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## Further Reading, Hedgehog Concept, 'Good to Great' (extract) – Jim Collins

“The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing.”

‘Foxes pursue many ends at the same time and see the world in all its complexity. They are “scattered or diffused, moving on many levels,” says Berlin, never integrating their thinking into one overall concept or unifying vision. Hedgehogs, on the other hand, simplify a complex world into a single organizing idea, a basic principle or concept that unifies and guides everything. It doesn’t matter how complex the world, a hedgehog reduces all challenges and dilemmas to simple – indeed almost simplistic – hedgehog ideas. For a hedgehog, anything that does not somehow relate to the hedgehog idea holds no relevance... they have a piercing insight that allows them to see through complexity and discern underlying patterns. Hedgehogs see what is essential, and ignore the rest.’

### The Three Circles

A Hedgehog Concept is a simple, crystalline concept that flows from deep understanding about the intersection of the following three circles:

1. What you can be the best in the world at (and, equally important, what you cannot be the best in the world at). This discerning standard goes far beyond core competence. Just because you possess a core competence doesn’t necessarily mean you can be the best in the world at it. Conversely, what you can be the best at might not even be something in which you are currently engaged.
2. What drives your economic engine. All the good-to-great companies attained piercing insight into how to most effectively generate sustained and robust cash flow and profitability. In particular, they discovered the single denominator – profit per x – that had the greatest impact on their economics. (It would be cash flow per x in the social sector.)
3. What you are deeply passionate about. The good-to-great companies focused on those activities that ignited their passion. The idea here is not to stimulate passion but to discover what makes you passionate.

e.g.

- ‘I feel like I was born to be doing this’
- ‘I get well paid to do this’
- ‘I look forward to getting up and throwing myself into my daily work, and I really believe in what I’m doing’.

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### Personal Hedgehog Concept

