

Article 2: Purpose and Mission

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There must be a “why”

Having a why is synonymous with having a purpose. Having a purpose is necessary to success in both business and personal lives. When it comes to leading a company, employers need to keep in mind that understanding the why behind what they are doing and translating that for employees is important because purpose drives passion. Purpose invites people to be a part of a bigger story than just the task at hand.

Additionally, according to the multiple authors of *Crucial Conversations*, having a mutual purpose when it comes to relationships in the business world is imperative to team cohesion and the success of honest conversations between employees. When the leaders of a company can help their employees see the purpose of their company, then when conflict or differences of opinion pop up, it is easier to recenter around a common purpose, remembering why they are working together in the first place and revise their mission.

Mission is the how. How do we live out this purpose driving our behaviors? If purpose is why a company exists, then mission is how a company is accomplishing that purpose. In a Ted Talk on Purpose, Simon Sinek argued that companies and leaders too often get caught up in the how and what and forget about the why. Human beings need to connect with the purpose of your company before they will really commit to sticking around and working for it. Furthermore, people need to connect with a company purpose before they buy the product you are selling. As a team, once you have identified your purpose, you can formulate a mission that will produce a product people will find worth investing in or following.

Recently I was a fly on the wall for a board meeting with the Greenville Chamber of Commerce. The room was full of Presidents of Universities, CEOs, and many more successful community leaders. Something the Chair of the Board did right off the bat was remind the board of their purpose as a team. As the Chamber comes together to think strategically about how to influence the Greenville community, they are working through difficult topics; however, knowing their

purpose helps the Board remember why they are on this team. Once they are locked in on their mutual purpose, they can better determine their mission.

A large part of a successful company is good leadership. A frequently asked question by professionals young and old is what makes a good leader? Is it simply money and power? Or is there something else to the story? In a Ted Talk on purpose, Simon Sinek proposed that there are “leaders and those who lead.” Leaders are those with authority and maybe money. Those who lead are ones who inspire others to follow them with a purpose.