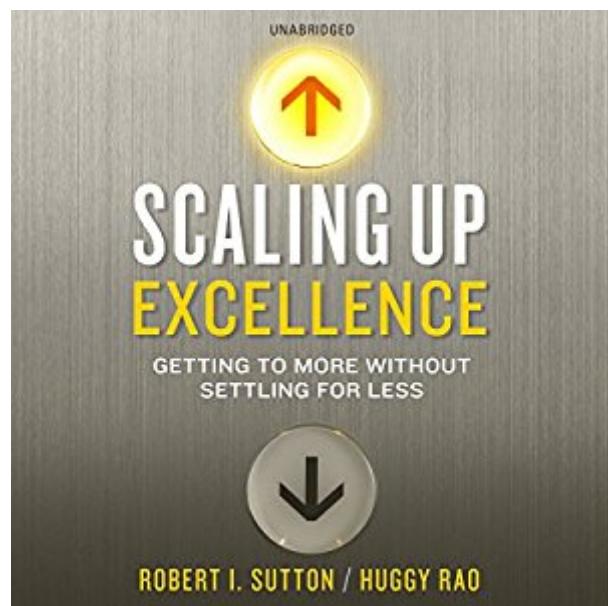


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# Scaling Up Excellence



## Synopsis

Scaling up excellence is the key to creating a great organisation. It's how a small enterprise expands without losing focus. It's how a brilliant new idea or plan developed by the few goes on to be adopted by the many. And, in hard times and tough situations, it's how pockets of smart new thinking overcome cultures of indifference or negativity. An organisation that doesn't know how to scale up what is best within it won't achieve long-term success. Best-selling author Robert Sutton and his Stanford colleague, Huggy Rao, have devoted nearly a decade to uncovering what it takes to create and spread outstanding performance, and in *Scaling Up Excellence* they share the fruits of their research. Drawing on case studies that range from Silicon Valley enterprises to nonprofit organisations, they provide crucial insights into corporate cultures, both good and bad, and offer a road map for establishing and stimulating excellence. In the process, they show how to use 'premortems' when making big decisions about change. They reveal why seven is so often the magic number when it comes to team size. They examine successful and unsuccessful quests for improvement - in hospitals, schools and elsewhere. And they discuss when a single corporate mind-set is best ('Catholicism') and when local variation is preferable ('Buddhism'). *Scaling Up Excellence* is the first management book devoted to what is - or should be - a core priority for every organisation. As such it is destined to become the standard bearer.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Sutton and Rao offer a comprehensive guide to management in a package of enticing stories, subtly supported by references to high-end research. Their personal history in the Silicon Valley and their global access to interesting organizations provides the backdrop. **MAIN THEME & WHO SHOULD READ** The main theme is that, while many good practices exist in organizations, they either get lost or there are difficulties when attempts are made to spread them (scale them) across the organization. The breadth of this theme means that this book will provide value to anyone who would like to see organizations improve. The benefits are not limited by industry, functional area, or organizational size. **KEY IDEAS: THE SEVEN MANTRAS** Sutton and Rao are far more direct than most academics; it often takes a lot to get a professor away from an "it depends" answer. In this instance they have enough background to be confident with the following: We've identified reliable signs that scaling is going well or badly, and we've distilled these signals into seven mantras. If you are embarking on a scaling effort [I'll add if you are doing anything to make your organization better], memorize them, teach them to others, and invent ways to keep them firmly in focus -- especially when the going gets rough. Spread a mindset, not just a footprint. This first one is their, and your, protection against being labeled a fad. Engage all the senses. From my perspective, this is where you consider how to weave together human, technical, and organizational practices such that they work together, not against your goals. It's also where I realize that my presentation of these ideas is much less colorful, and perhaps less likely to scale.

Growth is something we all assume will happen. Invent something cool, deliver a needed service, and you will naturally prosper and increase revenues, right? But what if there is a better way to grow, or scale? What if you need to constantly check whether it's time to go "Buddhist" -- style or "Catholic"? What if growth depends on regularly stoking "hot causes" and linking them to "cool solutions"? Bob Sutton is a veteran Stanford professor and organizational guru who has written ground-breaking books about the nuances of interpersonal and management innovation, often with his characteristic humor and humanity in such bestsellers as *The No ARule*. Here, he has teamed up with fellow Stanford professor, Huggy Rao to tackle something incredibly complex and important: Why do so many businesses stumble as they grow? Sutton and Rao tell us in engaging, behind the scenes stories why Google and Facebook have scaled effectively while Starbucks and others have stumbled. Flexibility is a key positive message: Facebook advocates fast development and gives engineers the leeway to "feel safe to break some stuff along the way; they also widely promote "hack a month" where each year employees are loaned to another group for a month. Google, surprisingly, despite its meteoric

growth, âœhas always been notoriously slow to hireâœ every new hire is still approved at the organizationâ™s highest levels.âœ One of the things you can count on in a Sutton book are stories youâ™ll be able to tell at your next business dinner or meeting. But unlike so many books today, these arenâ™t just culled from business articles or the web. Bob and Huggy have interviewed dozens of top executives at many of the nationâ™s premiere companies.

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