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#### About the Author

Simon Sinek an unshakable optimist, is the author of the bestselling book Start with Why, which challenged traditional assumptions about how great leaders and great companies inspire people. He has shared his ideas with companies big and small, members of Congress and the highest levels of the U.S. military. His TEDTalk based on Start with Why is the second most popular video of all time on TED.com. He lives in New York City.

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The New York Times-bestselling follow-up to Simon Sinek's global hit, Start With Why.

Why do only a few people get to say "I love my job"? It seems unfair that finding fulfillment at work is like winning a lottery; that only a few lucky ones get to feel valued by their organizations, to feel like they belong.

Imagine a world where almost everyone wakes up inspired to go to work, feels trusted and valued during the day, then returns home feeling fulfilled.

This is not a crazy, idealized notion. Today, in many successful organizations, great leaders are creating environments in which people naturally work together to do remarkable things.

In his travels around the world since the publication of his bestseller Start with Why, Simon Sinek noticed that some teams were able to trust each other so deeply that they would literally put their lives on the line for each other. Other teams, no matter what incentives were offered, were doomed to infighting, fragmentation and failure. Why?

The answer became clear during a conversation with a Marine Corps general.

"Officers eat last," he said.

Sinek watched as the most junior Marines ate first while the most senior Marines took their place at the back of the line. What's symbolic in the chow hall is deadly serious on the battlefield: great leaders sacrifice their own comfort—even their own survival—for the good of those in their care.

This principle has been true since the earliest tribes of hunters and gatherers. It's not a management theory; it's biology. Our brains and bodies evolved to help us find food, shelter, mates and especially safety. We've always lived in a dangerous world, facing predators and enemies at every turn. We thrived only when we felt safe among our group.

Our biology hasn't changed in fifty thousand years, but our environment certainly has. Today's workplaces tend to be full of cynicism, paranoia and self-interest. But the best organizations foster trust and cooperation because their leaders build what Sinek calls a Circle of Safety that separates the security inside the team from the challenges outside.

The Circle of Safety leads to stable, adaptive, confident teams, where everyone feels they belong and all energies are devoted to facing the common enemy and seizing big opportunities.

As he did in Start with Why, Sinek illustrates his ideas with fascinating true stories from a wide range of examples, from the military to manufacturing, from government to investment banking.

The biology is clear: when it matters most, leaders who are willing to eat last are rewarded with deeply loyal colleagues who will stop at nothing to advance their leader's vision and their organization's interests. It's amazing how well it works.

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185 of 193 people found the following review helpful.

Great insights! And a splendid vision of how things can be.

By Srikumar S. Rao

There are many books on Leadership that have little to say. Sinek's book has both new insights and an inspiring vision.

Sinek begins with biology and outlines the roles of chemicals - specifically Endorphins, Dopamine, Serotonin and Oxytocin - and how evolution has dictated why we generate them and how we respond to them. Endorphins mask pain and help give you a `runner's high' or the intense satisfaction after a tough work out.

Dopamine leads to your `feeling good' upon accomplishing a goal whether that is bringing home dinner while evading sabre-toothed tigers or doing a bang-up job on a major presentation. Think of endorphins and Dopamine as the `individual achievement' chemicals. We need them to excel at what we do.

Serotonin is what gives you a feeling of gratitude and affection for the persons who supported you in your endeavors and the good feeling as they applaud you. Oxytocin is `love' chemical. It gives you the warm fuzzies you get when you hug someone or have a deep meaningful conversation. Think of Serotonin and Oxytocin as the `social' chemicals.

We, as humans, need both the individual achievement and social chemicals to progress. What has happened, unfortunately, in our society is that mores and values have changed to emphasize the former to such an extent that a deadly imbalance has been created. It is truly toxic - your job may be killing you. I used to think this was hyperbole but Sinek presents enough evidence for me to revise this opinion.

Central to Sinek's arguments is the `Circle of Safety'. When a sabre-toothed tiger attacks a herd of buffalos they gather together with their tails touching and horns out. Whichever direction that tiger attacks, it is met with impenetrable defense. This is the circle of safety. We want to feel that there are persons we can trust who will look out for us. Where we can let our guard down and be ourselves.

In such a trusting environment we can focus on doing the best we can and this greatly benefits both us, individually, the company. This feeling of `belonging' is what has disappeared from the corporate workplace to a large extent. It has been replaced by an ethos of `everyone for himself and the Devil take the hindmost'. And, sadly, even the `winners' in this environment are actually losers because of the personal price they pay in terms of insecurity and lack of meaningful relations, not to mention health side effects.

What I found really useful in the book is the way in which Sinek takes concepts from fields such as psychology and shows how they are relevant to what we experience in the workplace. I found these to be penetrating insights and they lead to many `aha' moments as well as to a change in the way I conduct some of my own programs.

