

# NOW START WITH WHO

Serving Is The New Selling

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JON MORRISON



*Now Start With Who: Serving Is The New Selling*

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## Praise For Now Start With Who

“*Now Start With Who* is a timely reminder that our businesses exist to make our customers’ lives better.”

Chip Wilson, Founder of *lululemon* and author of  
*Little Black Stretchy Pants*

“Jon’s passion for serving people is a breath of fresh air in the business world. His message will encourage your heart, renew your passion and help your team get clear on its mission to help customers.”

Trevor Throness, CEO of *Getting People Right &*  
Author of "*The Power of People Skills*"

“Jon Morrison has helped my chiropractic practice and many others get clear on their messaging. I teach chiropractors about marketing and Jon has been a vital aspect of helping my chiropractors get laser-focused on their marketing message.”

Dr. Kevin Christie, Author of *Doing It Right: Modern Chiropractic Marketing* & Co-Founder of the  
*Chiropractor Success Academy*

“Jon Morrison is a master of reducing confusion. His skills and this book will help you declutter your marketing, which will declutter your website, and your business life. Not only will your marketing become simplified, but your customers will buy more often since they aren’t confused. I can’t recommend him enough.”

Dr. Josh Satterlee. Author of *Clinic/Gym Hybrid Secrets: The Revolutionary Method to Maximize Your Chiropractic License, Have The Clinic of Your Dreams, and Live The Life You Desire!*

“Jon Morrison has so eloquently identified that the crux of any business and any relationship, for that matter, is the ‘Who.’ If we can start with our ‘Who,’ we will easily be able to identify the corresponding ‘Why, What and How.’ This is such a critical book for all organizational leaders!”

Tim Dumas, CEO of *Servus Leadership*

ONE



## Introduction: It's All About People

“ A customer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him. He is not an interruption of our work. He is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider of our business. He is part of it. We are not doing him a favour by serving him. He is doing us a favour by giving us the opportunity to do so.

- Mahatma Gandhi

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic was the most disruptive force that most of us have ever experienced. We will feel its impact for decades to come.

While the virus brought disastrous setbacks to so many areas of life, COVID-19 launched our world ahead by ten years in so many ways. Let me give you an example: If you are in the medical field, pre-pandemic, you already knew something like telehealth was coming. Like the ripples that show up in a glass of water in *Jurassic Park*, we knew something big was coming. The patient experience needed a shake-up. COVID brought that change to the mainstream sooner than anyone could have expected. With telehealth as an accepted tool, if someone needed help, they didn't have to leave the house, drive through traffic, and go from one waiting room to the next only to have a short visit with a hurried doctor. Anyone with a screen and decent wifi could receive that critical first appointment with a doctor from the comfort and convenience of their home. Telehealth is now here to stay. That's what COVID did in healthcare.

There were giant leaps forward in retail as well. In 2019, we all knew e-commerce was the future of retail. We just didn't presume that our grandparents would figure out how to shop for our 2020 Christmas presents on Amazon. Most brick and mortar stores scrambled in the Spring of 2020 to get their products online to avoid going out of business. Out of necessity, COVID-19 brought e-commerce to the masses much quicker than we expected.

Those are just a few examples of how society's evolution was launched ten years ahead by the virus.

What changed for you during the pandemic? We are all a little different. Your customers certainly changed. How did your

business change with them? Many businesses did not survive the pandemic. For many of them, based on how things were going pre-COVID, shutting down was inevitable. What would've happened at some time in the coming decade, COVID accelerated. Some time ago, these struggling companies lost touch with the one essential element they need to survive and thrive in business today: *A commitment to serve people.*

When they lost that, the writing was on the wall. The COVID-19 crisis delivered it quicker than we thought.

Perhaps your business has lost its commitment to serve people. You and your team could use a fresh vision and inspiration for the customers that will fuel your business for decades to come. This book will reconnect you, your team, and your business to the people you may be missing the most right now: *your cherished customers.*

## The One Thing Businesses Must Do

One of the consequences of automating, economizing, and digitizing everything is that we can quickly lose track of why our business exists in the first place.

Every business primarily exists to serve its customers. While many perks come with having a business (the earning of wages, the trips, the tax write-offs, and company golf tournaments), a business exists to make a customer's life better. Too many business leaders and entrepreneurs have forgotten about how important people are. For many of us, it took a global pandemic to

remind us how good it is to have people around - and how much we struggle without them.

Helping people is mission-critical for any company to make money. Reaching more people is critical to sustainable growth. We are calling those people your "Who."

Every business has a Who. Your Whos are the people you love to help, that you're good at helping, and they are the people who are happy to pay you well for it. Others have called them your "ideal client," "customer avatar," or a whole host of other names that consultants have come up with over the years.

Let me show you why you need to prioritize your Whos or risk disruption from a company that does. You'll soon see the benefits of re-centering, putting customers at the core of what you do. In doing so, you'll reach more of them. We've got a lot of case studies of thriving businesses that have done just that.

It's time to do a check for what is pumping the heart of your business. It's time to rediscover your core conviction for helping people. It's time to Start With Who.

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## What A Novel Virus Taught Us About How Much We Need People

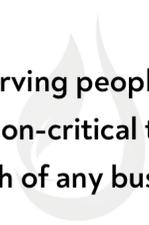
When I started writing this book near the end of 2019, I had no idea what was coming in 2020. Did anybody see 2020 coming?

- There was a toilet paper shortage
- A lot of people died.
- There was a global pandemic
- Businesses that struggled
- We saw massive social unrest
- We endured another excruciating US election
- And everything else that went awry in our lives that memorable calendar year

It's a year full of stories that will be passed on for generations.

We will forever remember the scramble for PPE, the refrigerated mobile morgues parked outside of hospitals, and the plexi-glass everywhere.

While it was a boom year if you worked for Amazon, owned shares of Tesla, or could pivot to e-commerce, it was one of the most challenging seasons we've all had to go through.



**Serving people is  
mission-critical to the  
health of any business.**

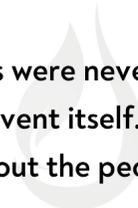
2020 was a truly unique experience because it's something that we, the whole world, experienced together.

Of course, it didn't seem like we were doing it together. We went into lockdown and isolated. We lost our sports, office culture, restaurants, favorite annual conferences, attending church, being moved by concerts, and going to school.

And we lost our minds sometime between the second and third wave.

We noticed an ache build-up in us. Separated from the events that made life fun, we learned that the true joy in all the usual activities was never the events themselves. What made “going out” meaningful was the people with whom we shared the experience.

Just like with these public events and outings, it’s the people that make your business meaningful too.



**Events were never about the event itself. It was about the people.**

Putting people back at the heart of why you do what you do is the driving principle of *Now Start With Who*. I want to show you how critical it is to have your customers at the core of your business strategy.

Connecting with people wasn’t only a problem in 2020. For many of us, it has always been a struggle. It may not be connecting that’s the issue. It’s connecting with the right people we find such a challenge.

## This Is For Those Struggling To Connect With People

It troubles me that most of us go through each day frustrated because we know our best ideas are not getting the attention they deserve. Why is that happening? We have a people problem.

Our ideas are not connecting with the people that need to hear them.

You may have an amazing idea for a business you want to start. Perhaps it is a service or product you want to add. It could be a cause you want to advance. You may have an organization you want to improve or a new process that will increase efficiencies and profits.

No doubt, what you've got inside of you could help many people. But you don't need to be convinced of that. Other people do.

It would serve everyone best if you find a way to effectively transfer that passion from you to others. Imagine if they could share the excitement you feel. Imagine if they could see things as clearly as you do.

The problem is (and we all know it), they don't.

### For Those Struggling To Achieve Their Purpose

We start the book engaging with the ideas of Simon Sinek. He wrote an influential book about the importance of finding your "Why" in life. I appreciate this book and its influence on our culture today. It has inspired millions of people to look for purpose and meaning in life and business. The reality is that not everyone who read *Start With Why* is taking the proper steps to achieve it. They haven't taken any steps at all.

This can be discouraging. To know your Why and not be actively taking the proper steps towards it is to miss the very reason we think we are alive.

In the next chapter, I'll reveal the reasons I see this happening. In the meantime, I will tease out my theory: We don't get our "Why" because we have a Who problem. Put another way, we struggle to achieve our purpose because we can't get people helping us do it. We are missing the people needed to get behind our Why.

Great Whys go unfulfilled because no one else buys into them. Why seekers are missing a strategic element to achieving anything significant, this element will capture the right people's attention and generate a movement when appropriately applied.

Starting With Who provides the strategy to:

- achieve your purpose
- grow a business with your favourite customers
- improve your marketing
- streamline your communication
- clarify your message
- advance your cause
- get the traction your ideas deserve
- increase your satisfaction in life
- get your Why

You're about to learn the importance of finding a specific group of people and helping them win in life. You'll learn to diagnose what is causing them pain so that you become the leader they've been looking for. Our goal will be to help you create marketable

solutions that improve their lives by helping them overcome the problems holding them back.

When you Start With Who, you make a difference on a micro and macro level. The right product, service, course, or new technology can profoundly change a life. That's micro. When one life changes, a whole family can benefit. When families are better, we see transformation in entire communities. When you see that happen, you've made your mark on this planet. That's the macro change for which many of us aspire.

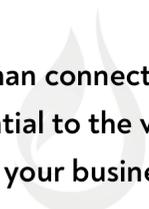
Any kind of real success in life involves impacting people. There are few significant achievements accomplished in history that didn't involve people.

Human connection is essential to the success of your business.

People are not your problem. People are your goal. As we look at reconnecting with customers, we discover just how powerful helping real people can be.

