



FORMING RESPONSIBLE LEADERS

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Aligning Personal Aspirations with Institutional Needs

St. Ignatius of Loyola's Letter: On Desire to Study

This is a letter he wrote To Brother Giovanni Battista, on May 23 in 1556 from Rome

Brother Giovanni Battista was the buyer at the Jesuit college in Padua and for some time had been growing unhappy as a coadjutor brother and now desired to take up studies. He made this proposal to his rector, who in turn passed it on to Ignatius in Rome. Ignatius interpreted the brother's desire for studies to be a temptation, and within that framework wrote to him telling him that he is surprised that the brother had fallen for the ruse. Ignatius adds that considering Giovanni's age and his natural capabilities, studies would be a waste of time, and reminds him that in the Society, as in the human body, there is a variety of members, and that each member must be content with the task that God offers him through the will of the superior. Ignatius' letter is in Italian [Ep. 11:437-438].

St. Ignatius writes: In the body all the members are not eyes, nor ears, nor hands, nor feet. And as each member has its function, and is satisfied with it, so likewise in the body of the Society all cannot be learned, nor all priests, but each one must be content with the employment given him according to the will and judgment of the superior, who will have to give an account to God for all his subjects.

The letter from Ignatius of Loyola to Brother Giovanni Battista addresses an inner conflict faced by the brother, who wished to shift from his current responsibilities to academic study. Ignatius interprets this desire not as genuine inspiration but as a subtle distraction that could lead him away from his true purpose. He reminds Giovanni that he had previously been advised to focus not on formal studies but on humble and supportive service, suited to his strengths, age, and disposition.

Ignatius stresses that not every individual is meant for the same tasks. Using the analogy of the human body, he explains that diversity of roles is essential for harmony and effectiveness. He emphasizes the importance of obedience, trust in leadership, and contentment with one's assigned responsibilities. Ultimately, he urges Giovanni to reflect deeply, correct his approach, and follow the path set out for him with humility and dedication.

Even though this letter was written in the 16th century, its message speaks powerfully to the world of today, especially to those stepping into leadership roles in a dynamic, competitive, and distraction filled environment. The themes of focus, humility, role clarity, and alignment with a larger mission are as relevant in modern institutions as they were in religious communities centuries ago. In a time when choices are abundant and career paths change rapidly, the letter invites emerging professionals to pause, reflect, and grow with intention.

Modern workplaces present endless alternatives: new certifications, shifting industries, side ventures, and constant digital distractions. The letter's warning about "temptation" can be understood as a reminder that not every appealing opportunity is the right one. Staying grounded in long-term goals is essential for meaningful growth. In today's organizations, success depends on people performing different yet complementary roles. Ignatius' metaphor of the human body mirrors modern teamwork: strategic thinkers, analysts, communicators, designers, and operators all play different but equally important parts. Recognizing this diversity strengthens collaboration and reduces unhealthy comparison.

Current leadership models consistently highlight humility as a trait that differentiates sustainable leaders from merely ambitious individuals. The letter's emphasis on accepting guidance and understanding one's strengths aligns with contemporary expectations of emotionally intelligent leadership. Career advancement today depends on striking a balance between personal goals and the institution's evolving needs. The letter highlights the importance of this alignment, a principle that remains vital in environments where adaptability and collaboration take precedence over individual preferences.

The Saint writes, reminding him of his call - *Finally, Giovanni Battista, if you have given all to God, allow yourself to be guided by God, and act not in your own way, but in God's way. You will have to learn this by obedience to your superior.*

The letter highlights the importance of seeking and trusting experienced guidance, especially when internal desires or external influences create confusion. Ignatius' call for self-examination mirrors today's emphasis on self-awareness which is a key component of emotional intelligence. Emerging leaders are encouraged to reflect on whether their decisions stem from true purpose or from impulsive reactions, pressure, or comparison.

