



Stand Out in the Job Market

How to create an inspiring elevator pitch to help
you land a job you love

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Land a job you love

Most of us have crossed paths with someone who absolutely loves their job. They don't just like their job, they love it. When someone says they love their job, what they are really saying is they feel fulfilled at the end of the day. While they may not be able to put it into words, they feel that their job is one of the things they do in order to bring their *Why* to life; perhaps they even feel that they are part of a cause greater than themselves. And the fact that their job is more than a paycheck **is** the reason they love their job. The first step to finding a job you love is to identify what brings you fulfillment; what drives and inspires you. You must start with *Why*.

When we don't have clarity of *Why*, we tend to apply for many different positions, or perhaps worse, get stuck thinking we can only work in one industry because we have a specific skill set. We focus on *What* (our skills) rather than *Why* (what we believe). When we focus on skill set and salary alone, we may find ourselves having to fudge things a bit in order to make ourselves fit into the culture of the companies we work for. Bending to fit into a culture where we won't naturally thrive might land us the job, but we likely won't be going home feeling fulfilled. If you've felt this way in the past, you're not alone. 80% of people don't feel fulfilled by the work they do.

There is an alternative. A way to wake up everyday inspired to do the work we love. When we have clear sense of *Why* and can clearly say it to others, we can better judge the environments, individuals and kind of companies that inspire us. Armed with that knowledge we have to be disciplined to only apply for jobs that are more likely to leave us feeling enriched. In the long run, you may be applying for fewer positions, but the likelihood of you landing a job you love is much higher.

If you've completed the [Why Discovery Course](#) or you feel like you have a good sense of your *Why* and the concept of The Golden Circle, feel free to skip Section 1, "Introduction to the Golden Circle" and jump right into Section 3, "Tips for a strong elevator pitch".

Consider this

The job search and hiring process is all about clear and consistent communication. It's very important that the things you do and the things you say you actually believe.

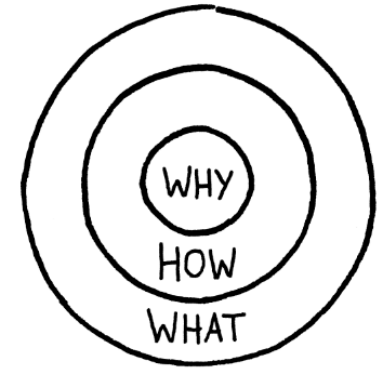
Whether you're writing a cover letter, sending a thank you note or sitting in an interview, the place to start is always with *Why*.

Learn how to create a *Why*-driven resume and cover letter and get helpful tips on interviewing so you can land the job you love.



Introduction to The Golden Circle

Why are some people and organizations more innovative, more influential and more profitable than others? Even among the successful, why are so few able to repeat their success over and over? In studying the leaders who have had the greatest influence in the world, Simon Sinek discovered that they all think, act and communicate in the exact same way – and it's the complete opposite to everyone else. Sinek calls this powerful idea The Golden Circle.



The Golden Circle

Most people can explain What they do; some can explain How they do it; but very few can articulate Why. Our Why is the overarching purpose or cause that drives us when we are at our best. It's what inspires us to get out of bed in the morning. You're more likely to land a job you love when each step in the job seeking process starts with Why and follows the pattern of The Golden Circle. Let's define the terms:

Why – Your purpose, cause or belief

Very few people can clearly articulate Why they do what they do. The Why is not about making money. Making money is simply a result of your Why. Your Why is bigger. No matter what you do, your Why is what inspires you to take the actions that bring you fulfillment and lasting happiness.

How – The actions you take to realize your Why

Once you know your Why, you must identify your Hows. These are your natural strengths, the actions you take or the guiding principles you live by that allow you to be at your best.

What – the results of putting your Why into action

Whats are the tangible representations of what you believe; your career, the positions you've held and the work you do. Whats are always measurable. They are the proof you are starting with Why.

Consider this

Every single organization, even our career, functions on three levels: What we do, How we do it and Why we do it.

If you don't yet know your Why, we have some resources at StartWithWhy.com to assist you.