Now let me tell you how a string of lousy dating relationships, a Facebook Group with thousands of chiropractors, and my early days as a Baptist preacher led to the development of why we should Start With Who. It's a principle I'm excited to share with you.

I'm convinced it transforms your life and business.



**Human connection is essential to the vitality of your business.**

## TWO



### You Get Your “Why” When You Start With “Who”

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“ *Look after people, and people look after you.*

– *Sam Walton*

**T**oo many of our friends, family, members, business colleagues and customers feel like they lack purpose in life. I don't blame them for feeling that way. They've been told since they were young that humanity's existence is meaningless. When you're only one in over 7.5 billion people on the Earth, how do you feel special? If we humans are just one of the zillions of other organisms struggling to live out some kind of existence while inhabiting planet Earth, what's the point? What do you do with the discovery that our planet is just one big molten rock circling a giant star that scientists tell us will blow up or burn out one day?

What do you think it does to someone to hear messages that their existence has no meaning in the big picture? Intelligent people figure out quickly that if life has no meaning in the big picture, neither does it matter in the small one.

If we humans are no different from dirt, grass, or animals, what's the point of trying to make something or do something with our lives? Why spend our finite time at work trying to serve others and make a living?

We've been told this for a long time. It has left many discouraged, and others have given up on life altogether. We have a poverty of purpose in our world today.

### Deep Down, We All Know Better

Despite what we may have been told in our school textbooks, we all know that there's something special about people.

Imagine you are driving down some highway road and out of nowhere you see up ahead of you a tree, a rock and a baby. Your vehicle has too much momentum to come to a complete stop, but you still have enough time to react and avoid hitting one of them.

Which do you choose?

You pick the baby every time. That's because sane people intuitively know that there is something special about people. People are different than any other inhabitant on planet Earth.

They are different than the rocks and the plants. People are different from the animal kingdom. While you could still be horrified or traumatized if you were to hit a rodent or even one of the higher mammals, if you hit a human being with your vehicle you would be completely devastated (and face legal repercussions because our entire justice system is set up with the belief that people are different).

The first principles in this book are about growing your business by getting your views of people right. Human beings are not a resource to consume. They are not a means for us to get what we want. People are not a rung on the corporate ladder we step on to advance. People lie at the heart of every business. A body could never function without a heart. A business without people wouldn't be alive either.

## Human Beings And The Need For A "Why"

Thankfully, millions of people have rejected the idea that their life is meaningless. Many people have Simon Sinek's work to thank for their new-found sense of purpose. Sinek's message gave a generation of otherwise hopeless people the belief that their life could serve a bigger cause. Sinek calls it a "Why". A Why is the goal that makes you excited to get out of bed each morning. It's the driver that keeps you going; keeps you reaching for a life of significance.

Since the 2009 release of Simon Sinek's *Start With Why*, business leaders, entrepreneurs, entire companies, and organizations of all sizes have scrambled to figure out their "Why." All around

the world, they've huddled around board room tables or taken four-day naval-gazing retreats to find their "Why."

Several of my friends confessed to losing sleep, trying to figure out their own Why. Thankfully, many of them finally found it.

Discovering your purpose is a powerful milestone in life and business. Knowing your Why, however, doesn't get you across the chasm. It just opens your eyes to a new starting point.

Now the real challenge comes. I fear too many people who get inspired by starting with Why never get to the other side called "Win."

That's what I noticed when researching this book. I talked to colleagues, clients, and other business leaders about their Why. When I asked how they figured it out, they lit up like a Christmas tree. Everyone loves to discuss their Why. If you ever run out of things to say at a business networking event, just drop Simon Sinek's name and you'll have a whole crowd around you in minutes. When I asked businesses how they were *applying* what they learned from Sinek, their countenance changed. Suffice it to say; they were ashamed that they weren't where they should be.

Here's what I observed in my survey: Most fans of Simon Sinek and the "Start With Why" approach struggle with applying the material. It turns out that achieving one's Why is no easy endeavor. We all start with the best of intentions. It's just that our follow-through is lacking. Time passes, and we don't get any further ahead, bridging the gap between "Why" and "Win."

There's a reason for this. It took me several years to diagnose the problem and prescribe the solution.

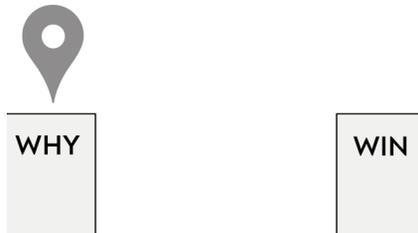
## The Chasm

As I mentioned above, there exists a vast chasm between *knowing* your purpose and *actually achieving it*. How do you know if you're one of the few who figure out the way to bridge the distance between inspiration and transformation?

We are going to learn the process how to go from “This is an inspiring vision for my life and business...” to the thrill of arriving on the other side. I'm calling this “winning”.

Picture two cliffs on each side of a span. On the one side of the cliff there are three giant letters. “W”, “H”, and “Y”. “Why” is the driver for what motivates you to do what you do each day.

On the other side are the letters: “W”, “I”, “N”. “Win” means that you've achieved what you started out to do. You arrived. You crossed the chasm. You finished the journey, accomplishing what you sought out to do.



## Now Start With Who

The problem is that far too many people are comfortable on the “Why” side and never leave. They know their Why but years pass and they don’t get anywhere closer to the other side. Without the right bridge, they fall into the abyss of obscurity. Then they climb out and try again. But with no bridge built, it’s the same result.

With time, those letters “W-H-Y” fade. As discouragement sets in, the Why moves to the other side. By this point, getting to the Why with the Win seems unattainable. This leaves you more discouraged and hopeless than you were before you knew what a Why even was.



## Why People Don't Win

Many people don’t achieve their Why because the Start With Why approach doesn’t adequately equip us to make the jump from inspiration to application.

Let me use one glaring example I resonate with the most. In chapter five of the best-selling book, *Start With Why*, Simon Sinek tells the story of a man named “Brad” who struggled to win the heart of a girl he fancied. In Sinek’s account, Brad

messed up his first impression with that ever important first date. We know from how Sinek described the date that Brad loved bragging about himself. It's not hard to picture the situation. We've all met someone like this. Brad is the kind of guy who loves talking about his ideas, his dreams, his awards, his job, and anything else he wants to bring attention to in order to reveal how great he is. It's not that he loves talking about those things - it's that he *only* talks about them. Why did Brad struggle on this date and all his other dates? There are a few ideas to consider. Here's how Simon Sinek diagnoses the problem.

On their only date, Sinek recalls how Brad mistakenly only offered this potential suitor *the pure facts about his life*. According to Sinek, Brad mistakenly spoke about his wealth, his fame, and his many exotic experiences as data point. To Sinek, Brad's goal was purely the transformation of information to another. It was about numbers and facts. Sinek argues that if only Brad had offered the compelling "Why" around the information, he would have had more success in winning over the girl. As I read Sinek's advice, I became convinced that the best-selling author and most-viewed TED speaker's suggestion wouldn't work either.

Here is the script proposed by Sinek taken directly from *Start With Why*. This is what Sinek recommends Brad *should have* expressed to the girl on their first date. Note that the information/data is still all there, but Sinek has flowered it up a bit:

“ ‘Do you know what I love about my life?’ he starts this time, ‘I get to wake up every day to do

*something I love. I get to inspire people to do the things that inspire them. It's the most wonderful thing in the world. In fact, the best part is trying to figure out all the different ways I can do that.*

*It is amazing. And believe it or not, I've been able to make a lot of money from it. I bought a big house and a nice car. I get to meet lots of famous people and I get to be on TV all the time, which is fun because I'm good looking. I'm very lucky that I'm doing something that I love, I've actually been able to do pretty well because of it.'*<sup>1</sup>

Sinek's advice is that instead of just flat out saying, "I'm a big deal," Brad should disguise it with some humble bragging. Sinek's goal for Brad is to list how great he is and veil it with statements about beliefs and values (what will be called the "Why").

Here's a better approach for guys like Brad, who can't wait to talk about how great they are on a first date:

*Don't do it.*

Here's the truth: Other people don't care about how big of a deal you think you are. I know that's tough to hear for some. But it's an insight that will help you make the kind of connections you crave with people.

We shall soon see that what's true in dating is true in business.

One of the reasons we get stuck at “Why” is because we have an overinflated sense of self-importance. We think everyone should be impressed by our “Why”. But they’re not. We discuss the reasons for this in detail later.

Here’s a thought for impressing people: What if Brad didn’t start by talking about Brad at all? What if Brad asked questions instead of offering information? I argue that Brad would have a lot more success on dates if he took a genuine interest in the person sitting across from him, rather than the *Humble-Brag-With-My-Why* technique.

To all the people like Brad, who have honest intentions to achieve something important but haven’t been able to get others to buy-in, I offer you a better way. I know it because I’ve lived it.

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## I Was Brad. Then I Learned There’s A Better Way

I can hear a disaster like Brad’s and Sinek’s dating strategy coming from miles away. For years, friends and family watched me try to find love like one observes an auto accident - you witness it happening, you cringe, and yet you can’t stop staring. Looking back, I see the glaring flaw in my approach to dating. Let me lay out my old methodology for you. You’ll soon see why it never worked.

First, I would meet a nice girl and take her out for coffee—nothing out of line so far, I’d say.

Next, I would work hard to impress the date by dropping my many “Whys” that I’ve accumulated in my life. I was passionate about my many Whys for sure. Like:

- *Why* I love sports (“I like to stay active. That reminds me, did you know I played competitive hockey growing up?”)
- *Why* I’m important (“Let me tell you about some sort-of-famous people I’ve met...”)
- *Why* I’m interesting (“I’ve traveled to some very exotic places...”)
- *Why* I’m one of the good guys (“Here are some social issues I’m passionate about because it’s cool to be in to things like this these days...”)