From the essence of the letter, emerging leaders can take forward several enduring lessons: to embrace their present responsibilities with sincerity, recognizing that every role, whether visible or unseen, adds value to the organization; to remain grounded even in moments of ambition by discerning what truly contributes to growth; to cultivate humility and openness to guidance, knowing that genuine leadership begins with the willingness to learn; to appreciate the diversity of roles that collectively strengthen a team; to make self-reflection a continuous practice for aligning daily choices with long term purpose; and to balance personal aspirations with the organization's mission, ensuring that their development contributes meaningfully to a shared vision.

Dr Y Arul Sulochana
Assistant Professor, JIM

Beyond the Badge

In November, JIM meets team interacted with Mrs. K. Sathya Bhama, a devoted Sub-Inspector of Police at the Srirangam Police Station in Trichy City. With a profound dedication to public service, Mrs. Sathya has not only accepted her position in law enforcement but has also made noteworthy contributions to her community through her efforts and leadership.

Her father's long-held dream of seeing her in a police uniform encouraged her to join the department. Mrs. Sathya's excellent resume includes a stellar volleyball career, during which she served as Tamil Nadu captain for six years and competed in 13 national competitions.

She discussed the challenges she faces in her role, particularly as a female officer in a traditionally male-dominated field. *"It's not just about proving you're as good as the men; sometimes, it feels like you have to be twice as good just to be seen as equal. That pressure can be immense."*

Saying so, she highlighted the importance of resilience and adaptability, stating that overcoming obstacles is crucial for personal and professional growth. Mrs. Sathya also addressed the balance between her demanding career and family life, explaining how she manages her responsibilities as a police officer and a mother. She believes that strong support systems and effective time management are key to navigating these challenges.

For aspiring leaders and those in law enforcement, she underscored the importance of self-confidence and integrity. Sathya stated, *"Honesty and duty are the cornerstones of our profession,"* and encouraged others to embrace their roles with dedication and pride. The honesty and duty Mrs. Sathya speaks of are directly transferable to the corporate world. For an MBA student, this means viewing every decision through the lens of ethical integrity understanding that your duty is not just to the bottom line, but to your team, your customers, and your stakeholders. This is the cornerstone of sustainable leadership.



Mrs. Sathyabama K
Sub Inspector of Police
Srirangam

Interviewed by
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25PBA232

How November Shaped Business Confidence

In November 2025, global stock markets experienced a month of mixed fortunes, marked by volatility in equities and a stabilizing trend in bond markets. Investor sentiment was shaped by a combination of easing inflation, geopolitical uncertainties, and shifting trade policies, which together created a complex environment for businesses and economies worldwide. Equity markets, particularly in developed economies, showed resilience with double-digit gains year-to-date, but November itself was characterized by uneven performance. Technology stocks, which had driven much of the earlier rally, faced sharp swings as investors questioned whether valuations could be sustained.

Meanwhile, defensive sectors such as healthcare and utilities provided a measure of stability, reflecting a cautious approach among investors who were balancing optimism about innovation with concerns about global risks. Bond markets offered a more reassuring picture. Yields eased modestly as confidence grew in the disinflationary trend, reducing borrowing costs and encouraging corporate lending. This had a direct impact on businesses, particularly those in manufacturing and infrastructure, which benefited from cheaper financing for expansion projects.



The Small and Medium Enterprises also gained from improved lending conditions, though volatility in equities limited their ability to raise funds through public offerings. For multinational corporations, the month was a balancing act: while resilient demand in developed markets supported revenues, uncertainty around U.S. trade policies created challenges for export-driven firms. For the FMCG sector, the easing of inflation was a significant positive. As prices stabilized, households experienced improved real purchasing power, which translated into stronger demand for everyday essentials. The wealth effect from earlier equity gains also supported consumer confidence, encouraging spending on branded goods rather than cheaper substitutes. FMCG companies benefited from this trend, as stable demand allowed them to maintain margins even in the face of fluctuating input costs. Additionally, lower borrowing costs in bond markets provided opportunities for FMCG firms to invest in distribution networks, marketing, and product innovation, further strengthening their competitive position.