For The Golden Circle to be most effective, to truly inspire, we must remember two things:

- 1 – Order Matters: Simply having the Why buried in there is not enough. We must think, act and communicate from the inside-out of The Golden Circle. We must start with Why
- 2 – Balance: All three levels of The Golden Circle must be in balance. This means you must have clarity, discipline and consistency.

Clarity of Why

- Purpose, cause or belief
- The Why is the single driving motivation for action

Discipline of How

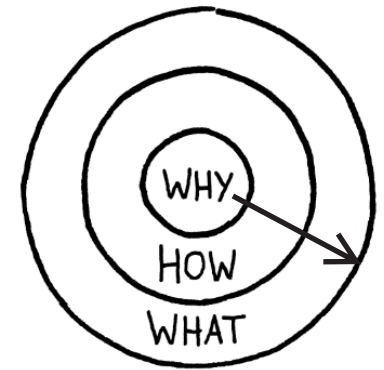
- Values or guiding principles
- Hows are the specific actions that are taken to realize the Why

Consistency of What

- Tangible proof or results
- Whats are the tangible manifestations of the Why

Most people define themselves by What they do – trade stocks, study Byzantine art or fight for human rights worldwide. But these are simply the tangible examples of something deeper – a single passion that unites these interests or activities. We inherently know What we do is not enough so, in an attempt to distinguish ourselves, we explain How we do what we do; perhaps by pointing to particular experiences, skill sets or who we know, for example; all in an attempt to stand out from the crowd. The problem is, it rarely gets us the results we want.

Operating from the outside-in of The Golden Circle, by starting with What or How, does not, in reality, distinguish us. Worse, it often forces us to pay more attention to outside forces in order to determine who we are or why we do things. We may become obsessed with our competition or begin to fret over what we lack (a Master's degree, enough work experience, a high enough salary). When we tie our happiness, who we are and what we believe to the whims of the outside world, we feel unstable. We are not at our best. That's where the Why comes in.



The Golden Circle

Want to learn more?

If you want to learn more about the Why and the concept of The Golden Circle, check out Simon's talk on [TED.com](https://www.ted.com) or check out his book, [Start With Why](#).

When we operate from the inside-out of The Golden Circle **we** determine how the market perceives us. Being able to clearly state our **Why** allows us to explain the reasons we choose to do the things we do. We live in a tangible world. The only way people know what we believe is by the things we say and do. When we know our **Why**, we can choose to do and say the things that reflect what we believe.

When our Golden Circle is in balance, meaning all three levels (**Why**, **How** and **What**) are given equal weight, each as important as the other, the combination becomes like our fingerprint. It is our identity; now and forever.

Where does the **Why** come from?

We are all products of our upbringing. The **Why** is found by looking back at the experiences we had growing up.

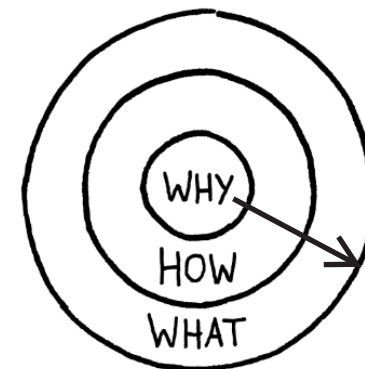
Our family, teachers, hobbies, jobs and other experiences are all contributors to the formation of our **Why**. Growing up, there were times we naturally thrived and things we naturally did well. Those natural abilities manifested themselves in different ways and the key to finding **Why** is to identify those patterns.

When we look back at our early and adolescent years and clearly identify the situations and people that were present when we were happy and did well, we see a pattern emerge. This pattern becomes a recipe for future success. This recipe allows us to repeat our success by placing ourselves in the same kind of situations and circumstances that allowed us to do well in the past.

When we use our **Why** as a filter, we can make decisions more easily, know what will allow us to thrive and avoid what won't.

Learn more

Learn more about how the market perceives us. Check out the [Celery Test](#).



The Golden Circle

Leadership

When our **Why** is clear, when we are disciplined in **How** we pursue it and when **What** we do is consistent, the outside world understands our **Why** as clearly as we do.