Do you see a flaw in this approach to winning someone’s affections?

You could almost hear my poor dates thinking out loud, “He is passionate for sure. He is passionate *about himself*.” The girls would likely return to their friends and say,

“ You know, he did pay for the coffee but...I’m just not sure I’d love to spend the rest of my life hearing all about his *Why*.

### My Strategy That Failed Miserably

With wisdom and enough hindsight, I see that endlessly talking about my “Why” led to a string of broken relationships. It was

always about me. That approach didn't work. Helping others not make the same mistake is what inspired this book. After reading chapter five of *Start With Why*, I had a burning passion for challenging Simon Sinek's ideas and offering an alternative way forward for his fans. I thought maybe my experience could help someone avoid the pain I went through.

Those conversations ended up as the book you are holding today. Thankfully, I figured out a better way to capture someone's attention.

I'll share with you the story of how I managed to get it right. I'll show you how when you change your focus from your Why to your Who; it will help you achieve your dreams and goals. I've seen it happen in the business right after seeing it work in my most important relationship.

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## The Strategy of Who That Landed Me the One

In my early thirties, I was able to redeem my years of bad dating experiences. A friend introduced me to a girl named Hayley. She was both beautiful and intelligent - a great start. Right from the outset, I was determined to get a different outcome than the brokenness I was leaving in the past. I didn't want to screw up. I started by committing in meeting number one to shutting up and taking a genuine interest in Hayley's life.

As part of my new approach, I began collecting some information on her. Many would call this "due diligence." Some might

call it creepy. Whatever you want to call it, it worked because it got me away from only thinking about myself.

On our first date, I learned about her budding career as a teacher. That was my in to start a string of questions about her passions in life. I realized she loved teaching children. She mentioned it was an excellent career for raising a family. We had plenty to talk about as the time flew by. The two of us aligned on the idea that strong families and fantastic teachers are pillars of a great society. We had so much more to talk about. As time went on that night, our conversation switched to discussing the next date. The plan was working.

For the next date, I started asking about her parents, siblings, extended family, nieces, friends, neighbors, and anybody she ever knew. Her answers sparked my curiosity and led to more questions. I wanted to learn as much about Hayley as I could. I took many mental notes. Later I would transfer these onto an ongoing note I kept on my phone.

The third date went smoothly, and by the time we went on our fourth date, my boldness was at an all-time high.

With sheer boldness, I summoned the courage to ask one night, “Hayley, what’s your favorite food?” She said, “Lasagna.” Wanting to add layers to my ever-growing list of facts about her, I asked a prodding follow-up question:

“What do you like about lasagna?”

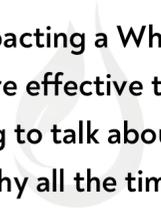
As it turns out, she appreciated the meat to cheese to noodle ratio the most.

Later she confessed my question went too far and made me appear “weird.” Point taken. I justified it knowing I was compiling an impressive database of information. Sure, one *could* interpret this as weird. But if she found out at the right time, it could also be seen as a very romantic gesture. Relationships are risky like that.

One day I was reading through my list and realized that this was the girl for me. In the process, I also realized that if I spent my life making all Hayley’s now well-documented dreams a reality, I could achieve my goals of leading a happy family as well. Not long after, I decided that I would spend my life helping her experience the life she always wanted.

Today, we are happily married with three beautiful girls. They keep us busy and laughing all the time. Often, at the end of a long but rewarding day, we remark to each other that while it’s never easy, we are living out our dream, one day at a time. As mentioned, this new approach to dating was a catalyst for the “Start With Who” business strategy I will lay out in this book.

While we’ve been putting together a great love story, I can see that my new methodology of winning someone over was a brilliant sales strategy.



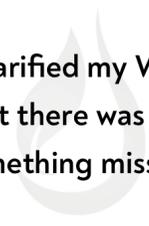
**Impacting a Who is  
more effective than  
trying to talk about my  
Why all the time.**

## Start With Why...Then Start Again With Who

In *Start With Why*, Sinek effectively convinces his readers that every person, organization, or company needs a deep-seated purpose. The Why is their cause or belief that they are working to achieve. A “Why” could also be a problem in the world they are working to solve.

For those who struggled to find their “Why,” Sinek co-wrote a follow-up book titled, *Find Your Why: A Practical Guide For Discovering Purpose For You And Your Team*<sup>2</sup>.

This accompanying book helped readers look to their passions, experiences, struggles, etc., to tease out some themes that could lead to a “Why” statement.



**I clarified my Why.  
But there was still  
something missing.**

Once the assigned exercise is complete, anyone should know why they’re motivated as they are.

I excitedly read the book and did the prescribed exercises. I clarified my Why. But I still felt something was missing.

People nodded their heads politely when I told them about my Why. However, a polite agreement doesn’t mean they would come along for the journey to help me achieve it. My pitches fell flat. I didn’t sell books as I wanted. My talks didn’t land like I thought they should have.

It didn't take long before realizing that "Start With Why" and "Find Your Why" needed a follow-up. I couldn't be the only one that felt this way.

I did a quick Google search to see if anyone else was writing in line with my discontent about the "Start With Why" phenomenon. I found that Ken Krogue, in a post for Forbes<sup>3</sup>, made an argument that when it comes to achieving significant sales, finding the *right person* was more important than talking about your Why. Krogue was the first person (and one of the only ones) on the Internet that I saw asking the question,

*"Why not start with Who instead?"*

I'm not convinced that Krogue had it right, either. He argues that getting your Who right always precedes achieving your Why. The logical outworking of his argument is:

*First, find people with whom you connect. Next, discover your purpose as you help them.*

This is where I disagree with Krogue. I'm with Sinek on this one that our Why is foundational to the reason we show up and work up each day. Once we have our Why clear, *then* we find the people that we can help. Without a Why leading us, we are in danger of becoming what Zig Ziglar called a "wandering generality."<sup>4</sup> Wandering Generalities are the people who aspire to become a celebrity by trying to reach everyone. They may get large followings but a cursory survey of their lack of impact reveal their work to be a mile wide and an inch deep. They are a mile wide and an inch deep.

Instead, Ziglar encouraged leaders to become a "meaningful specific." This is where you become something special to an intentional group of people. I prefer this approach. I have never wanted to be a celebrity, but I have always known that I wanted to impact a multitude of lives.

### Is Liking People Just For Extroverts?

Helping people has always been the fuel that drives me as a professional. This book's message - that recovering a passion for serving and helping people, does not surprise my friends and family who saw me grow up. In school, I was terrible with math and science. I barely passed the bare minimum. It was the same experience while working through my MBA. I have always struggled with accounting and finance classes. On the other hand, I loved any learning that involved people. I loved studying the social sciences (psychology, sociology), playing team sports, and sharing ideas with friends.

Does that mean I'm an extrovert? Not at all. Even those close to me mistake my love for people for extroversion. Believe me, it's not being an extrovert that fuels my love for people. It's even insulting to introverts to suggest that the way they recharge alone means they don't like people. Those close to me are often surprised to learn that I too need significant amounts of time alone to feel like a healthy contributor to society. Rather, my passion for people comes from my beliefs about the nature of humanity. Additionally, I've seen in history and from my mentors that a career devoted to serving people is the path to a life of joy and significance.

## Where I Learned About Loving People

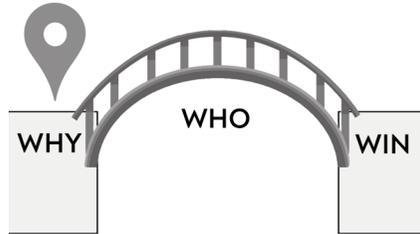
For years, I cut my vocational teeth by serving in a local church. It is leading in a church where I sharpened my skills in how to create a culture of service. The church is the place where we need to learn how to love people better. As one given the mantle of “leader”, I knew I needed to model it myself. But I couldn't personally care for everyone myself. When you're the pastor of a large church, that's a crisis of limitation. You can't be there to care for everyone with the attention they all deserve. As a leader, however, you can work hard to create an organization and culture where everyone feels valued and cares for each other. When a church is full of people who care for others, it can be a dynamic presence in their community.

But love doesn't always come naturally for any organization. Creating an organization like this starts with developing strategies around the philosophical beliefs and values that *people are worth caring for*. Many of us know this intrinsically. Do we have anything in our stated values about why people matter?

The business world has a few things to learn about how critical people are to its existence (and growth). Today, I have transferred my focus to serving entrepreneurs and business leaders. I help them restore a passion for serving humanity. When they do this, their lives, their business and their communities at large are rewarded.

If you're struggling to make the jump from “Why” to “Win”, you may have a people problem. You will appreciate the challenge coming in the pages that follow. If you know you are

destined for more impact than you are currently making, this book is for you.



In order to get across the Why to Win chasm, you need a bridge. Serving other people is how you are going to get across. Together we will see that there are very intentional steps to take to get to where you want to go. You'll be inspired by some amazing business leaders who took those very steps en route to winning their story.

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### It's Tough To Achieve Your Why

After my time as a pastor, I began my second career as a marketing consultant. I took my passion for people and applied it to growing businesses.

I realized that many companies have great Why's, but that doesn't guarantee sales, profits, and growth - the things they need to scale their Why.

Let's go back to Brad, the struggling bachelor in Simon Sinek's example. Imagine Brad applied his dating strategy to his company's sales and marketing. It still wouldn't work. We all know why.