But volatility in equities created some uncertainty for firms seeking to raise capital through stock offerings, limiting expansion opportunities for smaller players in the sector. Consumer durables, on the other hand, experienced a more nuanced impact. These products ranging from appliances to automobiles are highly sensitive to interest rates and consumer sentiment. The decline in bond yields and improved lending conditions made financing more affordable, encouraging households to consider big-ticket purchases. This was particularly relevant in markets where consumer credit plays a major role in durable goods sales. The sector also benefited from the optimism around technological innovation, with investors showing interest in companies that integrated AI and smart technologies into their products.

India's The performance of the stock market in November had important implications for GDP. On the positive side, strong equity gains earlier in the year contributed to a wealth effect, boosting consumer spending and supporting demand. Lower yields encouraged investment, which is a direct driver of GDP growth, while cooling inflation improved real purchasing power, sustaining household consumption. These factors combined to create cautious optimism about economic expansion. Yet, risks remained. Persistent volatility in equities threatened to undermine investor confidence, and geopolitical tensions continued to cast a shadow over global trade flows. The uneven performance across sectors suggested that while some industries were poised for growth, others faced headwinds that could limit their contribution to overall GDP.

For businesses, November's market dynamics underscored the importance of adaptability. Firms that could leverage lower borrowing costs to invest in innovation and expansion were well-positioned to benefit, while those reliant on equity markets for funding needed to navigate volatility carefully. Consumer-facing businesses gained from improved purchasing power, but they also had to remain alert to shifts in sentiment that could arise from market instability. The broader economy, meanwhile, stood at a crossroads: supported by disinflation and fiscal stimulus, yet vulnerable to external shocks.



Godwin Ginus A
25PBA223

Focus on the Present – Mistaken?

Values are part of inheritance, right? When we consider inheritance, we frequently think of material wealth, such as cash, jewels, real estate, or treasures that have been passed down through the generations. But ironically, the values, beliefs, customs, and narratives that define who we are, are a deeper and richer form of heritage than these tangible belongings. These intangible legacies shape the moral and cultural fabric of families, impacting the decisions we make, the bonds we build, and the values we cherish, tying us to our origins. The power of wealth, birthright, and progeny raises deep concerns about duty and justice. Thinking about birthright should make us reflect on what we owe to society and our families. Unquestionably, wealth inheritance influences social mobility, but it also runs the risk of sustaining inequality. Children who inherit large sums of money have an obligation to give more than they are entitled to. This obligation stems from the understanding that inherited wealth carries with it a duty to use resources wisely, promote fairness, and support the well-being of communities beyond oneself, as seen in the example of Warren Buffett's children, who are among the nation's biggest givers despite inheriting substantial wealth. Now, **how can societies better recognize and support this transmission of these invaluable legacies alongside material wealth?** And most importantly, ask yourself - *What values will you choose to pass on as part of your own inheritance?*

Write to us what you think @jimconnect@jim.ac.in



The Mind Behind India's Retail Transformation

Damodar Mall, an IIT Bombay engineer and IIM Bangalore gold medallist in marketing, began his journey at Unilever, where he learnt the pulse of Indian households, but his true legacy began when he stepped into retail entrepreneurship. Mall, as part of the founding team that built the D-Mart supermarket chain with R.K. Damani, created one of India's most successful value-retail models based on affordability.

His influence grew at Future Group, where he built iconic formats like Big Bazaar, Food Bazaar, and Sangam Direct India's first phone-order supermarket. He helped develop several Indian FMCG and food brands that are now well-known in the market, updated traditional shopping practices, and introduced organized value retail to millions of people. Damodar's ability to mix Indian culture with modern retail is his distinct strength whether in local cuisine, festival assortments, or regional entrepreneurs.



Today, as CEO of Grocery Retail at Reliance Retail, he oversees one of the country's major grocery platforms, Smart Bazaar, JioMart, and Reliance Fresh. His work focuses on utilizing AI, IoT, and data analytics to make grocery retail more efficient while maintaining the same level of personalization as a local kirana store.

Groceries, in his opinion, are the best representation of India's growing wealth: "When families earn more, the first upgrade is how they eat, shop, and celebrate."

