

A large white question mark is positioned on the left side of the image. The background is a bright blue sky with soft, white clouds. In the bottom right corner, a person's hand is visible, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt, with the index finger pointing upwards towards the top right of the frame.

Can Business Save the World?

Joey Reiman

Business people are the new superheroes.
And they are here to save the world.
Their super power is purpose. And with it
they intend to improve and save billions
of lives while putting millions more dollars
back into the economy.

No force on the planet is greater than purpose, because purpose gives us our reason for being and doing. When you discover your purpose, you become unstoppable. It works the same for business.

As someone who thinks for a living, I make money by making meaning. If your business today would do the same thing, it could in a herculean sense lift the world and garner financial rewards way beyond your latest financial projections.

You are not reading this article by accident. You picked it up because the world today needs lifting up. Teetering economies, inequities and a crisis in meaning are villains that threaten our days. But business has recognized its response-ability and is coming to the rescue. Occupy Wall Street occupied our minds. But purpose comes from the heart and is here to save the day.

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It's simple: the higher the purpose, the higher the profit. It sounds easy, but it requires a journey back to your beginnings to discover what made you great in the first place. You'd think a business already knows why it exists. As the CEO and Founder of BrightHouse, a company that helps companies discover their purpose, I have been surprised to find in nearly two decades of doing this work not one brand or company could clearly articulate their purpose.

Business is everywhere and part of every human endeavor. That means we, and you, have the means to move from just selling goods and services to creating good in service of our future business. Together, with business working on purpose, we can guide and inspire society to new heights.

Compared to today, business was a relatively insignificant institution 150 years ago. But the corporation is today's dominant institution. Modern business is no longer interested in purchasing the world; It wants to protect it as well. In moving from a shareholder model to stakeholder model, commerce is expanding its orbit of caring to all peoples on the planet.

A famous quote by philosopher Aristotle tells us that where one's distinctive talents intersect with the needs of the world; there lies your vocation or calling. Like people, businesses find their vocation or purpose at this intersection. It is here that business will discover the opportunity to better and brighten the world—even save it!

Once we understand that we can work in the company of something greater, we will see endless ways for doing business in a profitable and sustainable manner. Coming apart will break us. Coming together will make us. This is the next chapter in the story of business. Help me write it. You have a voice in this story. Yes, you.

Each of us in business today is going to be a lead character in improving the story of humanity. And we are all the authors of a better tomorrow. By being the hero in the larger story of life, your business can revitalize the sectors of health, education, equality, and sustainability.

Until now, the goal of business has been to improve the bottom line and make shareholders rich.

But an exciting movement is afoot today—one that's led by a new vanguard of business leaders who believe in a greater purpose for business: to make the world a richer and more meaningful place to live.

In these amazing times, when purpose-branded companies are redefining what success looks like, it's critical to change the way your company thinks.

So here's what you need to know:

1. **Business is learning that purpose equals earning**—earning greater respect, larger profits, and the most coveted prize of all, a better world. Our institutions and icons are under great scrutiny. We have lost trust in many of them. But people like people who like them back. Business is no different, and those “likes” translate into profits you will love.
2. **Competition will be out of business.** Fierce competition is not sustainable. Compassion is. The Latin root of the word competition—competere—gives us a clue of what the future will look like. It means to thrive together. In the decade to come, businesses will focus on the business of life and will work for the largest client of all—society. If we put humanity back in business, business will come back for good.

3. **Make more good more available to more people.** Purpose-driven organizations create more good in the world, which begets greater profit, which allows them to then create even more good. It's a virtuous, never-ending circle. And creating good is more sustainable than selling goods. It's a model that can serve over 5 billion people who are currently underserved, undervalued and financially underwater.
4. **Discover your Why Factor.** When I arrive at an organization that yearns for purpose, I find that most companies assume their purpose is their mission. But, as they soon learn, a mission is what you do today, a vision is where you are going tomorrow, and a purpose is why you are here in the first place. Answer *why* and every *who* in the world will want your *what*, helping you get where you want to go faster.

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5. **Turn your brand into a stand.** In this new era for business and marketing, the best brands will be built upon the solid foundation of their purpose for existing—on a fundamental human truth, a universal good, a deep-seated conviction that outlasts campaigns, opens minds, deepens relationships, and aligns all associates (quickly becoming advocates) around something they stand for. Alignment and advocacy win the day.
6. **The fruits are in your roots.** If you want a fruitful future, go back to the roots of your organization to discover what made you great in the first place. Apple was not about computers, but unleashing our creativity. Nike was not about shoes, but improving the human race. Whole Foods is not about bagging vegetables or customers, but about growing a healthier planet.
7. **The best story wins.** We human beings are meaning-seeking creatures. When we were kids, a good bedtime story put us to sleep. As adults, a good daytime story wakes us up to the possibilities of what you and your business can do for the world. The best stories don't sell—they tell, they inform, and they create and share an identity. In *The Story of Purpose*, I share the stories of the world's most purposeful companies and give you the tools and strategies to tell your own story so you too can become the stuff of legend.

Mark Twain said the best two days of your life were the day you were born and the day you find out why. Your brand feels just the same way. Discovering your purpose delivers unprecedented clarity, a better strategy, and empowers you to make a genuine impact on people's lives. It guides and inspires those in your company as well as those your company serves. The new bottom line is that meaning and money go hand in hand.

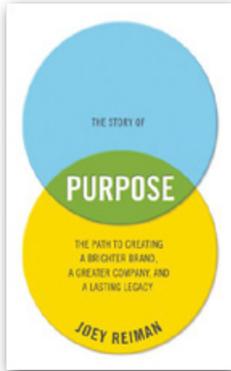
Businesses without purpose might make a profit in the short term, but organizations with purpose make a difference in the long run, and are more sustainable because there's a deep need for them in the world. Their focus is not only sharing profit but also sharing the response-ability to make the world work better. The new purpose of business is to create and add value to people's lives. It's a win-win, and superhero leaders mean business.

There has never been a more powerful time to be in business. Businesses are getting the world going again, because of people who are waking up to purposeful business models and the ability to create profit while profiting humankind.

So, discover your purpose by beginning your journey right now. Purpose is a super power that will create better brands, brighter companies and lasting legacies. And you don't need bright tights to take your business and the world to new heights. *The Story of Purpose* is about businesses as human organizations saving the world.

Join me in writing the next chapter. Yours... and ours. 📖

Info



BUY THE BOOK | Get more details or buy a copy of [The Story of Purpose](#).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR | Joey is CEO and founder of BrightHouse. Over the past 25 years, Joey has worked with leadership at The Coca-Cola Company, Procter & Gamble, McDonald's and Newell Rubbermaid, and has emerged as one of the nation's foremost visionaries and leading authorities on thinking and marketing. He is the best-selling author of several books, and a world-renowned speaker who provides listeners with the inspiration and foresight needed to become leaders of the future. A graduate of Brandeis University, Joey has won more than 500 creative awards in national and international competitions, including the Cannes Film Festival.

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