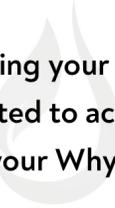
The problem is that leading with and sharing your "Why" does not capture attention in our noisy world.

In dating and business, human psychology is similar: *People don't care about you as much as you care about yourself.*

Of course, our moms care about our Why. Our spouses pretend to care about our Why. But the real people we need to reach in business, the ones who pay our bills and help us achieve our goals - they really don't care to hear about our Why.

I'm not alluding to mean people. Even the kindest, most benevolent saints out there aren't thinking about us like we think they should. They've got enough to think about already. They're consumed by trying to figure out their own *Whys*. They've got busy lives. They are lives full of problems that they're working hard to solve to make their stories work out for them.<sup>5</sup>

I understand how frustrating it can be to be passionate about your purpose and yet struggle to get others on board.



**Impacting your Who is  
connected to achieving  
your Why.**

If you profoundly impact what I'm calling your "Who," then you can achieve your Why.

When it comes to your business, embracing the *Why* is a major component to success. But you'll never get your *Why* unless you are wholly devoted to serving a *Who*.

Both *Why* and *Who* matter but for different reasons.

### Climb The Mountain, Discover Your *Why*, Come Home, And Then Start With *Who*

Some people think I'm kicking off this book by throwing shade on Simon Sinek. That's not the case at all. There's nothing wrong with healthy disagreement. Our culture needs to learn how to disagree respectfully. I think everyone should embrace the "Start With *Why*" framework for which Sinek is famous. We could all benefit from taking the time to figure out our *Why*. I highly encourage it.

You could schedule a quest to find your *Why*. Climb a mountain to get inspired. Don't return until you figure out *why* you exist (your purpose, mission, values, etc. - all the things that Sinek recommends). Once you get it, descend the mountain. You will feel inspired and ready to make an impact. Now you know your purpose. Now it's the time to direct your energy to achieve it.

Now it's time to get to work and Start With *Who*.

When you return, don't assume people will want to hear about what you learned while you were gone. None of us were up there with you. We didn't share your mountaintop experience.

We've been stuck in the valley, and trying to make it down here is the only thing on our minds.

## Why People Don't Listen To Us

Your Why is personal.

Remember when you came back from that exciting trip and quickly became discouraged when the people you talked to seem bored and disinterested after a few minutes of telling your stories? Except for those closest to us, most people don't care, nor do they have time to hear about everything we've seen or done. Strangers, acquaintances, and Uber drivers may politely give us a couple of minutes of their time.

I recall the year I spent studying at the University of Oxford. I spent a year sitting under some of the best minds, engaging in life-changing conversations, and being a part of stories that we could share for hours. When I got home, much to my surprise, no one seemed as interested in my time there as I was. That year, I visited Auschwitz, walked around Stonehenge, participated in the search for a lost city in a Middle Eastern archeological dig, and won a prestigious award for my Varsity Match performance against the University of Cambridge in ice hockey.

When I came home, I thought I'd have lineups of people waiting to talk about what they had seen me do on social media. They didn't. Family members had already heard the stories on the phone. Old friends wanted to spend the time laughing about the shared memories we had. New friends wanted to create new memories. I couldn't get into it with strangers. Unless it's about

drama in the royal family, most North Americans can't be bothered with what's going on in the UK (and I understand that).

I'd say most people I talk to regularly have no idea about my experiences in England. While I'm always happy to share if asked, I know people have their own stories of adventure, struggle, and achievement.

The truth is that their ambivalence doesn't bother me one bit. I don't have the time to listen to their' experiences either. Not having time to listen to each other is a symptom of a bigger problem outside the scope of this book.

We're all busy trying to make the most of today. That's our focus.

Assuming that you're going to have ample opportunities to share your "Why" is setting yourself up for disappointment. Don't expect to come down from your quest hoping to show up to sold-out theatres full of people waiting to hear about why you're here.

The same principle applies to your business. I want to show you the trouble with trying to do marketing like people try to impress others - by just talking about yourself.

## How to Sell a Tide Pen

What happens when you try to market your product, service, or idea and lead with your "Why"?

Let's look at the difference between *Starting With Why* vs. *Starting With Who* as it pertains to how you might pitch a product.

Imagine for a moment that you work in the marketing department for the detergent giant. Your team is trying to sell their new "detergent in a pen" product. In this imaginary scenario, you're knee-deep in a routine marketing meeting. Seeking a new marketing campaign for a new year, the top thinkers all chime in to offer a slant of the company's "Why." They get together with you and your team in a boardroom and start brainstorming ideas.

The chair of the meeting puts a question before the group,

“ Okay, everyone, we have been leading this industry for years. We need a fresh message that will take this company into the future. What can we say to convince the masses to choose Tide over our competitors?

One person puts their hand up: "Remember how we were one of the first detergents on the market designed to fight stains. Let's tell people that *we are innovators.*"

There is agreement around the room as heads nod.

Another adds, "Let's tell our story. We should film a commercial about how we've been perfecting our stain-fighting detergent for sixty years now. *We have proven expertise in stain removal.*"

The executives all love it. There is a clear consensus while the room starts to bubble with excitement.

Another adds, “And as far as I know, no one here has ever been to jail. That means (motioning to write letters in the sky) *‘We can be trusted.’*”

Thinking they are really onto something, another partner stands up and shouts, “*And we are the number one brand recommended by washing machine companies!*”

The room erupts in chanting and whisks the VP of Marketing out in a hero’s parade to celebrate over drinks.

“We’re number one! We’re number one!” can be heard echoing through the office as they leave.

The scribe taking notes is left in the room alone, thinking that this message doesn’t resonate with her. Regardless, she pens her summary and forwards it to the advertising department for next year’s campaign with a grimace:

“ Buy our pen because we are the number one, innovative, and trustworthy detergent company recommended by washing machine companies... and we are very proud of it.

Who is inspired by this campaign? It’s a tired tactic that takes zero creativity and total narcissism. It’s the same tactic used by the guy on the first date who only wants to talk about how amazing he is.

This example identifies one of the significant flaws of starting with "Why." People get put off by another company talking about themselves. The problem with this campaign is that it is all about them. There's nothing about what Tide does for the benefit of the consumer.

What if, hypothetically, *I* was their target market? Let's examine how starting with Who can produce different results.

### One Of My Nightmares

Starting instead with Who considers first the intended audience. It captures *their* attention by highlighting a specific problem the audience is struggling to overcome.

If I'm the targeted customer of this company (their Who), here's a better way to capture my attention. I don't care about their awards or years of service. I care about keeping my shirts clean.

It's the morning of the big presentation. I have spent hours researching and going through every detail of my upcoming talk. I have read it out loud to myself in front of the mirror multiple times. While I get great reactions from the audience in the mirror, the talk remains unproven to real-life audiences.

I say "goodbye" to my wife and kids, pulling out of the driveway like a soldier going into battle. In a few minutes, I'll be going through the drive-thru of my coffee shop to get another dose of liquid inspiration. My favorite coffee is now riding shotgun with me. Together, we are off to conquer the world.

As I navigate the route and weave through traffic, I feel confident that I have selected the right sports coat (casual but still professional) with a matching shirt. I bring no spare shirt. Why would I? You can't have two favorite shirts. Besides, what could go wrong? I am listening to my favorite pump-up music, take a sip, and tragedy hits. My mouth has failed to make the perfect connection with the lid opening.

I've spilled my coffee. It's not all the coffee. A few drips. But that's enough to stand out for sure.

In a moment, my confidence has vanquished. For the rest of the day, I'll be convinced that *everyone* is noticing and focusing on the coffee spots on my shirt.

*My swagger is gone.*

Giving the presentation stressed me out enough. Now I have stains that not even my jacket will cover. My anxiety level has just maxed out.

What would ease the stress?

There exists a pen that discharges laundry detergent instead of conventional ink!

This pinnacle of human innovation assures me that no matter what substance may hit my shirt, I could get it off with that magical, patented, translucent fluid.

I keep one of those pens in my car in an unconventional act of wisdom. I have lived through this nightmare and wish not to

repeat it. I should keep two around because one in the laptop bag never hurts either.

The guys in that marketing meeting should've directed their campaign away from themselves. They could have targeted coffee-loving, favorite-shirt-wearing business people who desire to drink their coffee with boldness.

Who doesn't face the threat of a coffee stain every morning commute? Who couldn't benefit from the ease of knowing that any stain is no match for the power of a disaster-erasing pen?

By turning their eyes and focusing on this kind of situation, they would get our attention. If you work for Tide and are reading this, you can have that one for free.

That's the power of a compelling narrative rather than just talking about yourself.

In summary, what's the difference between the above two approaches when selling a stain-removing pen? There's a complete difference in perspective with the hero of the stories: It's about *Why vs. Who*. The first story focused on the company's Why. They were the focus, and nobody cared. The second looked at the transformation the product could offer a customer by casting *the consumer* as their message's focus.

That, to me, is a much more effective approach. If you ever find yourself marketing a stain-removing pen, you can have that one for free.

## Starting With Who Is About Identifying Problems And Then Showing How You Can Help Solve Them

What if, in your journey to spread *your* ideas, you got up each day and instead of shouting, “Look at me! Listen to my story! See how great I am!” you thought:

*“Who am I helping win today?”*

This kind of message works. It’s how you create raving fans of your brand.

It is the most effective way to present your ideas, so they impact the marketplace, and you make the income you are looking for - you start with **Who**.

Maybe you have an idea that you want other people to buy into, grow a business, or advance a cause close to your heart.



