



energized and inspired after a year of reflection on our purpose

By Jim Hart, President and CEO, Senn Delaney



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Motivation allows people to achieve goals, but does not inspire them. Inspiration that comes from clarity of your purpose makes people happier, more authentic in their work and motivated from within, propelled by the belief that their ideas can have great influence.



A year ago, I wrote an article about organizational purpose being one of the most powerful driving forces in successful companies. I am even more convinced that this is true today.

Why? Because we are seeing the results first hand in our own company. Our consultants and employees are starting 2011 more aligned, energized and inspired after having spent a year understanding Senn Delaney's purpose and defining their own personal purpose and examining how their purpose aligns with and supports our purpose. It has been a surprisingly enriching learning journey that continues in the year ahead.

Why are we doing this? At least three important reasons come quickly to mind.

Number one is that we understand that if we are to achieve our purpose, we need to live it and "be the message," for ourselves and for our clients who rely on our expertise to guide them to create thriving, high-performance cultures. We cannot tell leaders to model the culture they want for their organization if we don't do that ourselves every day, in our thinking, our behaviors and our actions.

The second reason stems from our deeply held belief that purpose is what moves people beyond motivation to inspiration. Motivation allows people to achieve goals, but does not inspire them. Inspiration that comes from clarity of your purpose makes people happier, more authentic in their work and motivated from within, propelled by the belief that their ideas can have great influence. By slowing down and reconnecting with our purpose we are having the most meaningful impact and inspiring other leaders.

Dr. Wayne Dyer stated this in a similar way: "When you are inspired by a great purpose, everything will begin to work for you. This is why inspiration is such an important part of the fulfillment of your intention to live a life on purpose. When you feel inspired, what appeared to be risky becomes a path you feel compelled to follow. The risks are gone because you are following your bliss, which is the truth within you."

Tony Hsieh, CEO of Zappos.com, published a book in 2010 called *Delivering Happiness: A Path to Profits, Passion, and Purpose*. He makes the very interesting point that motivation is different from inspiration: People will work harder if they are motivated — but they would work even harder if they were inspired.

Delivering Happiness represents the story of all the Zappos employees — of their

shared purpose of making others happy by offering the best possible customer experience. Hsieh teaches us that building a community of people driven to fulfill a common purpose is what builds true success and wealth.

Companies with a strong purpose create a distinct competitive advantage

The third reason that we are committed to our exploration of purpose is one every CEO can relate to: our findings in working with clients is that those with a strong, clear purpose and an organization truly aligned around and living that purpose tend to have outstanding business results. Burson-Marsteller and IMD business school affirmed this in a 2010 study, *The Corporate Purpose Impact*. The study found that corporate purpose enhances financial performance, and can contribute up to 17 percent of the financial performance of leading companies.

One example of how a defined purpose has created a distinct competitive advantage is our work with USAA. The financial services company that serves military families has a committed focus on the culture of going above and beyond — and doing the right thing because it is the right thing to do. CEO Gen. Joseph Robles attributes a big part of USAA's success to the passionate commitment of leaders and frontline employees to

USAA's six cultural pillars and to working from a higher purpose of serving military families. The company has enjoyed robust growth, garnered top ratings for financial strength and regularly ranks the best in customer satisfaction.

Zappos and USAA, like many great companies, are examples of organizations that operate from the inside-out of what marketing consultant Simon Sinek calls the "golden circle." All organizations and individuals function on three levels: what you do, how you do it and why you do it. Most people and companies know what they do and how they do it, but many have not clearly defined why they do what they do, beyond the obvious answer of making money.

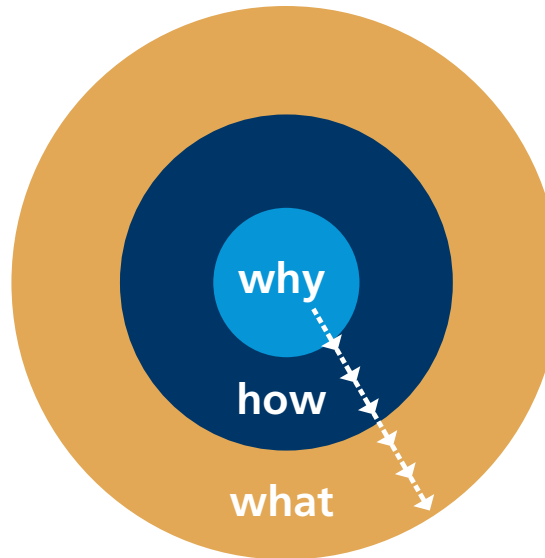
Sinek turns that thinking around, challenging leaders and companies to first determine the why. Why does your organization exist? Why do you get out of bed every morning? Why should anyone care?

