



Why it had to be better2best...

A few weeks ago an article by Simon Sinek named “Why better is better than best?” caught my attention. It happens to be that I choose “b2b” as a catching company name. Moreover, b2b stands for better2best. Consequently, I was more than curious to find out what Simon Sinek’s key messages were...

So why did I choose better2best?

I simply wanted to make the statement that you don’t become the best leader, collaborator or employee overnight. It takes a lot of hard work on the one hand. It takes a gradual build-up of relational skills on the other hand. And an effective leader always knows that he or she has to raise the bar on the latter.

I also wanted to stress that only better leads to best. You aren’t born as the best. Aspiring to become the best requires ambition and self-reflection. It requires you to reflect consciously on your strengths and weaknesses. It requires you to work on each of your weaknesses with self-confidence, one after the other. It requires you to grow and excel each day in your key strengths.

And you do not become the best (in anything) instantly. People do indeed overestimate the (personal) change they can accomplish in a short period of time. They also, however, underestimate the change they are able to realize in the long term. Going for the best is a short-term run. Going for better is a long-term run, requiring discipline and character.

Becoming a better leader is also far more noble than becoming the best. A leader is human, with a set of shortcomings, like anybody else. Indeed, as a leader, you don’t always have the best ideas. Often one of your team members – having gained the relevant expertise – comes up with a better idea than yours. Balancing your shortcomings as a leader requires collaboration and interaction. Therefore, an effective leader surrounds him or herself with team members that often have better ideas.

A leader that wants to do better also has a learning mindset. He always should be willing and eager to improve, step by step. A leader should aspire to be the best, but he must never think he is the best.

I also wanted to express that the challenge we face as an individual, team and organization is to be “at our best” more often. And therefore we have to feel better more often. This includes demonstrating feelings and behavior such as creativity, collaboration, positive energy, resourcefulness, confidence, accountability and commitment.

All of the above is why I have chosen better2best. It leads from good to great. And as we reflect with an agile mindset in an ever changing world, great means something else than perfect. Wasn't it Voltaire who wrote "the best is the enemy of the good" as achieving absolute perfection may be impossible. Let's just go for better.

But what about Simon Sinek's view? Luckily I have the impression that our thoughts are aligned... "If you do better every day, you 'll end up being the best one day..."

I don't know whether it is a coincidence – his latest book "The infinite mindset" is still on my reading list - but Simon Sinek appears to also frame it perfectly in an infinite mindset. Indeed, if you strive every day to do better than the day before, you are well aware that there is always room for improvement. Moreover, you realize that it is an everlasting journey... to go where "no man" has gone before... and outrun the bear.

I've added the article, I hope it will inspire you to get into that 'better2best' mindset.



Why better is better than best? – by Simon Sinek

The fastest runners in the world run between 12-14mph (19-23kph). The average bear runs between 30-40mph (48-64kph). That means if a bear decides to give chase, even world record-breaking sprinter Usain Bolt, could not outrun it.

But there is an adage: to get away from a bear you don't have to be the fastest runner in the world, you just have to be faster than the guy behind you.

The same is true in business.

It is amazing how many businesses, big and small, like to present themselves as "the best." I once met an optometrist, for example, who bragged to me that her store had "the best service in the industry." A claim that is simply untrue—or at least there is no way to actually measure if it even is true. At the end of the day, there is no way for any business to say they offer the best of anything—service, quality or features. There are no standard metrics and most companies have no idea who all their competitors are.

The good news is, you don't need to be the best. You need to be better. "The best" is an impossible standard that lacks credibility. But "better" is a realistic claim and a much easier comparison to make. The optometrist I met should have told me that she was "driven to offer better service than any of the other stores in the area and, more importantly, to outdo her own great service every year." To her, this seemingly lower claim is actually much more realistic, much more believable and much more appealing.

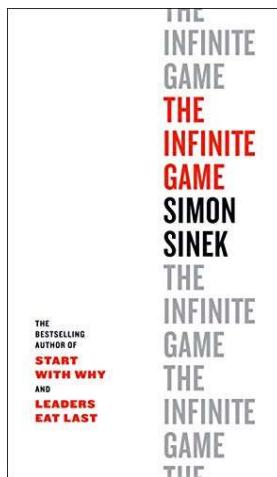
The standard of "better" also keeps you on your toes. Like being chased by a bear, you always have to be one step ahead not to get eaten. Being better means you have to keep pushing, learning and improving because there is still room for improvement (not to mention there is a huge bear running behind you). Being the best offers only a short-term advantage.

Once you're the best, there is no incentive to push any harder and laziness or hubris start to set in (think about any big company that made it to the top of their industry only to be bashed from all sides by every competitor ... bashed by everyone working to be better). And for all those "bests" out there who believe their incentive is to stay the best, they are fooling themselves. Just as there is much more of an incentive to lose a few pounds than to stay the same weight, just as there is much more of an incentive to run your next race faster than to run it at the same pace, the incentive to improve is always more powerful than the false incentive to stay in one place, even if it's the best.

Any great athlete, company or leader that is actually capable of staying ahead of the pack for any significant period of time is able to do so not because they think they are the best, but because they show up every day to do better than their most important competitor of all: themselves.

Pushing yourself and those around you to be the best is unsustainable. Pushing yourself and those around you to be better is the only way to be the best.

... and outrun the bear.



Many thanks for viewing my post, I hope you found it useful? If you did, would you share it with your network who might also enjoy it.

We all want change, but we constantly tend to fall into our old habits. Are you looking for someone who can give that little push so that you and your co's will effectively support change? Then you've come to the right place. I am ready to guide you, with humor, creativity and lots of passion for cultural change.

b2b - www.better2best.be – Alain Surkol 0497/591333 – alain.surkol@telenet.be
