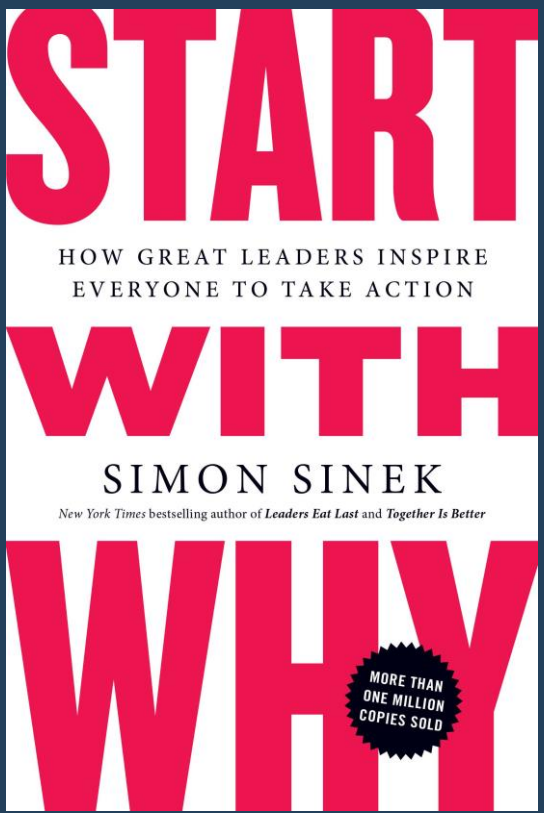

Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action

Year of publication: 2012
Author: Simon Sinek
224 pages
Link for purchase: https://amzn.to/32EAaHw

A global bestseller, the book was originally published in English ("Start With Why") in the year 2009. Since then, it has sold more than one million copies, translated into 36 languages.
In it, the author addresses the reason why some organizations are much more innovative and successful than others, even if they start under similar conditions.
In addition, it offers an innovative approach to motivate and inspire people. Its content is distributed in 6 main parts, developed along the 256 pages of the original version.
In Brazil, the first publication of the book was made in 2012 by Editora Saraiva.

Score

9

10 Aplicability
9 Inspiration
8 Innovation
9 Impact on results
8 Structure

Main ideias of the book

The highlights of the book are:

- Your “why” is your cause, your purpose, and your mission;
- Every really inspiring leader started with “why”;
- Knowing your “why” is essential to building lasting success;
- When you lose track of your “why”, it becomes harder to maintain the growth, loyalty, and inspiration that were central to your initial success.

These ideas are developed throughout the 6 parts of the book. Let's know more about them?

For whom is this book suitable?

The ideas of the work will help anyone who wishes to inspire others and, moreover, feel satisfied and successful in their work.
In addition, it can inspire leaders who have the desire to undertake and generate transformative impact in the world.

Overview of the book

Part 1 - A world that does not start with why

In the first part of the book, Sinek talks about ways to attract customers. He states that most practices involve some kind of manipulation: price, promotion, fear, aspiration, group pressure, and innovation.
However, the author understands that these types of attraction are short-term solutions, which need to be applied constantly, resulting in a continuous cycle of manipulation.
This strategy ends up impacting long-term profits because it does not promote customer loyalty.
Thinking about it, Simon offers an alternative to this practice in the next segment of the book, discussed below.

> *People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it. And what you do simply proves what you believe*

Part 2: An Alternative Perspective

In this part of the book, the author explains one of the most important parts of his approach: the Golden Circle.
It consists of three concentric circles with the word "why" in the center, surrounded by the circle of "how" and the farthest is the "what".

WHAT: describes the activities carried out by the company. Any company in the world knows exactly what it produces. It is the easiest and most noticeable part of the circle.
HOW: it illustrates how the "WHAT" is done. Most companies know how they do what they do. Normally, it is something that differentiates the company in the market, as a proposal of exclusive value, for example.
WHY: this is where the differential is found since most companies can not conceive why they do what they do. The author clarifies that it does not mean making money, according to him, this is a result of his activity. This part of the circle defines your mission, why your business exists, and why it should be important to someone.
Simon shows that inspiring business leaders think of this circle from the inside out, that is, they base their actions and thoughts initially on the "why", then the "how" and ultimately the "what."

Thinking in this way, the company can captivate the loyalty of its consumers, because, according to the author, people do not buy what you do, but why you do it.

Overview: Part 3 - Leaders Need Followers

Following the book, Simon talks about the importance of collaborators. He explains that the best companies hire people who are already motivated and who believe in their "why".

This type of company can inspire its employees, making them more productive and innovative.
The inspiring leaders we mentioned earlier did not change the world by acting alone. They achieved such achievements because other people believed in their "whys" and, from there, they began to spread the ideas and attitudes propagated by these leaders.
However, one must know how to captivate and unite those people who believe in you and your purposes. The author deals with this in the next part of the book.

Part 4 - Joining those who believe

Simon highlights the difference between energy and charisma. A leader who speaks energetically makes people feel excited and motivated to work. However, this feeling does not last very long.
Charisma, on the other hand, is an inherent characteristic of all great leaders. This is because they have a clear perception of their "why", allowing them to believe strongly in a cause or purpose greater than themselves.
The author also explains that a charismatic leader doesn't necessarily need to be energetic. A great example of this is Bill Gates.
His personality is shy and reclusive, but his charisma makes people feel inspired by him and share his great ideal. This makes your employees loyal to your cause.

Part 5 - The biggest challenge is the success

It is common to confuse achievement with success. The author explains that achievement is something tangible and measurable, that is, it is something that you acquire or achieve, as a goal. You get accomplished when you get WHAT you want.
Success, on the other hand, is much more personal and feels like a state of mind. You feel successful when you understand WHY you want to accomplish something.
Our achievements, what we achieve, are as flags that indicate that we are on the right track in the pursuit of success, which is our greatest challenge.

Part 6 - Discover Why

You should have heard that market research is the most important part of the preparation before starting a business. From it, you can identify your consumer audience and build your product according to your niche market.
The author, however, does not agree with this. He believes, of course, that the most important part is to discover and understand his "why". This is a process of discovery, not invention.
According to Simon, you have to look in the opposite direction from the one you are in at the moment. Your "why" is inside you.
Once you have identified this motive, the hardest part is to stay true to it, so the author believes that you yourself are your biggest and best competitor.

> *If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader*

Okay, but how can I apply this in my life?

The main lessons we can draw from this work are:

- Understanding and staying true to your why is essential to sustaining a continuous and lasting success;
- Your decisions should be guided by your primary purpose;
- Keep your why alive within your organization;
- Invest in people who believe in and share your ideas.

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