Establishing and clearly communicating the why should be the starting point that focuses teams and organizations around the how, which is the guiding principles or specific actions companies take to realize or bring their why to life.

At Senn Delaney, we have always had a strong vision that guides our work, but as we got more focused on our purpose, we had the powerful realization that we had a higher purpose that drives our work and our passion. The Sinek golden circle illustration above shows how we define our why: our purpose; our how: our vision; and our what: our strategy.

Defining our organizational purpose was a strong start, but to really live that purpose requires all the people who make up our company to make a personal connection to that purpose. They are only able to do that through developing a clear understanding of their own individual purposes and how they can align around and contribute authentically to living Senn Delaney's purpose.

Here is how we define our golden circle:



Our why = our purpose:

We positively impact the world by inspiring leaders to create thriving organizational cultures.

Our how = our vision

We enrich the spirit and performance of organizations.

Our what = our strategy

We provide leading-edge, high-quality culture-shaping services to Fortune 1000 companies to help them achieve better business results.

One of the ways we are able to successfully shape cultures in our client organizations is through inspiration drawn from experiential learning that connects people at a gut level to the desired behaviors they need to shift. We used that same powerful approach within our organization.

That is why throughout 2010, we gathered small groups of our field and office staff together at a series of three-day experiential learning sessions in an informal and charming Victorian hotel far from the corporate settings so we could be truly present without the distractions of work.

We were not only focused on creating greater clarity around our purpose, but we wanted every person at Senn Delaney to come out of these sessions with some kind of personal purpose articulated; who they authentically are, and what drives them in their lives and thinking.

Each of us has a purpose that gets us out of bed each day, excited about life, motivated to make things happen. Not many of us take the time to actually think about and define what that "personal

purpose" is. These sessions were a powerful catalyst for that awareness.

This was not a one-time exercise or event, but a starting point for people to begin to define and refine their purpose back in their work and personal lives. By actually putting pen to paper to state their purpose (which is often a work in progress), and then making certain specific commitments to showing up in the spirit of that purpose, they become clearer and most in sync with that purpose. When they are not operating at their best, and that feels out of integrity with their stated purpose, they have a higher awareness of that and a guidepost for finding their way back more easily.

You do not create a life purpose; you draw it out of yourself through a higher awareness of what you naturally do best in life, what you already offer the world and what you aspire to be in life.

A year ago, I wrote that if leaders encourage employees and create an environment for them to understand their own purpose and direction and how it connects with the company's, it will increase

their personal inspiration, satisfaction and performance. Even the highest-performing companies can benefit from slowing down and looking in the mirror to get clear on and aligned with their purpose.

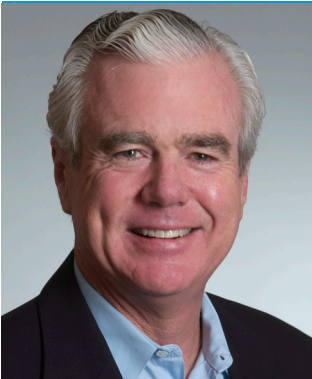
I can now say for a fact that Senn Delaney has become a stronger, more inspired firm for our year of exploration and reflection.

It's been gratifying and exciting to be a part of this exploration and learning. By sharing some of our purpose journey, I hope you will find a deeper connection to yours. After all, as author Thomas Thiss states: "Having a purpose is the difference between making a living and making a life." ■

Are you bringing your purpose to life?

Here are some questions to consider as you examine whether you are bringing your purpose to life in your company and the world:

- Do your employees know what your company's purpose really is, the why you exist?
- Do employees feel like they have a personal connection to that purpose and their role in achieving it?
- What is your purpose in leading?
- Do your clients and customers clearly understand your purpose and what it means to them?
- Are you willing to make the hard decisions that need to be made to remain true to your organization's purpose?



about the author

Jim Hart is President and CEO of Senn Delaney. He has 30 years of experience working with top leaders of Fortune 1000 companies around the world to create Thriving leaders and organizational cultures that consistently deliver better results. He has led engagements in many industries, including telecommunications, aerospace, energy, retailing, financial services, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals and high technology.

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