

Why and How - Which Comes First?

Welcome back. I'm Kim Baillie, she's Fulyana Orsborn. This is Inside Exec.

Today, we're going to talk about why and how. So you've heard us in the past and probably will in the future, talk a lot about Simon Sinek and finding out your why. What we also want to explore today is how that works with the how of getting things done. Fulyana is going to speak.

Thank you. Yes. One of our listeners actually commented on how interested he was with or when he listened about our sessions which focus on the why and do you like that. But he also read a book by Adam Grant. Adam Grant is an organizational psychologist and he wrote a book called Originals and he seemed to focus on the how, talking about how do we do something to make it happen rather than just what, why we're doing something. So we got into this discussion and the more, the more we talked about it, I think it's important to have both.

I think what we're looking at is I want to know why we want to do something, why we're building something why we're changing a strategy, why we're introducing a policy, all of those, whether it's in corporate or private life. I love great ideas, but ideas have to be implementable as well, and this is where the how comes in. It would give me confidence to know that we can do it, we're not just sort of pie in the sky, but we can look at the purpose first and how, but in the same conversations, we have to cover both.

Most definitely they go hand in hand. You can't have one without the other, as the song goes. If you focus on the how first and foremost, then yes, you'll get all sorts of stuff done, but you won't know why and you won't know in terms of understanding why, you won't know whether it's actually doing the thing that you've designed it to do, what you want it to do. If you focus on the why first, then you live in this dream world of uh this is why I do think this, wouldn't it be so wonderful and everyone will be happy, world peace and all of those things.

But if you don't focus on the how and if you don't, if you don't link the how to the why, then nothing will ever get done. And just so we understand that the why is not why you're doing something or why do we do it this way. The why is what is your baseline purpose?

So I think I've talked in the past about my why is why do I do anything in any environment that I do professionally and my why is that I get satisfaction knowing that I have helped someone develop to be the best that they can be. That's all very fine. It's a lovely phrase to have. But unless I had some "how" attached to that it's useless. It's nice for me to know that that's my why, I have a purpose in my existence. But unless I'm following through with the how it just goes nowhere. So my how that is attached to the why is that.

How do I provide as many people as I possibly can with the tools to make them better in themselves at what they do, regardless of what that is. And so that can be the podcast. It can be that I'm volunteering on organizations that provide other services because my management skills are such that that's what they need. So my management skills, my how, in

that sense is my management skills provide the organizations with a better purpose. And so their why is better served by my how - it's about defining what your why is, what the organization's why is and then having all of these things that link into it that make it your how or the organization's how or how to.

I think it's really good when you have whatever you're doing, it requires other people to work with you on it mostly. So let's talk about a product innovation and say you're coming up with the product and it's going to do something in the garden. So the why would be to make it more enjoyable for the gardener less time consuming to use this new developed product. So that's the why and then how is how you're going to put it together. So the purpose of the tool would be cutting grass or would it be to water the garden or whatever it is. She's so knowledgeable. Yeah, of course, I'm definitely not a gardener, but anyhow. So if you're looking at it that way and then you have the people that develop it, so the people working on it have the shared purpose of what is the why, what's the ultimate reason for creating this. And then the how is each person will have a different part to play. So I will develop part A, part B and so on and so forth, and it comes together. So the communication on the how and the why. has to be for every person involved in the making, it has to be covered in first of all pitching the idea to get funding or to get approval or whatever it is, it's going to be ultimately in showcasing your product to the shareholders, to the end users, customers, whatever it is.

So, in that sense, if you get those two answers rather at the beginning, when you come up with the idea that's going to go all the way through to production cells and feedback and

satisfaction.

Then we have the question of which comes first, why or how?

Well, if you're doing it at the same time, I don't care because I want to know what is your idea and why? It's good. So you can start with that.

It depends also on the recipient of the information. For me personally, my style is to know the why first and then the how. For other people might say, look before we hear some of your ideology, can you tell me what does it involve? And so I'm happy. As long as I had both the how and why I'm okay.

It's definitely a finite situation, but sometimes you hear it in your head because you'll look at a product for example or a service and you say how can I make that better? So that's already the how. Why would you want to might be a little bit grayer because the how can I make it better is often a result of wanting to improve it for ourselves, for our use and not so much for an end user and the why comes out of that. How might it be more focused on the end user? It might be completely focused on you being able to do a process better. So if we look at a process rather than a product, how can I make this process better? Which is often the question quality improvement situation, how can I make this process better? Why do you want to - because it's time for a review and you think this is what has to happen.

So the why might be harder to find, might take longer to find than the how, but it's not something that you should ignore. So I still want to reinforce that they both must go together. They

both must be considered in the same thought process and the same development that happens not one after the other, not one before the other, but always keeping in mind the two things so that what comes out of that discussion and that development is the best it can possibly be because it's not just about why and it's not just about how.

I think we've covered that. We've covered our bases and ourselves pretty well by saying yes, you've got to do it all. Thank you for bringing that to our attention. And it's been a good little discussion to see how we think about why and how.

For now I'm Kim Baillie, she's Fulyana Orsborn, this is Inside Exec.