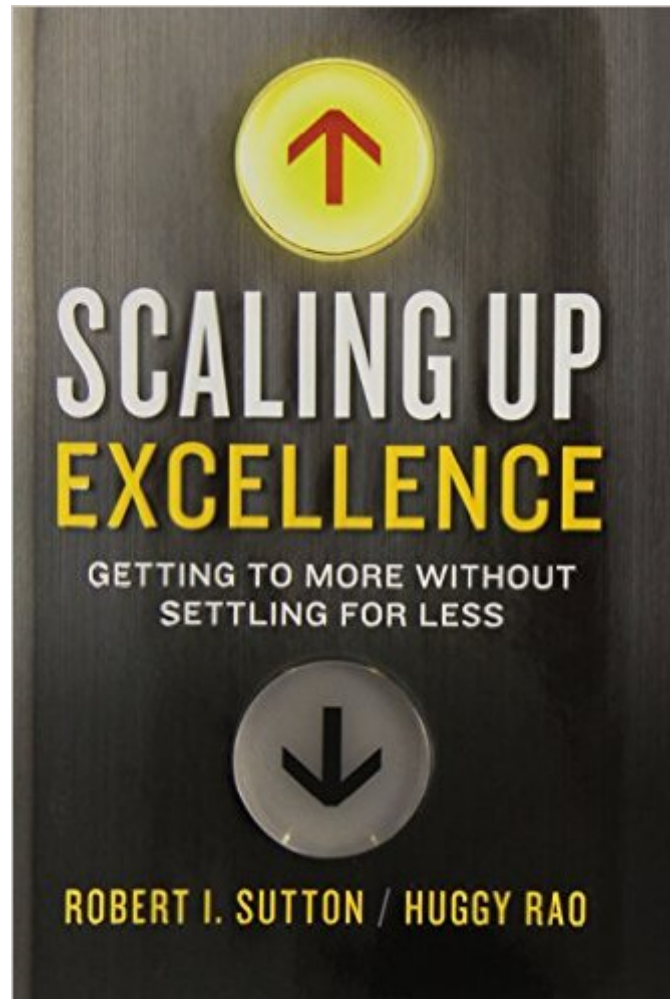


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# Scaling Up Excellence: Getting To More Without Settling For Less



## Synopsis

Best Books of the Year list, Business & Investing Inc.com 10 Best Business Books of 2014  
Financial Times - The Pick of 2014's Management Books The Globe & Mail's list of 5 Best Business Books in 2014 Library Journal's list of 5 Best Business Books in 2014

In *Scaling Up Excellence*, bestselling author Robert Sutton and Stanford colleague Huggy Rao tackle a challenge that determines every organization's success: scaling up farther, faster, and more effectively as a program or an organization creates a larger footprint. Sutton and Rao have devoted much of the last decade to uncovering what it takes to build and uncover pockets of exemplary performance, to help spread them, and to keep recharging organizations with ever better work practices. Drawing on inside accounts and case studies and academic research from a wealth of industries -- including start-ups, pharmaceuticals, airlines, retail, financial services, high-tech, education, non-profits, government, and healthcare -- Sutton and Rao identify the key scaling challenges that confront every organization. They tackle the difficult trade-offs that organizations must make between "Buddhism" versus "Catholicism" -- whether to encourage individualized approaches tailored to local needs or to replicate the same practices and customs as an organization or program expands. They reveal how the best leaders and teams develop, spread, and instill the right mindsets in their people -- rather than ruining or watering down the very things that have fueled successful growth in the past. They unpack the principles that help to cascade excellence throughout an organization, as well as show how to eliminate destructive beliefs and behaviors that will hold them back. *Scaling Up Excellence* is the first major business book devoted to this universal and vexing challenge. It is destined to become the standard bearer in the field.

## 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 Rule*. 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, has always been notoriously slow to hire every new hire is still approved at the organization's highest levels. One of the things you can count on in a Sutton book are stories you'll be able to tell at your next business dinner or meeting. But unlike so many books today, these aren't just culled from business articles or the web. Bob and Huggy have interviewed dozens of top executives at many of the nation's premiere companies.

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