**“Who am I helping win  
their story today?”**

If this is the case, you already know what your **Why** is. The challenge then becomes achieving it. Could it be possible to achieve your **Why**, you will have to be open to the idea of discovering and focusing on your **Who**? To do this, we need to take our eyes off ourselves, maybe even swallow some pride and keep our mouths shut. In some cases, this won’t be easy. Serving your **Who** is the only way to make your **Why** a reality.

## How To Get Others To Buy-In To Your Ideas

Here's what we know about busy consumers today: They only listen when there is something of benefit to them. If they listen, they are only being cordial and waiting for the part where they get some advantage.

If you read *Start With Why*, you would think that every business transaction is an exchange of core values. Simon Sinek argues that we should only give our money to companies with whom we agree on fundamental core values.

When is the last time you said to yourself before making a purchase, "Before I buy this, I want to make sure I agree with this company's core values."?

Granted, a boycott may happen from time to time when a company achieves notoriety, making the news because of a newsworthy indiscretion. You have every right to boycott. But here I'm talking about the bulk of your consumer decisions. Do you know the Why of the company that made your vacuum cleaner, breakfast cereal, or the car you drive?

Not likely.

You bought those things for what they do for you. They looked good, were on sale, or made you feel good.

## Why People Buy Stuff

People buy products and services because it solves a problem for them. In most cases, it's not because the manufacturer or supplier has a resonating core value.

Simon Sinek reiterates this familiar chorus throughout *Start With Why*,

“ People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it.

I don't think that's true.

Sinek's suggestion that people only buy your Why is overstepping. It's giving people too much credit for what motivates their decisions. It's assuming we're all taking the time to do something that we all know we don't have time to do.

Here's my confession: I don't have a clue what the core values are for the vast majority of the vendors I purchase products and services from either personally or to run my business.

The last time I bought a power tool, my first thought was not to go to Home Depot's website and read their "About" page and see what the company's mission statement was.

I just needed a drill. That's it. I didn't need a cultural manifesto.

I believe people buy products and services because it solves a problem for them, not because the manufacturer or supplier has

a resonating core value.

There is one thing that motivates consumers. It comes from business guru, Michael Hyatt. Hyatt teaches that we consumers are tuned into the radio station *W.I.I.F.M* (That is, “*What’s in It for Me?*”). According to Hyatt, we make purchases because:

1. We think something solves a problem for us.
2. It makes our life easier.
3. It helps us to become better people.
4. It satisfies an inner desire to be identified in a particular way.

### It’s Not Your Why; It’s Me

I make purchases of products and services because they promise to help me overcome something I am facing.

A company’s *Why* almost never crosses my mind. Neither when I am logging on to an e-commerce site or walking around a brick-and-mortar store. I buy things not because I’m a benevolent consumer trying to save the world and help a CEO achieve their *Why*. I make purchases because what they’re offering helps me get what I need to win that day.

As a consumer, the big question that I need to have answered is: *did the brand connect with me so that I knew they would solve a problem I was facing?*

Do you think people buy Apple products because they love Apple’s *Why* and want to help them become the most prom-

inent company globally? For the hardcore ones, that's true. These are the people who line up for a week before a new phone is released. But for the vast majority of iPhone users, my guess is "No." Most iPhone users haven't even read the "Terms and Conditions" they've signed, never mind Apple's mission or vision statement.

Do you know the mission, vision, or values of what drives Apple Inc.? If you don't, it's ok. Most people don't. Most of us buy Apple products because of what these products do for us.

Apple is a user-friendly technology that enables tech-savvy millennials, soccer moms, kids, and grandparents to leverage technology's power.

Apple has done a brilliant job of building a community and tribe that enjoys sparking conversations about their purchases and experiences. If you have a couple of free hours, go to any coffee shop at any hour of the day and start looking around. Ask all the people with the glowing Apples on their laptops a question about their beloved Apple product. They shut down whatever they were doing and tell you all about it. This is the validation they have been craving all day! They love to expound on how excellent their own tech choices are.

Note that it's not the Why they rave about Apple. It's all about what Apple does for them. That's why they bought the product. And then, next launch next year, they'll come running back for that same rush again. 1

Apple may be Sinek's poster child for doing "Why" well. I argue that without appealing to their Who, Apple would have never

accumulated its cult-like millions of happy customers.

I am looking forward to the new iPhone - whenever it comes, whatever it looks like — I'll be ready.

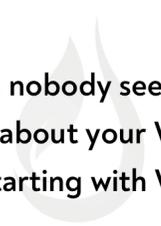
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## Now Shift from Why to Who

Suppose you want to get from “Why” to “Win” you absolutely must Start With Who to get you there. Ideas spread, connections get made, and influence grows when we get over ourselves and focus on serving the people we're trying to reach.

In Dale Carnegie's classic book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*<sup>6</sup>, one of the primary principles Carnegie shares is that to win people over, you must see things from another's point of view. In other words, knowing your Who is imperative because if you don't know or understand your Who, you will advertise, market, and communicate from your Why and perspective.

The late Carnegie further expounds the value of Who by encouraging the reader to appeal to the other person's inner desires and wants. By adopting this approach, convincing someone your product or service is in their best interest becomes much more manageable.



**When nobody seems to care about your Why, try starting with Who.**

If you're frustrated because nobody seems to care about your Why, it's now time to rethink your approach to people. We could all learn a lesson in loving people again. That's the next step towards winning your Why.

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1. Sinek, Simon. *Start With Why* (Penguin Books, 2009). p 77
2. Sinek, Simon, Docker, Peter, & Mead, David. *Find Your Why: A Practical Guide For Discovering Purpose For You And Your Team* (Harlow, Eng). Penguin Books, 2017.
3. See Simon Sinek Says 'Start With Why,' But Sales Experts Disagree" Ken Krogue. Full article: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kenkrogue/2015/07/06/simon-sinek-says-start-with-why-but-sales-experts-disagree/#6631274b4b82>
4. See <https://www.ziglar.com/quotes/meaningful-specific>. Accessed April 5, 2021.
5. For a powerful treatment of this idea, I recommend the book, *Building A StoryBrand* by Don Miller. (HarperCollins Leadership, 2017).
6. Carnegie, Dale, *How To Win Friends and Influence People*. New York:Simon & Schuster, 2009.

## THREE



### Love People And Help Them Win

“ *Get closer than ever to your customers. So close that you tell them what they need before they realize it themselves.*

*- Steve Jobs*

**H**ow far would you go to help one of your customers? This example of customer service sets the bar high for the rest of us. I didn't have to go further than my favorite hot dog vendor in town to meet the hero of this story.

It's a heart-warming story of how far a hot dog vendor would go to love a customer. Andrew "Skully" White is the owner of Lully's Food Experience. It's a gourmet hot dog stand in a Cana-

dian Tire parking lot in Abbotsford, B.C. It's also happens to be my favorite hot dog joint in town.

For three years, Tim Hiscock was a regular customer of Lully's. Hiscock and White never knew each other's first names, but they still bonded over the love of good food and sports.

That relationship nearly came to a screeching halt when Tim Hiscock's kidneys were nearing complete failure, a complication of living with Type 1 diabetes. Hiscock had recently taken a turn for the worse. The doctors prescribed a strict diet and drastic measures to be taken for him to survive. Hiscock's wife went to Skully, explained his kidney condition, and pleaded with the hotdog vendor to stop selling her husband his weekly hotdog.

"We told him that we just found out that Tim needed a new kidney," Hiscock's wife told a reporter in an interview. "Skully asked what was involved in donating a kidney. We told him the donor had to have a matching blood type. He [Skully] quickly threw in, 'If I'm a match, you can have mine.'"

"I knew you could live off of one, and I asked him, what's the criteria?" Skully commented when asked.

It turned out the pair was a blood match, and White committed to the transplant within days.

"It's a cool journey. For me to be able to yank something out of me while I'm alive and stick it into him? And it works. It's the coolest," he said.

"If you've got two healthy kidneys, give one up and save somebody," White said. It was the most amazing feeling in the world that I could do this for him."<sup>1</sup>

In another article, Skully White was asked by a reporter why he'd donate a kidney to a customer whose name he didn't even know. His response was indicative of someone who had a love for humanity:

"Why not?"<sup>2</sup>

I get the sense that if Skully had six kidneys, he would have given them all.

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## For The Love Of Customers (And Humanity)

I'm not asking that we take Skully's lead and offer a kidney to our top customers. I'm not even asking that you would be *willing* to give a kidney to a customer if you had to. In this chapter, I'm only asking that you care about the essential people for your business, your customers. That means that if they ever experience health issues, at least send flowers.

Many businesses have lost their love for humanity. This lack of love is reflected in poor care of their customers. We've all experienced the disappointment of a business that didn't go the extra mile for us. How do you avoid doing it to your customers?

Many businesses start with compassion for the customers and their problems. Small companies can go above and beyond to

offer rockstar service. Under relentless pressure to keep the machine profitable, little compromises happen along the way. These include:

- produce quick profits at the expense of quality
- automate systems at the expense of customer service
- hit their goals to earn promotions
- appease shareholders as if it was the only thing that mattered

Customer care suffers when businesses work so hard to increase short term profits that they compromise product quality, embrace sleazy sales tactics, trim services, and stack on more unexpected fees to customers. In exchange for a quick win, the customer pays for it. This may work for the annual report. However, over time the company that relentlessly reduces value and squeezes more money out of their customers is doomed.

The commitment to add profit by adding value is a core conviction that you can't create by simply writing it on the office wall or posting it on your website. It comes from your driving beliefs about the mandate to serve other human beings.

If you don't get this right, your brand will suffer if it's not already. The modern consumer comes with built-in Tupperware detectors - they can smell plastic from a mile away. Because of this, every company needs the right mindset and care for other human beings to succeed.