And when that happens, more and more people are inspired to follow. And that is when you know you are a leader.

Put words to your Why

If your Why isn't crystal clear, use the exercise below to get you thinking about it and how to express it:

A good Why statement has two parts. To _____ so that _____. The first blank is the contribution you make and the second blank is the impact of your contribution.

try this!
↙

1. Think about three or four of the **specific** experiences in your life when you were at your best. What made you so successful or happy in those specific examples?

2. If you were to tattoo one verb on your body, what would it say?

To _____

3. If everyone in the world were to _____ (the verb you'd tattoo on your body) what kind of world would it be?

4. If they build a statue of you after you die, in one sentence, what will the plaque say?

He/She _____

5. Complete the following statement:

I wake up every day inspired to _____

so that _____

(hint: the verb you'd tattoo on your body + the impact you have on others – #3 & #4)

Examples of Why

To inspire people to do the things that inspire them so that together we can change the world. - Simon

To propel positive change so that others can live a more fulfilled life. - David

To support and encourage others so that they can revel in who they are. - Kim

Heads up

If you're planning on doing the exercises contained in this guide on your computer using Adobe Reader, please remember to save your document as you go so you don't lose your answers when you close the application!

Did I get it right?

How do you know if the Why is right? You may have a physical response (goose bumps or welling up). It's important that it feels right. If you can't state it perfectly, that's okay. Sometimes it takes some time to find the exact words that really inspire you.

Tips to improve your pitch

We've all felt the pressure of the ticking clock; only a few seconds to effectively "sell" ourselves. The reason it often fails is that we try to do too much in a short time. We oversell. We try to close the deal. But remember, the goal of any elevator pitch is simply to inspire a conversation. It's not to get the job or land the deal – it's just to inspire someone to ask for more.

An elevator pitch is important even after we find a job we love. When we're clear and focused on why we do what we do, we set out to meet people and build relationships that can help us achieve that greater purpose. We're always pitching. Great relationships are built on trust and trust is not built in 30 seconds. However, by talking about who we are and what we're working toward, that 30 seconds can lead to a much larger conversation. Here are some tips to help make that happen:


Tip #1: Tell them who you are

Instead of telling what you know and what you've done, tell them something about who you are. A great way to achieve this is to tell a quick story of your childhood or early experience.

Example: When I was a kid, I wanted to be an astronaut. I love the idea of exploring the unknown and doing things most people never get to do. I'd dream about going to space and telling everyone what it was like. Although I didn't end up being an astronaut, that passion for the unknown has stayed with me. I love being the guinea pig, trying things first, and sharing my perspective with others.

Guess what?

It's called an elevator pitch because it's meant to be delivered in the span of time of an elevator ride.

Simon says 

"People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it."

Immediately those who are like you will be inspired by your story. They will find you interesting enough to want to learn more about you. Once you've built a good Why-based connection, the traditional stuff like job experience or skills becomes a piece of a bigger conversation. It's true, some may be turned off by your story, but if your story is a good reflection of who you are – if you love your story – then you wouldn't want to work for them anyway. Working for someone who thinks the stories you love are wonderful is a good start to finding a job you love.

Simon says 

"If you talk like a scientist, only scientists will understand you. If you talk like a trucker, everyone will understand you."

Tip #2: Keep it simple

Avoid flowery language or big words. The more clearly you can communicate your Why, the more easily you will be understood.

Example: When I was a teenager, I served in my community as a Big Brother to a 5th grader who lived alone with his mom. Over the couple of years that I spent with him, I realized what an amazing kid he was and that he was able to do so much better in school and at home when he had someone he could talk to and trust. I think all of us are a little like that 5th grade kid. We do better when we have people around us who care about us and who build us up. I'm at my best when I can be that person for those around me.

Tip #3: Think of the problem you help to identify and solve

Think of a problem you're good at solving. Your value to an organization comes from your ability to work to your strengths. What are you supremely good at? What comes naturally to you that has made a tangible difference in your work experience? Tell them that and make sure they know you love doing that. If you do, your passion will shine through.