Damodar Mall is also a prominent retail thinker. His book *Supermarket Wala: Secrets to Winning Consumer India* is considered a Bible for understanding Indian shoppers explaining why they buy, how they think, and what makes Indian markets unique. Published in several Indian languages, his second book, *be a Supermarket Wala*, is a useful manual for supermarket owners that makes retail knowledge available to everyone. His writings through *Forbes India* and national dailies continue to encourage new retailers and legislators.

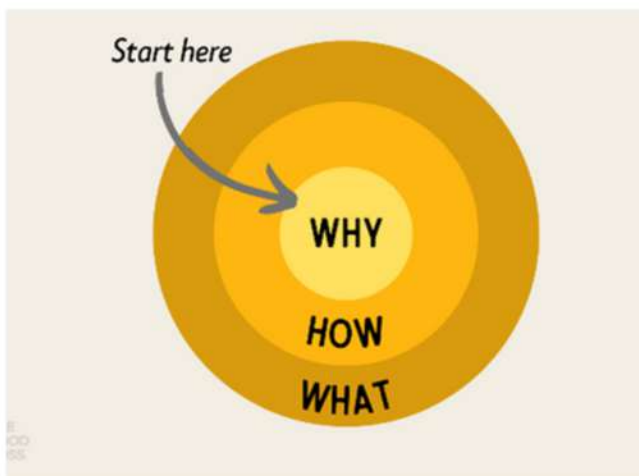
Twice awarded the Golden Spoon for India's most recognized Food & Grocery expert, Damodar Mall stands as the bridge between India's traditional shopping wisdom and the daring, innovative retail concepts influencing the future. His tale illustrates that the biggest revolutions can originate from something as everyday as a supermarket cart.

Dickson D
25PBA121

Start With Why

Start With Why by Simon Sinek is an inspiring and practical book that encourages readers to rethink how true leadership, influence, and long-term success are built. The main message of the book is simple but powerful: great leaders and great organizations always begin with a clear purpose — their “why.” Instead of focusing first on what they do or how they do it, they start by understanding and communicating the deeper reason behind their actions. This shift in thinking forms the foundation of the book and invites readers to reflect on their own motivations in life, education, and career.

The key model Sinek introduces is the Golden Circle, which is made up of three layers: Why, How, and What. Most people can easily talk about what they do, and some can explain how they do it. But very few can clearly express why they do what they do. According to Sinek, this is the real difference between ordinary and extraordinary leaders. Leaders who start with why speak directly to people’s emotions and beliefs. This creates trust, inspiration, and long-lasting loyalty, which is much stronger than influence created through pressure or manipulation.

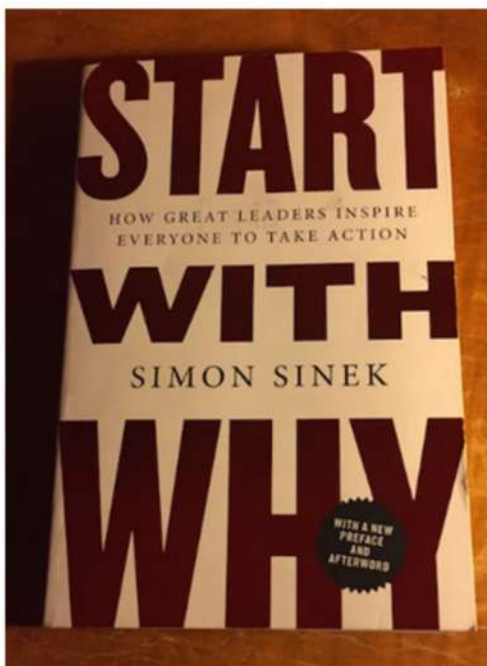


Dr. Murphy’s writing is simple and easy to follow. He mixes spiritual wisdom with examples from daily life. He tells many real stories about people who used the power of their subconscious mind to heal diseases, find better jobs, or change their bad habits. To explain this idea, Sinek uses well-known examples of influential leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr., Steve Jobs, and the Wright Brothers.

