A Just Cause, 'The Infinite Game', Simon Sinek (2019)

Intro

"In an 'Infinite Game', there is no finish line. (For example, you don't defeat poverty, it's an ongoing cause to help everyone thrive economically...) The Game lives on, and it is the players' time that runs out. Because there's no such thing as 'winning and losing' in an Infinite Game, the players drop out of the game when they ***run out of the will or resources to keep on playing***... which means we have to stop thinking about who's the best, and start thinking about how to ***build organisations that are strong enough and healthy enough to stay in the game for generations to come.***

The true value of an organisation is measured by the desire others have to contribute to that organisation's ability to keep succeeding well into the future."

"The goal of an infinite game is to keep playing... it is to advance something bigger than ourselves or our organisations. And any leader who wishes to lead in the infinite game must have ***a crystal clear 'Just Cause'.***

A 'Just Cause' is a specific vision of a future state that does not yet exist. A future state so appealing that people are willing to make sacrifices in order to help advance towards that vision."

"A 'Just Cause' is not the same as our 'Why'; a Why' comes from the past, it is an origin story, it is a statement of who we are, the sum total of our beliefs and values."

"A 'Just Cause' is about the future, it defines where we are going. It describes the world we hope to live in and will commit to help build."

"Think of the 'Why' like the foundation of a house.It is the starting point. It gives whatever we build upon it strength and permanence. Our 'Just Cause' is the ideal **vision** of the house we hope to build. We can work a lifetime to build it and still we will not be finished... as it moves from our imagination to reality, it inspires more people to join the cause and continue the work. Forever."

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"Whether in science, nation building or business, leaders who want us to join them in their infinite pursuit, must offer us ***in clear terms, an affirmative and tangible vision of the ideal future state they imagine."***

"We call it 'Vision' because it must be something that we can 'see'. For a just cause to serve as an effective invitation, it must paint a specific and tangible picture of the kind of impact we will make or what exactly a better world would like."

"***What happens when those charismatic keepers of the cause move on, retire, or die?*** Without finding the words for the Just Cause, and writing them down, it dramatically increases the risk that it will be diluted or disappear altogether. And without the Just Cause, an organisation starts to function like a ship without a compass: it veers off course. Focus moves from beyond the horizon, to the dials in front of them. Finite mindedness begins to creep-in. The leaders will celebrate how fast they are going, how many miles they have travelled, but fail to recognise that their journey lacks direction or purpose... it's the difference between a verbal contract and a written contract – it prevents any disagreement or confusion about the terms of the deal.

A written cause works like a compass, and with a compass in hand, each succession of leaders – looking beyond the horizon – can more easily navigate the technologies, politics and cultural norms of the day without the founder present."

In order for a Just Cause to provide **direction** for our work, to **inspire** us to sacrifice, and to **endure** not just for the present, but for lifetimes beyond our own, it must:

1. **Affirmative** - be 'for' something (hopeful and optimistic), not 'against'
2. **Inclusive** – inspires others to join in
3. **In service** – for the primary benefit of others
4. **Resilient** – survive a changing environment
5. **Idealistic** – big, bold and ultimately unachievable