Example: One of my strengths is helping teams work more efficiently. One of the ways I do that is to capture and organize seemingly intangible knowledge that's stored only in people's heads. I've worked with a lot of teams and have noticed the precious time and resources spent on relearning information after a colleague has left the company, which inevitably slows progress. By capturing and making that valuable knowledge available to others, organizations can focus their time moving forward, rather than trying to play catch up.

Tip #4: Slow is better

Sometimes it can be a little nerve wracking to express everything we want to say in such a short period of time. Choose your words carefully so that you can give your elevator pitch without rushing through it. As great as it may be, if people can't keep up with what you're saying, you'll miss opportunities for the important conversations that lead to being able to hand out your resume.

try this! ↘

1. After each sentence, pause. Think about what you just said. Is all the information **really** necessary at this point?
2. Slow down to the point that it feels a little uncomfortable. It may sound too slow while you're speaking, but if you record yourself you'll be amazed at how much clearer and more confident you come across when you speak slowly.
3. Be conscious of your tone of voice. Relax. You're communicating with another human being who has feelings and emotions and who has the capacity to be inspired.

Tip #5: Make eye contact

Whether you're speaking to one person or a room full of people, eye contact helps you connect with others. If you're giving an elevator pitch in front of a group, make eye contact with different people in the room throughout your pitch. Try to give a complete sentence or whole thought to one person. Then, focus on another individual for your next phrase or thought. Focusing your attention on people rather than on the wall at the back of the room or your notes will help you connect on a more personal level.

Tip #6: Tell people what you're looking for

If you don't tell people what you're looking for they won't know what you're looking for or how they can help you. If they can't help you, maybe they know someone else who can.



[Check out Why University >](#)

Tip #7: Record yourself

If you're worried about how you come across, try recording yourself. It's important to hear what others will hear. As you listen to the recording, ask yourself:

- Do I sound confident?
- Do I give enough/too much content for the amount of time I have to fill?
- Do I communicate a little about who I am before I launch into what I can do?
- Do I repeat any concepts or ideas that don't need to be said more than once? (If you can take out repetitive information, it allows you to include something else of importance.)
- Do I identify a problem I see and how I contribute to solving that problem?

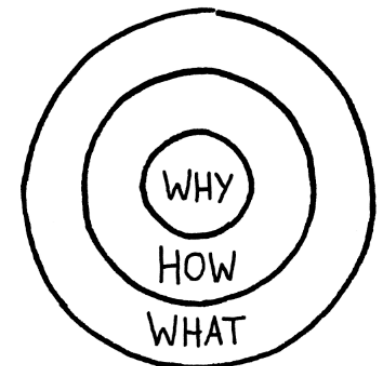
Tip #8: Be patient

The Golden Circle illustrates the three components that lead to lasting and fulfilling success:

- Clarity of Why
- Discipline of How
- Consistency of What

The problem is, we've spent most of our lives thinking, acting and communicating from the outside-in. It takes practice to do it in reverse. It's like riding a bicycle: at first we are unsure and unsteady. We are thinking about what we need to do, really concentrating. Sometimes we may even fall over and scrape our knees, but that doesn't mean we can't do it. All it means is that we need to keep practicing.

Starting with Why is no different. At first it will feel awkward. It may not even work. But with practice, the ability to think, act and communicate from the inside-out of The Golden Circle, to start with Why, will become so natural that you can't even imagine a time when you couldn't do it ... just like riding a bicycle.



The Golden Circle

Learn how to go from What to Why

Following are two versions of an elevator pitch – a traditional one and a Why-driven one.

Traditional elevator pitch

My name is Allison Carver and I specialize in Project Management. I've helped companies of all sizes deliver on their strategic plans for over 15 years.

My attention to detail and aptitude for structure and planning has allowed me to consistently complete projects on time and on budget. I help companies have a better understanding of their short and long-term goals and how they can reach those more efficiently.

The greatest asset I provide is improved predictability for project budgets and completion. No one likes to spend excessive money or time to reach their strategic goals and I help ensure that they don't have to.