These individuals succeeded not just because they had skills or resources but because they believed strongly in a purpose that others connected with. Martin Luther King Jr. inspired millions because he stood for a vision of equality rooted in belief. Steve Jobs built Apple around the purpose of challenging the status quo and thinking differently. The Wright Brothers achieved manned flight because their passion and purpose were stronger than the challenges they faced. These examples show that people don’t follow leaders for their intelligence alone; they follow them because of their beliefs and clarity of purpose. One of the most powerful lines from the book is: “People don’t buy what you do; they buy why you do it.” This single sentence captures Sinek’s central idea. He argues that human beings make emotional decisions first and logical decisions second.

This explains why some brands become symbols of trust and loyalty, while others remain forgettable. For students and young professionals, this lesson is extremely meaningful. Understanding your personal “why” helps you choose a career path that aligns with your values and goals, rather than blindly following what others expect. It gives direction, confidence, and motivation.

For MBA students and young professionals, *Start With Why* serves as a practical reminder that purpose-driven thinking leads to long-term success. In a competitive world, many people focus on grades, salaries, or promotions without understanding why they want these things. Sinek challenges this mindset by showing that clarity of purpose brings meaning to work and gives individuals the strength to face challenges. When we know why we want something, we stay focused and committed. A unique part of the book is how Sinek connects the Golden Circle to human biology. He explains that the limbic brain which controls emotions and decision-making reacts strongly to “why.” This is why people often say they make a choice “from the gut.” Meanwhile, the neocortex, responsible for rational thinking, corresponds with the “what.”



This biological explanation supports Sinek’s idea that leaders who communicate purpose connect more deeply with people than those who rely only on logic or features. Sinek also highlights how companies that remain true to their purpose perform better over time. Apple, for example, built a loyal community not just because of its products but because of its belief in creativity and innovation. In contrast, businesses that lose sight of their “why” often struggle to maintain loyalty, even if their products remain good. This shows that purpose is not only important for leadership but also essential for building strong brands and sustainable organizations.

Simon Sinek’s *Start With Why* thus delivers a timeless message that true influence and long-lasting success begin with clarity of purpose. The book holds inspiring stories, psychological insights, and practical advice to help readers discover and communicate their “why.” Whether a student, an aspiring leader, or an entrepreneur, this book motivates one to build future based not on what we want to achieve, but on why we want to achieve it.

Book Reviewed by
Rithik L
24PBA149



A three-day Outbound Learning program at Leap Academy and Vanaprastha for first-year MBA students took place between 6 and 8 November. Adventure-based activities immersive, nature-centric experiential learning, helped the students develop skills that improved team building, communication skills, conflict resolution techniques, and accelerated their leadership development.



The I year MBA students finished the two-day Shepherd Program on November 21 and 22. This co-curricular activity focuses on rural insights and community involvement. Medical camps, planting of samplings, and interaction with village people were all part of the first day at Lakshmanapatti. Day 2's activities included planting trees and cleaning the JIM campus.



Dr. P. Palaniappan, Group Chief Executive of Lifelong Learning Academy, Singapore, gave a very enlightening guest talk to MBA students of JIM on 26 and 27 November. He provided insightful viewpoints on 'why we think what we think' and the critical role that on-going professional development plays in improving global career preparation. He also interacted with the faculty guiding them to empower the future leaders.

தருக்குறள்

குறள் 812

உறின்றட்டு அறின்றருஉம் ஒப்பிலார் கேண்மை
பெறினும் இழப்பினும் என்.

தமக்குப் பயனிருந்தால் நட்புக் கொண்டும், பயன்
இல்லை என்றால் நட்பை விலக்கியும் வாழ்வதில்
தமக்கு இணை இல்லாதவராய் இருப்பாரின்
நட்பைப் பெற்றென்ன இழந்தென்ன?

TRANSLATION

*What though you gain or lose friendship of men of alien heart,
who when you thrive are friends, and when you fail depart?*

EXPLANATION

Of what avail is it to get or lose the friendship of
those who love when there is gain and leave when
there is none?

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