

Leaders Eat Last:

Why Some Teams Pull Together and Others Don't

Book's Argument: For Sinek, we need to re-orient ourselves toward what it means to be human in order to make the world a better place. A focus on people entails understanding cultures, values, teamwork, trust, and relationships. These are the elements that fuel success predicated on leadership excellence. People enable success.



Key Takeaways: Leaders take care of their people and focus on the well-being of the organization. They see everyone as human and enable all members of the team to work for each other in a place they feel valued. They prioritize care of human beings.

Circle of Safety = Belonging = Values + Empathy + Trust + Cooperation + Problem Solving
 Culture = Hiring + Development

Leaders establish the standards of entry into the Circle of Safety. Our feelings of control, stress, and our ability to perform at our best are all directly tied to how safe we feel in our organization. Our species was built to manage in conditions of great danger and insufficient resources. Every single human, regardless of culture, is naturally inclined to cooperate. There are four primary chemicals that contribute to our positive feelings while serving a very real and practical purpose:

Selfish chemicals Chemicals of Progress	<i>Endorphins</i> (runner's high) <i>Dopamine</i> (incentive for progress)	Mask physical pain Feeling of satisfaction, accomplishment, goal-oriented	Driven to hunt, gather, and achieve (finding, building, and achieving)
Selfless chemicals Keep Circle of Safety Strong	<i>Serotonin</i> (leadership chemical) <i>Oxytocin</i> (chemical love)	Feeling of pride when we perceive others like or respect us Feeling of friendship, love, deep trust	Manner in which we make progress Trust, belonging, good of group, fulfillment

Organizational culture, or environment, stimulates cortisol production. In response to varying levels of stress and anxiety, cortisol is our first level of flight or fight response. It is designed to alert us to possible danger and prepare us to take extra measures to protect ourselves to raise our chances of survival. In light of this, **we have the ability to create an environment in which people naturally thrive and advance the good of the organization.** People willingly commit their blood, sweat, and tears to see the tribe, the company, advance and grow stronger because they want to. To a social animal, trust is lubrication. It reduces friction and creates conditions much more conducive to performance. The more distance there is between or the more things we do that amplify the abstraction, the harder it becomes to see each other as human and trustworthy. Abstract concepts have human consequences. As such, we must keep it real (bring together), keep it manageable (acknowledge cognitive limitations), meet the people we help, give our time, and be patient. The following are seminal leadership lessons:

So goes the culture, so goes the company
 So goes the leader, so goes the culture
 Integrity matters
 Friends matter
 Lead the people, not the numbers

Best Quote: "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader." – John Quincy Adams "Trust is a biological reaction to the belief that someone has our well-being at heart." **"Let us all be the leaders we wish we had."** – Simon Sinek

Why it's important: A commitment to help others is all about service. Once we acknowledge this, we may begin to unveil the elements within the culture that are impediments to realizing an environment that is most conducive for optimal performance.