

Re:Focus

simple ideas to help you thrive

by Simon Sinek

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We don't miss the things we like, we miss the things we love. Pets. Family. That girlfriend or boyfriend that got away. Believe it or not, the same is true for companies.

Love is an emotional bond, and emotional bonds come in all shapes and sizes. We can form an emotional bond with things that remind us of the past. I LOVE the Jungle Book, for example, because it was the first feature length film I saw in the movies. I remember my mother taking me to see it. It was such an exciting day.

We can form an emotional bond with things that remind us of someone we love. I LOVE the smell of this one kind of factory lubricant because it reminds me of my Grandfather who worked at a factory and always smelled like work.

And we can form emotional bonds with things that reinforce our world view and reflect our own values and beliefs. I LOVE Lady GaGa because she exists to encourage all the misfits in the world to find their own style, their own voice and embrace it.

Like is different. Like is rational. Even if you like something a lot, you don't have an emotional bond with it. In other words, you won't go out of your way to get it, you won't be loyal to it and you won't miss it if it's taken away

There are some products and brands that many of us would miss if they were taken away. Harley-Davidson was going out of business until the employees rallied to keep the company going. I am not sure if the folks at GM are going out of their way to preserve that brand. Harley was not just liked, it was loved.

The way to create a company or product that people love is to infuse it with a belief, a point of view. Something people can relate to. No one will fall in love with your product because it's the highest quality. They may like it a lot, but they won't love it. No one will love your company because your company is the biggest. Size alone doesn't command loyalty.

People love Southwest Airlines because their brand, their people, their service and their marketing reflect the belief in the common man. People love Disney because everything they say and do is about good clean family fun. Other companies make age-appropriate cartoons for kids, but Disney movies "feel" different. People love Patagonia because their brand, their people, their products and their marketing reflect that genuine outdoor spirit. It's not faked. It's real.

Your quality, service, features and price may get people to like you...they may even like you a lot. But if you want people to LOVE your products, brand or company, then what you do has to stand for something. Everything has to reflect the purpose, cause or belief upon which the company was founded in the first place. And if everything you do brings that founding belief to life, you can enjoy a lifetime of loyalty from the people who work for you and the people who buy your products. Don't you just love that?