How do you feel about this question: *Are human beings a valuable gift to this world, or are they a resource to be exploited?*

You can't pretend to care. You have to really care. Anyone can fake it for a while. But no one can fake it long enough to grow a business that makes both income and impact.

If we are honest, too many of us don't care about people like we know we should. We can give all kinds of lip service about the importance and power of love, tolerance, and acceptance. If we're honest, people can easily annoy us. Does it seem like we've done everything to protect ourselves from this "annoyance" by eliminating human interaction from day-to-day life?

We have self-checkout to avoid cashiers.

We have ATMs to avoid bank tellers.

The delivery guys used to knock on the door and chat for a few minutes. Now they drop off the stuff and take off.

As with society, so with our businesses. We automate and delegate ourselves out of the customer experience.

While productivity hacks are wonderful gifts to efficiencies, they can become the beginning of our business losing touch with the heartbeat of business - the people we help.

Business is a microcosm of the rest of our lives. Remember how miserable we got when we were isolated in lockdown?

When COVID lockdowns started happening, many people were sad. But some thought it was novel.

"A couple of weeks at home doesn't sound so bad," we thought.

By the winter of 2020, six months into the pandemic, we were devastated with the second wave surging. First, social gatherings caused us to stay home (this time, it was much less welcomed). Then it was Thanksgiving that got “canceled.” Then Christmas. By contrast, no one thought being cut off from their friends and family was fun or novel anymore. We missed the football games, the ugly-sweater parties, and just being with people. We missed hugging our loved ones.

We felt distant. We felt alone.

It’s no surprise that mental health deteriorated to a crisis level in many communities during this season.

The COVID lockdowns reminded us of how important people were to us personally - even the introverts figured it out.

2020 was a reminder that connecting with people is essential to living a healthy life. The car, house, and holidays may make life fun, but they do not make for a rewarding life. Nobody ever goes to their deathbed wishing to get one more hug in from their vehicle or their stocks.

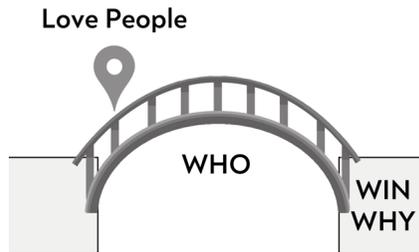
If you can get this right, you will have both joy and success in life and businesses. People are tough to have around, for sure. But we’ve all learned that we’d rather the problems that come from having them around than the problems that come with not having them.

We will look at the state of your heart in regards to how you feel about your customers.

Wouldn’t it be nice not to have to pretend anymore?

## It's About Truly Caring For People

If you get this chapter right, you'll have a new outlook on people. The bridge to winning in business and achieving your Why depends on genuinely caring for people.



It has to be something that everyone values - they cannot just put it on a website, placard, or billboard. You have to really mean it. Let's talk about the condition of your heart towards other human beings.

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### "People Are More Important Than Things"

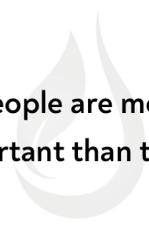
My Grandpa, or "Papa," as we called him, was and still is a hero of mine. Though he died when I was only twelve, he was around for much of my early childhood. He was an engaged grandpa. He was there to offer unsolicited grandfatherly wisdom to any impressionables who would listen. I remember the car rides I took with him on the way to hockey games, church, or while running various errands together. He proudly

drove his old Buick with a cigar in his mouth. Papa was a talker. I call these moments “skyscraper drives” - it was story upon story upon story upon story.

I confess now that his insight then fell on deaf ears at the time. His word has become appreciated in my life through my twenties, thirties, and now into my forties.

In a recent visit with my mom, she pulled out a tribute that I had written for Papa as an early teenager. I wrote this two years after he lost his battle with lung cancer. It’s incredible to me the trivial things moms hold onto can become uncovered and even make it into a book decades later.

As I read the tribute, I was taken back in time. The document resurrected memories that I thought were lost. My writing celebrated Papa’s love for people. I knew even then how special it was that I got to have that time with him.



**People are more  
important than things.**

Here’s what he taught me the most. It’s the heartbeat of this business book:

*Jono,” as he called me, “people are more important than things.*

Papa would often recite this phrase when we were together. I used to roll my eyes; we heard it so often. I’d give anything to hear him repeat it in person.

Nostalgia aside, Papa was right. People *are* more important than things.

By his standard, the measure of a successful life was found not to accumulate material items. One can determine a life of significance by the positive and transformative impact we made on other people. Though he died much too early, I see how my grandpa passed his values on to me. His words of wisdom serve as a guiding star that leads me through challenges and temptations of life. They are at the core of how I run my businesses. His message has ultimately become the primary message of this book:

*The heart of your business has to be about people because people are more important than anything else.*

## When Love Is Tough

There's a lot of commotion (aka "yelling") about the importance of love these days. It's like people think that the louder they shout it or the angrier they feel, the more they love. But it's clear to see that this is not the best expression of love either.

We all know deep down that we should be loving people more.

While I'm not great at showing it, I do want to be better at loving people. The desire is there - it's the application I find most challenging. The distance from what my head knows I *should* feel and what my heart does is vast.

Can you relate? Do you intuitively know that you should love people more but struggle to love people the way you know you should?

## Business Is About Loving People

One of the things I love about business is that you have to love people to be good at it.

Did you have to read that again? It's true. Your business exists because you have a mandate to love people and help them. As entrepreneurs and business leaders, we don't have to shout it on the news or write it on some cardboard at a rally. We do have to show it each day we arrive at work.

And when you do that in business, you are rewarded for it.

It's the responsibility of people, not the government, to help each other out. Too many of us observe problems in the news or read something troubling in our social media feeds. We look around at our broken communities and hope someone else does something to solve these issues.

Many look to a government program to rid the world of wrong. They blame past or current political leadership for society's ills, hoping that "their person" will make it better next time.

That's not how it works. The government has neither the resources, creativity, speed, track record, or the soul to bear the mantle of "universal problem solver."

It's our responsibility as humans to solve problems for each other.

We have to care for each other. I'm convinced that business is part of the divine plan for making his world better. When we do

an excellent job of helping people, we are rewarded with the gift of money.

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## We Need People In Any And Every Business

To run a profitable business, we need people around us to varying degrees. Regardless of how talented or brilliant, or hard-working we are, we need people around to make it a success. Without the right people, our business or idea will not catch on.

If you're going to have people around, you might as well learn to care about them. You might even enjoy them for the value they can bring to your life in return.

You may think people annoy you. I get that. But I bet that you are more of a people person than you think. Here are some questions to tell that you aren't as ornery about other people as you think you are:

- Did you miss being around people during the COVID lockdown?
- During lockdown, did you find yourself watching old clips of large events and miss the days you could be around crowds of people?
- Do you get a buzz from going to conferences? Even just a little buzz?
- Do you drive and fly through snowstorms during the holidays to be with your spreadsheets?

- Have you ever grieved when you watched the news and saw a video or image that represented a great loss of human life?
- Do your best-kept memories involve the nights you spent binge-watching TV alone?
- If a hurricane or fire was approaching your house, would you run inside to grab photos of your car?

It's always about people.

Try this: When you think about your years at work, what are the highlights that come to mind?

It's all about the people. Customers and coworkers are what we remember most.

People are the jewel of life. When we are far from connecting with other people, loneliness creeps into our hearts and makes life incredibly miserable.

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## My Struggle With Loneliness

Loneliness carries a particular sting that cuts us deep.

I experienced a memorable moment like this on a trip that took me halfway around the world. At a time that I should have felt immeasurable happiness, I only felt lonely.

Traveling alone many years ago, I stopped in Paris on a layover en route to Africa. I was doing some intense work building an

orphanage and wanted to get in some sightseeing before the big push. Since I was traveling alone to Africa, I reviewed my travel itinerary and was pleasantly surprised. Once I landed in London, I saw a layover that would allow me to cross an item off my bucket list:

*Get a picture standing in front of the Eiffel Tower.*

When I landed, I quickly found a locker to stash my luggage and then made a beeline to Gatwick International across the English Channel and into Paris.

Once in Paris, I grabbed a cab to Champ De Mars. I scouted out a picturesque place to capture a moment with the world-renowned landmark. I was excited. I felt a rush of satisfaction upon arrival, knowing I would forever have this picture.

Bucket list item: *Check!*

Taking out my trusty 35mm (that's what we used to call a camera when they didn't come with a phone attached), I placed it on the tripod. I looked through the lens and determined the best place stand to capture both myself and the tower. I set the timer and positioned myself, striking my best pose.

I got the picture. I fulfilled the mission. There was a moment of euphoria.

And then... the feeling was gone.

Suddenly I felt something I never felt this strong before. I had achieved a life milestone, but I had no one to share the moment with. There was no one around to high five.

I was all alone.

I was on a tight schedule and needed to get back to the airport. After a few more shots of the tower, I hailed a cab and headed back across the channel to Gatwick. Of course, my driver didn't speak any English. He seemed to be tuned into classic rock (in English). The song that came on during the drive was *Desperado* by the Eagles.

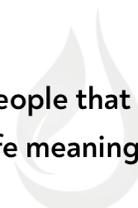
This song is by far the loneliest song ever written.

### **“Mauvais Quart D’heure.”**

Later I realized I lived out the French expression, which translated means “bad quarter of an hour.”

I won't forget the sting of loneliness that hit me that day. I was at one of the most iconic, most beautiful, and most romantic places in the world. And it was soured by having the experience alone. They say that feelings of depression can be like being lonely in a room full of people. I wasn't alone in just a room. I was alone in one of the busiest cities in the world.

