in the history of humanity. The “flying machine” he made use of had been

made by two brothers named, Wilbur and Orville Wright, and their team. None of the people that build the machine had a college degree, and the project had been sponsored by incomes from the Wrights' bicycle shop. How did they accomplish what Langley couldn't do?

They began with why. As James Tobin records in his biography of the Wrights, "Wilbur and Orville were real scientists" who cared a lot and sincerely about the issue they were attempting to fix– the issue of flight and balance. More importantly, they understood that if they did well, it would change the world for life.

On the other hand, Langley was obsessed with what. He desired the fame and respect that accompanied a key scientific innovation and was unconcerned to its application. When the Wrights defeated him to it, he didn't try to advance their own flying machine – he basically gave up.

Orville and Wilbur had another talent: a committed team. By doing what they preached, they motivated others to join them. On a daily basis, this diverse crew of dreamers and tinkerers went back to the field behind the Wrights' shop with five sets of parts. After five failures, they walked in and ate dinner. The following day, they began again.

Both Langley and the Wright brothers were extremely inspired and had a strong work ethic and strong scientific thinkers. But, Langley, had paid for talent to assist him to build his reputation. The Wrights' devotion to changing the course of history thrilled those around them and charged them with belief.

This is the lesson here. Employ people for what they can offer you and they'll work for your pay. Employ people who trust in your why, alternatively, and they'll offer you their blood, sweat, and cries.

Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action by Simon Sinek Book Review

Businesses, people, and movements of all forms should regularly begin with "why" – their motive for doing something. This "why" should be the foundation for all the choices its leaders

make and every message they spread. By doing that, they will charm devoted supporters and accumulate long-term success.

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