For example, take the Milgram experiments. These are some of the best known - and most shocking - experiments in psychology and the implications are truly horrifying. In the early sixties, shortly after the Adolf Eichmann capture, trial and execution, there was a lively debate on whether Nazi collaborators were simply `following orders' or had a sense of responsibility and ownership for what they did.

Yale professor Stanley Milgram devised a series of experiments in which a volunteer was asked to deliver electric shocks to a subject each time he made an `error' in a lesson. Unbeknownst to the volunteer the subject was actually a confederate of the professor and an actor who affected great pain and suffering as the level of electric shocks increased. In reality there were no shocks and no pain but the volunteer did not know this.

When volunteers demurred from administering painful electric shocks the white gowned Milgram told them in various ways that they were required to continue even when they thought that the shocks they were administering were severely harmful to the subject.

The shocking result was that huge numbers of `normal' persons - readily or with mild trepidation - continued to administer potentially lethal shocks to subjects even as they howled with pain and demanded that they be released from the experiment. And this happened simply because they were told to do so by an `authority figure' with no threats or rewards for doing so.

Obviously this has great implications for why dictatorships form and survive and the debate on this continues to this day.

What Sinek points out is that this same experiment is played out in our companies every day at huge human toll. I had never thought of it in these terms before but parallel is exact. Many `managers' willingly take actions that they know will bring hardship and suffering to others - mass layoffs, reductions in benefits, changes in working conditions etc. - simply because they have been directed to do so. Even worse, we have evolved a business `philosophy' where formal directions are no longer necessary - this is simply the way to do things.

Sinek talks about how to bring the balance back in our workplace so both companies and individuals can thrive side by side in a symbiotic relationship. And he gives lots of examples such as the Barry Wehmiller companies where CEO Bob Chapman is dedicated to `building great people who do extraordinary things.

And Charlie Kim, CEO of Next Jump who implemented a policy of lifetime employment.

I particularly like his comparison of the results achieved by James Sinegal, CEO of Costco and Jack Welch the much touted former CEO of General Electric. Welch's paradigm of pitting executives against each other created a high stress environment and the gains were short-lived and unsustainable.

In contrast Sinegal built a strong `circle of safety' for his people, paid wages which were nearly double those at Walmart and did many things to engender loyalty and trust. Costco employees are loyal and have built it into the second largest retailer in the country and the growth is both balanced and continuing.

This book will make you think differently about the business systems that prevail in our society and also give you a way to make the workplace more humane.

I hope you join the `Truly Human Leadership" bandwagon set rolling by Bob Chapman, CEO of the Barry Wehmiller companies. Be sure to watch his TEDx talk. Google it to get the URL.

65 of 67 people found the following review helpful.

A very different view of management

By Matthew

I previously read "Start With Why" and really enjoyed it. That book helped to completely reframe the way I viewed business and the big picture. I was very excited to get a chance to read this book. Initially, I thought it would give a fuller explaination of how the Marines create greater sensitivity in their leaders. In a way, it did this although actually, the book was much more of a scientific study on the chemistry of management. I think it's interesting how Simon related biological chemicals that we all have to better management. The concept of a Circle of Safety and treating each employee as if you are their second parent is also interesting. I think in particular the end of the book where Simon talks about how the current generation feels entitled to quick success is very enlightening and very true. The ultimate point of the book is that if a leader watches out for their people and commits their whole organization to serve others and each other, everyone wins. It's easier said than done, but it's a very good reminder of the importance of going beyond just chasing financial gain.

123 of 133 people found the following review helpful.

(Re) Stating the Obvious--Interesting Read But Nothing New

By William Corsair

I really tried to give this book a higher rating but just couldn't. While I can't quibble with anything Sinek says, he says nothing that hasn't been said by dozens of other authors. The point of his book: Leaders need to care for others, protect them from harm, provide opportunities for them to grow and develop, create a vision of something to believe in that's larger than themselves, and take an interest--a genuine interest--in the well-being of their followers.

There's a great deal of hand wringing in this book, but almost no "how-to" that can be applied in everyday organizations. He even uses the word "polemic" late in the book as a description of what he's writing. We all know what needs to be done, but very few of us are doing it.

Yes, it was interesting to read about brain chemicals and current brain research. And it was okay to read some of his comparisons between/among companies that see profit as the purpose versus those companies that see profit as a means to greater purpose. The problem is that all of this could have been stated in a pamphlet, rather than a 216-page book. And, just as his TED talk on "Start With Why" offered everything in that book, his 99U video offers everything in this book--in less than 45 minutes.

I recommend lots of books to students in my leadership development classes but, in this case, I'll recommend that the students watch Sinek's videos and save their money.

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