Reflecting on this moment, I realized that no matter how incredible the experience is, it loses its coolness real quick if other people aren't involved. It's like that in travel, at home, and in business.



**It's people that make a  
life meaningful.**

It's the people, not towers or exotic travel, that make life the most meaningful.

Here's an illustration with which we can relate. Open up the photo app on your phone and scroll through the moments you've captured. As you're scrolling, take note of the ones that make you pause and grab a second look. Which images cause you to linger? I can guess already. It's the ones with the people in it. Architecture, mountains, oceans, rivers, and trees all have their beauty, but nothing grips our attention like human beings.

Further to the point, have a look at the photos you've posted that that receive the most engagement. It's the ones with faces, not the landmarks or geography. The lesson: *People naturally connect with other people.*

## Putting People First

I saw the power of what putting people first can do for you during my days as a pastor. Even as a young man, I had the privilege of spending time with people in their final moments on Earth. I was there for those mysterious, sacred moments where they breathe their last breath and pass from this life to the next. In all my times doing this, I never visited someone's deathbed and heard them request to be surrounded by piles of their money or material things. The things we spend so much of our lives pursuing do not console us when we're facing the end of our lives.

We will talk more about that in the next chapter.

## Business Is About Helping People Win

You will soon discover that every great business has put other people at the center. Humans are unavoidable.

As Don Miller points out in *Building A StoryBrand*, every business is H2H – human to human.<sup>3</sup> We are all people trying to help other people win. Your platform may be marketed or sold as Business to Business (B2B) or Business to Consumer (B2C). Still, at the core, you are a human doing business with other humans. There's always a human behind every buying or selling transaction.

## What If There Were No People?

I know that you've probably thought it before. Maybe you've even yelled it out in a moment of frustration:

*"I'd like this job a lot more if there weren't any people in it!"*

Peaceful as it may sound for a while, I know you wouldn't like it.

What kind of a world would it be if there weren't any people?

Imagine how hard Adam would have had it. Adam is the biblical character whom the Jews, Christians, and Muslims refer to as the first human. Based on your beliefs, you can call him whatever you'd like. Somebody had to come first and figure the place out. And this somebody had to deal with the fact that there was no one else around to help. When it was just one person, there were no other people around to help him solve

problems. While this may seem like the introvert's dream, it took forever to do anything.

Here's why it was pronounced early on that it was "not good for man to be alone".<sup>4</sup>

Every time Adam wanted bread, it came at a high cost. First, he had to come up with the idea of farming. That would've been a significant milestone for even one person's lifetime of research. Then Adam had to take the time to grow his grain, water it, harvest it, thresh it, gather other ingredients, bake them all over a fire, and then cut his bread into uniform slices (but we know that "sliced bread" was a game-changing discovery to come many generations later).

Here's the point of my comical illustration: *Without other people running their businesses, Adam would have had to do everything himself.*

Thankfully, that's not the case today. There are people all over the world operating businesses that make our lives easier.

These people are showing up to work and serving people like you and I. We never see them. We never get to thank them personally. But they do it anyway. And you'd do it for them too. You probably do help them in one way or another in your business.

That's the power of people working together to serve each other.

## What to Do When People Frustrate You

People can be frustrating. You already knew that. Even the world's most extroverted of us get "peopled out." We all need the occasional night alone binge-watching Netflix.

When people bother us, the temptation is to give up on the whole human race entirely. We enthusiastically declare:

*"Forget all this talk about Who. I'm taking that first flight to Mars with Elon Musk and Richard Branson!"*

I understand how the part of life that is most important also has the opportunity to do the most damage to us—the need for having a Who is something that none of us can escape.

People can hurt us deeply. But a life without any people would be a cold, depressing shell of an existence.

The great 20th-century author and scholar C.S. Lewis described the risk of relationships in his classic book *The Four Loves*:

“ To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable,

impenetrable, irredeemable. To love is to be vulnerable.<sup>5</sup>

Lewis encourages us that no matter how much we've been hurt, or burned by a bad deal, or betrayed by a partner, we cannot give up on having people in our lives. The cost of abandoning people is a cold, shrivelled heart. That, to me, is far worse than a broken one.

### What If You Just Don't Care?

Imagine if you found out that your favorite Starbucks barista, the one fuelled on artificial enthusiasm from their endless supply of free coffee, didn't care about you? What if you found out that they only smiled when you came in and remembered your name and your personalized drink because that was their job? What if you discovered after years of your generous tipping that they were pretending to be friendly with you. What if you discovered it was all an act to impress their manager and get promoted?

You'd be devastated.

What if your favorite company started screening your calls every time you showed up on their call display? Would you stay loyal to them? What if Amazon blocked your account or didn't accept returns because they came from you?

What would you do?

You'd stop giving them your business and find another company that did care. If that's how you feel about a company that doesn't care about you, why wouldn't one of your customers react the same if they found out you've lost your passion for serving.

In life and business, you are rewarded when you put people first.

Zig Ziglar famously said,

“ You get all you want in life if you help enough other people get what they want.”<sup>6</sup>

This proverb that has been providing business leaders wisdom for thousands of years:

“ A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.”<sup>7</sup>

In the above two quotes, Ziglar, the greatest sales coach, echoes the wise Solomon, one of the wealthiest men who ever lived, to teach us about the importance of putting others first as a foundation for success.

If you want to achieve your financial and lifestyle goals, the best way to do it is by helping people achieve theirs.

Another way I've been saying the same idea is “You get your Why, when you start with Who.”

## Let's Recapture Your Passion For People

*Now Start With Who* is about restoring the awareness of how essential people are at every level of business.

Seth Godin writes of the significance of helping people in business:

“ If you can bring someone belonging, connection, peace of mind, status, or one of the other most desired emotions, you've done something worthwhile. The thing you sell is simply a road to achieve those emotions, and we let everyone down when we focus on the tactics, not the outcomes. Who's it for and what's it for are the two questions that guide all of our decisions.<sup>8</sup>

The mindset Godin and I are calling for you to adopt does not come easily. You already know that anything worthwhile takes courage and hard work.

Personal relationships outside of business are challenging - that's why so many relationships become stagnant or die. I'm deeply committed to some of the most challenging relationships in the human experience. I'm married. I'm a father. I'm a son. I have in-laws. I participate in discussions on social media. Tele-marketers have my phone number.

I also have clients whom I am committed to serving. Meaningful relationships require work. There are always going to be times of trials and obstacles to overcome.

Despite the difficulties that arise, the above are the most rewarding relationships in my life (except the telemarketers). To give up on them because they're difficult, tiring, frustrating, inconvenient, or a mix of any of those would be disastrous to the joy they bring me.

Periodically, I may have a client with unreasonable demands and unrealistic expectations. I do what I can to make their experience a positive one. For every challenging client, the temporary frustration is overridden by the call, email, or even handwritten letter that says something along the lines of:

“ We just wanted to drop you a quick line to let you know how much of a difference you have made in our business. The work you have done has increased our sales, increased engagement, and increased retention. We are so thankful we chose you and your team. Keep up the good work!

That email came from a client I almost gave up on. They challenged me. Things were awkward at times. But we pressed through the difficulty and came out stronger through it. Every relationship has conflict. That doesn't give us a pass to give up on them or the importance of relationships in general.

### See New Leads With Eyes Of Compassion

As business owners, we know our customer's struggles. After working with them for a while, we start to see that we are the best solution for specific situations with which they're strug-

gling. The problem is that they may not know we are best for them yet.

Before they meet you, they hear all kinds of voices that sound like you during the sales cycle. These voices promise something similar, and sometimes for a better price. You may know your competitors are inferior, but this potential customer does not.

We wish they could come to us first. We hope prospects would come to us as innocent and optimistic as high school sweethearts. But they don't come to us like that. They often come as divorcees, a little hurt and a little jaded from previous bad experiences.

It's your job not to be angry at them for not seeing you as the obvious choice. We must compassionately show customers how your company, product, service, course, or whatever you provide will be the solution they need.

## A Routine To Grow Empathy For People

I learned from a business mentor how to grow in empathy and tune in to a stranger's needs before getting on the phone with them. I spend a few minutes thinking about who they are and what they are currently going through. They reached out to us because something in their life is broken. They are hopeful that my company can help guide them to a better situation.

Yes, it may be just about a website for which they could use some help. Maybe it is a marketing limitation they keep banging up against. To us, it's just another Thursday morning. To them,

however, it's a problem that's not going away on its own. What's going on when someone has a website or marketing issue?

- Their leads are drying up
- They're watching competitors succeed
- They wonder if they can make payroll
- They're losing sleep at night due to an uncertain future
- It's holding them back from their goals and dreams
- It may even be affecting their other relationships at work and home

The website or marketing is never the only problem.

There's always a much bigger problem behind the problem. That's why we can have empathy when we're just meeting someone for the first time, and they could use some help.

Here's what helps me care for a stranger. I get in their proverbial shoes a bit and walk around in their life. I do some research on this person with whom I'm about to connect. I want to learn what I can about the origins of their business. I want to know their product and how they are currently communicating its value to the world. I check out their social media presence. I don't do this to be creepy. I do this because I'm curious about the person.

I want to learn as much as I can about who this unique being is that I'm about to cross paths with.

I have found little nuances about individuals by seeing something they are interested in. Sometimes you can find a place they have visited or even a business periodical they read and recommended.

Some might think I am just trying to establish rapport and use sales psychology to win them over. It goes deeper than that. If I see something that gives me a chance to show empathy, it will help me connect with them. When I know more about them, my heart warms up to the opportunity to do good in their life. And even if nothing is ever mentioned, subconsciously, I want them to know that I care about their situation. By this point, they are more than just a sales metric.