Why-driven elevator pitch

- 1 I believe that every one of us has an amazing capacity to achieve something great. If only we had someone by our side, watching our backs and helping us get the things we want to get done, actually done. My name is Allison Carver and I'm the Lieutenant every General wishes they had.
- 2 For over 15 years my ability to build structure, provide support and to advocate for others has become better and better and better. A huge key to my success in supporting others is my organizational skills. Because I'm highly organized, I can manage projects with lots of moving parts quite easily, which reduces the stress of my colleagues and allows them to do what they're really good at.
- 3 If we're not moving forward, we're moving backwards. I'm up for a challenge. I'm looking for a team that will push me to get even better. All that I have learned, all that I can contribute and all that I will continue to learn goes to the person or company whose vision inspires me.

Consider this

It takes practice to reverse our thinking. But with practice, thinking, acting and communicating from the inside-out of The Golden Circle becomes second nature.

1. Allison confidently states her Why.
2. She identifies a problem she's able to solve and how that solution benefits others.
3. She tells them what she's looking for in a company.

This exercise will help you put some structure around your elevator pitch based on a few of the ideas we've brought up. For each section of the elevator pitch, write a couple of sentences you could use. When you're done, go back over them and choose the one that feels best. Put them all together and see how it sounds.

try this!
←

You'll probably tweak and change a few things, but that's OK. It will evolve with time. Once you get the words and flow that feel right, you may even want to print it out and carry it with you in case you need to pull it out and refresh your memory until you have it down.

1. Start with Why – A story or a statement that communicates what I believe/who I am, and what I am working toward:

2. A problem, situation or issue I'm really good at making better:



Check out Why University ▶

3. The kind of opportunity I'm looking for:

Remember, now that you have the structure of your elevator pitch in place, practice, practice, practice. It's just like riding a bike. The more you say it, the easier it becomes, until it's second nature. Your elevator pitch doesn't only have to be for potential employers. Tell your family and friends too! Once they have a sense of who you are and what type of job would bring you fulfillment, they can be sources of possible opportunities as well.

Simon says 

“The visionaries aren't always the ones who have the ideas, they are the ones who can clearly communicate them to others.”

Test yourself



After you give your elevator pitch, ask yourself the following questions to help ensure that it's inspiring:

- Did I communicate who I am in a way that is simple to understand? If I used a story, was I concise and to the point?
- Was I inspired by the first two or three sentences of my pitch? (Did I get goose bumps, chills or another visceral response?)
- Did I feel rushed or anxious? (It's difficult to hide these feelings. If you're feeling it, chances are the person you are speaking with is too.)
- Was it short enough for an elevator ride?

A final thought

You now understand the importance of communicating from the inside-out of The Golden Circle (Why, How, What). Though it's a simple concept to understand, it's not always easy to implement. Each time you successfully start with Why, the purpose, cause or belief that drives you, you're one step closer to landing the job you love.

People who land a job they love find their work more meaningful. They feel like they're making a difference and they are happy at work. People who are happy at work, go home happy and those happy people make happier husbands, wives, moms, dads, neighbors and friends. A Why-driven resume, cover letter, elevator pitch and interview experience can make the difference between finding a job you can tolerate five days a week, and a job you absolutely love; a job that will be a reflection of who you really are.

When you're on the job hunt, it's easy to focus on salary, benefits and perks as the compensation package. Remember, those perks are important, but aren't the only things that matter. They don't bring lasting happiness. Lasting happiness, fulfillment, comes from making a contribution to something bigger than ourselves.

Simon says 

"The standard for your job should be 'I love what I do' for the same reason that it is better to fall in love than to fall in like."

Want to know more?

Learn how to create a Why-driven resume and cover letter and get helpful tips on interviewing so you can land the job you love.



Imagine a world in which the vast majority of people wake up everyday inspired to go to work in the morning and return home fulfilled by the work they do.

This is the world we are working to build, and by finding a job you love you are helping to build it. Thank you for being a part of this movement.

When you land a job you love, would you please let us know so we can celebrate with you?

Drop us a line at inspireme@startwithwhy.com.

We are always striving toward continuous improvement. Based on feedback and success stories, this guide will change. As updates and additions are made, we'll forward them on to you for free.