Stanford

Robert Sutton

Professor of Management Science & Engineering, Emeritus

Management Science and Engineering

CONTACT INFORMATION

- **Administrator**

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Bio

BIO

Robert Sutton is Professor of Management Science and Engineering and a Professor of Organizational Behavior (by courtesy) at Stanford. Sutton has been teaching classes on the psychology of business and management at Stanford since 1983. He is co-founder of the Center for Work, Technology and Organization, which he co-directed from 1996 to 2006. He is also co-founder of the Stanford Technology Ventures Program and the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design (which everyone calls "the d school"). Sutton and Stanford Business School's Huggy Rao recently launched the Designing Organizational Change Project, which is hosted by the Stanford Technology Ventures Program

Sutton studies innovation, leadership, the links between managerial knowledge and organization action, scaling excellence, and workplace dynamics. He has published over 100 articles and chapters on these topics in peer-reviewed journals and the popular press. Sutton's books include Weird Ideas That Work: 11 ½ Practices for Promoting, Managing, and Sustaining Innovation, The Knowing-Doing Gap: How Smart Firms Turn Knowledge into Action (with Jeffrey Pfeffer), and Hard Facts, Dangerous Half-Truths, and Total Nonsense: Profiting from Evidence-Based Management (with Jeffrey Pfeffer). The No Asshole Rule: Building a Civilized Workplace and Surviving One That Isn't and Good Boss, Bad Boss: How to Be the Best…. and Survive the Worst are both New York Times and Wall Street Journal bestsellers. His last book, Scaling-Up Excellence: Getting to More without Settling for Less (with Huggy Rao), was published in 2014 and is a Wall Street Journal and Publisher's Weekly bestseller. Sutton's next book, The Asshole Survival Guide: How to Deal With People Who Treat You Like Dirt, will be published in September of 2017.

Professor Sutton's honors include the award for the best paper published in the Academy of Management Journal in 1989, the Eugene L. Grant Award for Excellence in Teaching, selection by Business 2.0 as a leading "management guru" in 2002, and the award for the best article published in the Academy of Management Review in 2005. Hard Facts, Dangerous Half-Truths, and Total Nonsense was selected as the best business book of 2006 by the Toronto Globe and Mail. Sutton was named as one of 10 "B-School All-Stars" by BusinessWeek , which they described as "professors who are influencing contemporary business thinking far beyond academia." In 2014, the London Business School honored Sutton with the Sumantra Ghoshal Award for Rigour and Relevance in the Study of Management.

Sutton is a Fellow at IDEO, a Senior Scientist at Gallup, and academic director of two Stanford executive education programs:Customer-Focused Innovation and the online Stanford Innovation and Entrepreneurship Certificate. His personal website is at www.bobsutton.net and he also blogs at Harvard Business Review and as an "influencer" on LinkedIn. Sutton tweets @work_matters.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Emeritus Faculty, Acad Council, Management Science and Engineering

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- PhD, Michigan (1984)

Teaching

COURSES

2022-23

- Leading Organizational Change: MS&E 182A (Win)

- Organizational Behavior: Evidence in Action: MS&E 280 (Spr)

- d.Leadership: Leading Disruptive Innovation: ME 368, MS&E 489 (Spr)

2021-22

- LaunchPad:Design and Launch your Product or Service: ME 301 (Spr)

- Leading Organizational Change: MS&E 182A (Spr)

- Organizational Behavior: Evidence in Action: MS&E 280 (Win)

2020-21

- Leading Organizational Change: MS&E 182A (Win)

- Leading Organizational Change II: MS&E 182B (Spr)

- Organizational Behavior: Evidence in Action: MS&E 280 (Win)

STANFORD ADVISEES

Doctoral Dissertation Reader (AC)

Ryan Stice-Lusvardi

Master's Program Advisor

Chien-Hua Chen, Monica Tsien

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Rid Your X Organization of Obstacles That Infuriate Everyone** *HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW*
  Sutton, R. I., Rao, H.
  2024; 102 (1-2): 98-107

- **You Need Two Leadership Gears Know when to take charge and when to get out of the way.** *HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW*
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- **Can a Volunteer-Staffed Company Scale?** *HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW*
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- **Scaling Up Excellence**
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- **On Stepping Down Gracefully** *HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW*
  Sutton, R.
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- **The Boss as Human Shield** *HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW*
  Sutton, R. I.
  2010; 88 (9): 106-109

- **Good Boss, Bad Boss: How to Be the Best... and Learn from the Worst**
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- **How to Be a Good Boss in a Bad Economy** *HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW*
  Sutton, R. I.
  2009; 87 (6): 42-50

- **Moon Shots for Management** *HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW*
  Sutton, R. I.
  2009; 87 (6): 107-107

- **How and Why Theories Matter: A Comment on Felin and Foss (2009)** *ORGANIZATION SCIENCE*
  Ferraro, F., Pfeffer, J., Sutton, R. I.
  2009; 20 (3): 669-675

