

Re:Focus

simple ideas to help you thrive

by Simon Sinek

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On a recent visit to the Southwest Airlines corporate headquarters in Dallas, I saw first hand why their customers love them so much. It's because Southwest loves its employees.

Nearly every single company on the planet will say publicly that they care about their customers, but most only "care" because their customers are the ones with the money. To REALLY care about customers means you care about them as human beings, not as walking cash dispensers.

The best way to see if a company REALLY cares about their customers is to look inside to see if they care about their employees first.

100% of customers are people and 100% of employees are people. A company either cares about people or they don't. It can't care about some and not others. That's like being half pregnant.

There is no such thing as a company that loves its employees that doesn't also love its customers. And it's impossible for a company to claim it cares about its customers if it doesn't care about its employees first. And "to care," I don't mean to care about them as robots paid to do a job, I mean care about them as human beings.

All the "best companies to work for" are also the best companies to do business with. Container Store, Zappos and Whole Foods, are just three examples of companies known to care about their people and, as a result, are also loved by their customers. It is that combination that makes these companies and others like them more innovative, able to charge a premium if they want to and more financially successful. They don't treat their people well because they are leaders, they are leaders because they treat their people well.



The picture above is one of the pictures I took at the Southwest HQ. EVERY hallway there is filled with pictures of their people. It's not the pictures on the wall that make the culture strong. The culture is strong because they go to great lengths to hire people who "belong." They go out of their way to care about their employees as human beings. The pictures on the wall are just one of the things they do to prove how much they love their people.

Southwest is a great place to work and their people get along. As a result, their people REALLY care about the customers and their customers repay them with undying loyalty.

I wish there were more companies who REALLY cared about their employees as much as Southwest, because then we'd all enjoy doing business with more companies and more companies would enjoy doing business with us.