### We Cannot Fake It Forever

Anyone can fake caring for customers for a few years. During that time, only a few will notice.

The problem is that if nothing changes, in a few years, *everyone will notice.*

**That customer has a story of being loved by friends, family, and God.**

If your heart was a gas gauge, would it be on “Full” or “Empty” regarding how much love you’re feeling for others? If it’s empty, you’re going to struggle to care for customers as they deserve.

Take a moment to evaluate where your heart is at with people.

What do you need to do today to grow in love, compassion, and empathy? Perhaps you’re still hanging on to something for which you need to let go.

This could be:

- A painful experience with someone you never fully dealt with
- A tough customer in the past that you haven't forgiven
- Or you're running too fast and not taking the time to care for people
- You're so motivated by sales and profits that you've forgotten that each customer is a life of value and dignity who needs help

We carry around unnecessary baggage from our past and bring it into every relationship in the present and future. It's time to let that stuff go. Whatever happened, recapturing that passion you once had to help people is something you'll need to lead a healthy life and business.

## Conclusion

If you've lost that loving feeling with people, you might need to put the book down and think about what's going on inside.

Your customer is a human being with friends, parents, children, brothers, and sisters. They are loved and cherished by God himself.

Do whatever you have to do to let a little compassion seep into your heart. Pray, meditate, or think about the preciousness of humanity so that when it's time to interact with the people, you elevate to a place where you do care about them.

Professional, you're there to help them in their time of need. They're more than another dollar sign to capture into your account. They are your Who. They have a story, a struggle, and they're looking for the very help you provide.

For them, it's chaos going on in their lives. For you, it's just another Thursday morning to show up and humbly serve.

The human heart was wired for relationships. People may bring issues but having no people around brings significantly more issues. In this chapter, we focussed on how even in business, we need to love people and help them win. Remember, helping a Who is the way you go from Why to Win.

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## FOUR



### It's Time To Serve, Not Fight

“ It's easier to love a brand when a brand loves you first.

-Seth Godin

Sociologists tell us that we as a society are more divided than ever. Politics, race, religion, you've seen, heard, and experienced the things that divide us.

The media prey on this because a good fight always sells. It has always been this way. There's something about a battle in the woods in elementary school that will draw a crowd over a healthy exchange of ideas. Fighting is all too common. While I'm no pacifist, we cannot live our lives going from one fight to another.

If you feel like your life is a daily fight against the market, your competitors, or the demons inside of you telling you to give up, you've now had a vision of a better way.

Let's stop fighting everything and start serving some people we know we can help. It's time to make the kind of impact you know you want in your life. The fighting may provide a rush of adrenaline as you struggle to survive. It will leave an uninspiring legacy and a joyless existence getting there.

As we conclude the book, you will see that you can achieve your Why without having to feel like you've had to fight your way to every opportunity. There is another path: It's the path of service your Who.



## You Don't Have To Fight Anymore

Allow me to jog your memory to an epic movie from the early 80s, a classic that was one of the finest stories ever to hit the big screen. Of course, I'm talking about *Rambo: First Blood*.

Rambo is the classic American war hero. The Vietnam vet was a highly trained soldier who was notorious for being great on the battlefield. His struggles came when he tried his hand at civilian

life. As a former Green Beret, Rambo is misunderstood as a drifter and is arrested. Rambo quickly escapes his captors and is then chased by the crooked authorities. Not knowing whom they are fighting, they cannot capture Rambo, who survived a Vietnam POW camp and is as tough as anyone.

Rambo's mentor and former commanding officer, Colonel Sam Trautman, radios him and lets him know he doesn't have to fight anymore. Rambo insists they drew first blood. Rambo is a soldier. Fighting is all he knows. In his mind, he must continue to fight. Eventually, after escaping a collapsed mine, blowing up a gas station, and destroying a gun store, Rambo reencounters Trautman. "You don't have to fight anymore" is the theme of their talk. This strikes a nerve with the brave hero. Rambo breaks down in tears and surrenders. Instead of fighting, he agrees to a life of serving his community, leading from his strength and bringing good into the world.

What if, like Rambo, you need to stop fighting every day and start serving? Doesn't that sound more life-giving?

What if you found others who need your help and showed up every day ready to serve them? As we've discussed, the money will be there if you do.

Whatever you do, you're in the business of making other lives better. Help them win their story and be amazed how, in turn, they help you win yours.

## Instead Of Fighting To Get Your Why, Start Serving Your Who

We have enough fighting in this world. Remember the last election? I don't even need to specify when or where. They're all nasty blood baths.

The nations, the politicians, the world religions, races, and your competitors.

What if:

- the world took the lead from the best businesses?
- we business leaders could teach the world about the power of serving?
- Starting with Who is the key that unlocks the kind of income and impact that your heart desires?

Instead of fighting for every opportunity you can to promote yourself, what if you just started serving the people you know you help best.

When you serve, you win people over. When you win people over, they talk about you. When they talk about you, the good news travels. It results in more followers, more readers, more listeners, more referrals, and more satisfaction in life (and more people at your funeral, but you won't be able to see that yourself).

That's the kind of impact you've always dreamed of making. It all starts with a commitment to service.

## The People Who Need You Today

When we get stuck in a rut, we can easily wallow in pity. We lose hours, days, weeks, months and even years wishing our life and business would be different. Focussing on ourself, it's never enough because we were never meant to be satisfied alone. When it is just us, we miss the opportunity to actually get the thing we are looking for: *a real connection with people*.

Business is a wonderful vehicle for creating authentic connections with people.

If you don't get over yourself, nobody wins. You don't. And the people you can help don't either. Without you, your Whos remain stuck in their problems.

They lose hope each day. Their anxiety grows each day. They wonder if there's anyone who can help them.

Suppose you've lived with anxiety, frustration, loneliness, or some other problem you couldn't solve on your own. In that case, you know how easy it is to turn to despair and hopelessness. The world loses its color. Life seems like it has no purpose.

That's what's going on when your business is not around. Your Who is waiting for you and your team today. They're hoping today is the day you get over yourself and get back in the game. The people you can help are sitting there despondent because their problems are not going away on their own. They're praying that somebody like you would show up and help them break free.

Now, imagine how sad it would be if they never met you and your company. What if they did meet you, but you were so busy being a Brad, talking about yourself and how great you are? You would've missed the chance to make that critical first impression.

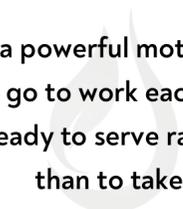
That would be terrible. But you're not going to do that because today is a new day. You're starting again with Who.

### When You're Starting With Who

Now that you're going to Start With Who, it's time to start connecting with the people you can help. You'll start talking about how you understand how frustrating the pain is, the problems you solve, and the outcomes you deliver.

You'll notice strangers start to trust you. They'll gladly hand you their credit card, eager to sign up for your services, course, widget or whatever you do.

That's how you live a life of purpose. It's time to change lives. It's time to start filling up your funeral.



**It's a powerful motivation  
to go to work each day  
ready to serve rather  
than to take.**

### It's Time to Tell a Better Story

It's time to work hard to change culture perception in business. What if you and I, by the way we treat our clients, could be a force for changing how our culture sees business? It's time to

restore the heart of business. It's about people serving people each day. That's the mindset we approach our work.

My goal in this book in writing *Now Start With Who* has been to serve you as a modern-day "Samwise Gamgee." He's the beloved companion to Frodo in J.R.R. Tolkien's famous Lord of the Rings.

My favorite scene in the book/movie series comes when Frodo is weary from his journey, cannot handle the ring's burden, and wants to give up. He tells his travel companion that he cannot go on anymore.

You may be feeling like you don't want to go on thinking that business is only about growth, making shareholders happy, or just making ends meet. Customers, with that mindset, are just a means to an end. You know it's not satisfying. It just doesn't feel right.

Thankfully, there's a better story to write. Service is a much better story than fighting or exploiting people.

If you feel like you're not enjoying the old way of doing business, let Sam close off the book with his encouragement to Frodo and all of us:

“ Sam: I know. It's all wrong. By rights, we shouldn't even be here. But we are. It's like in the great stories, Mr. Frodo. The ones that mattered. Full of darkness and danger, they were. And sometimes you didn't want to know the end. Because how could the end

be happy?... A new day will come. And when the sun shines, it will shine the clearer. Those were the stories that stayed with you. That meant something, even if you were too small to understand why. But I think, Mr. Frodo, I do understand. I know now. Folk in those stories had lots of chances of turning back; only they didn't. They kept going. Because they were holding on to something.

Frodo: What are we holding onto, Sam?

Sam: That there's some good in this world, Mr. Frodo ... and it's worth fighting for.

There is a better way. It's about serving. It starts with serving your Who.

Because people are always worth it.

## About the Author

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Jon is the Lead Consultant at *Get Clear Consulting*. Located on the West Coast of Canada, Get Clear empowers business leaders from all over the world by giving them the tools they need to achieve their goals.



Unlike other agencies that keep you focused on your company, Get Clear helps you develop the mindset and message to transform prospective customers into raving fans of your brand.

As a business leader, husband, and father, Jon knows that true joy and satisfaction only comes when you give up the rights to yourself and pour yourself out in the service to others.

Jon holds an MA from Biola University. He is also an alumnus of Oxford University, a TEDx speaker, and is married to Hayley. They live in Abbotsford, B.C. with their three girls.

For more information about Jon and his team at Get Clear when you visit [www.getclear.ca](http://www.getclear.ca).