- **What's the Best Strategy for Astrigo?** *HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW*
  Stybel, L. J., Peabody, M., Dormann, J., Sutton, R. I.
  2009; 87 (3): 38-40

- **Suppose we took evidence-based management seriously: Implications for reading and writing management** *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT LEARNING & EDUCATION*
  Pfeffer, J., Sutton, R. I.
  2007; 6 (1): 153-155

- **The No Asshole Rule: Building a Civilized Workplace and Surviving One That Isn't**
  Sutton, R. I.
  2007

- **Demanding proof** *INDUSTRIAL ENGINEER*
  Pfeffer, J., Sutton, R. I.
  2006; 38 (6): 43-47

- **Management, half-truths and nonsense: How to practice evidence-based management** *CALIFORNIA MANAGEMENT REVIEW*
  Pfeffer, J., Sutton, R. I.
  2006; 48 (3): 77-?

- **Evidence-based management** *HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW*
  Pfeffer, J., Sutton, R. I.
  2006; 84 (1): 62-?

- **Hard Facts, Dangerous Half-Truths, and Total Nonsense: Profiting from Evidence-based Management**
  Pfeffer, J., Sutton, R. I.
  2006

- **Prescriptions are not enough** *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT REVIEW*
  Ferraro, F., Pfeffer, J., SUTTON, R. I.
  2005; 30 (1): 32-35

- **Economics language and assumptions: How theories can become self-fulfilling** *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT REVIEW*
  Ferraro, F., Pfeffer, J., SUTTON, R. I.
  2005; 30 (1): 8-24

- **Breakthrough ideas for 2004** *HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW*

  Khurana, R., Florida, R., Slywotzky, A., Coutu, D. L., Christensen, C. M., Kurtzman, J., Sutton, R., Simester, D., Pink, D. H., Fuller, J., Fryer, B., Meyer, C., Ibarra, et al

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- **Weird Ideas That Work: 11 1/2 Practices for Promoting, Managing, and Sustaining Innovation**

  Sutton, R. I.

  2002

- **The weird rules of creativity** *HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW*

  SUTTON, R. I.

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- **Building an innovation factory** *HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW*

  Hargadon, A., SUTTON, R. I.

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- **Knowing "what" to do is not enough: Turning knowledge into action (Reprinted from The knowing-doing gap: How smart companies turn knowledge into action)** *CALIFORNIA MANAGEMENT REVIEW*

  Pfeffer, J., SUTTON, R. I.

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- **Perspectives on developing management theory, circa 1999: Moving from shrill monologues to (relatively) tame dialogues** *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT REVIEW*

  Elsbach, K. D., SUTTON, R. I., Whetten, D. A.

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  Pfeffer, J., SUTTON, R. I.

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- **The Knowing-Doing Gap: How Smart Companies Turn Knowledge into Action**

  Pfeffer, J., Sutton, R. I.

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- **Averting expected challenges through anticipatory impression management: A study of hospital billing** *ORGANIZATION SCIENCE*

  Elsbach, K. D., Sutton, R. I., Principe, K. E.

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  SUTTON, R. I.

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- **Brainstorming groups in context: Effectiveness in a product design firm** *ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE QUARTERLY*

  SUTTON, R. I., Hargadon, A.

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- **Consequences of public scrutiny for leaders and their organizations** *RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR, VOL 18, 1996*

SUTTON, R. I., Galunic, D. C.

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- **WHAT THEORY IS NOT** *ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE QUARTERLY*

  SUTTON, R. I., STAW, B. M.

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- **EMPLOYEE POSITIVE EMOTION AND FAVORABLE OUTCOMES AT THE WORKPLACE** *ORGANIZATION SCIENCE*

  STAW, B. M., SUTTON, R. I., PELLED, L. H.

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- **ORGANIZATIONAL-BEHAVIOR - LINKING INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS TO ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXTS** *ANNUAL REVIEW OF PSYCHOLOGY*

  MOWDAY, R. T., SUTTON, R. I.

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- **ACQUIRING ORGANIZATIONAL LEGITIMACY THROUGH ILLEGITIMATE ACTIONS - A MARRIAGE OF INSTITUTIONAL AND IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT THEORIES** *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT JOURNAL*

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- **THE RESPONSES OF DRUG-ABUSE TREATMENT ORGANIZATIONS TO FINANCIAL ADVERSITY - A PARTIAL TEST OF THE THREAT-RIGIDITY THESIS** *JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT*

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- **BUILDING A MODEL OF WORK FORCE REDUCTION THAT IS GROUNDED IN PERTINENT THEORY AND DATA - REPLY** *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT REVIEW*

  SUTTON, R. I., DAUNNO, T.

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- **EMOTIONAL CONTRAST STRATEGIES AS MEANS OF SOCIAL-INFLUENCE - LESSONS FROM CRIMINAL INTERROGATORS AND BILL COLLECTORS** *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT JOURNAL*

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  DAUNNO, T., SUTTON, R. I., Price, R. H.

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- **MAINTAINING NORMS ABOUT EXPRESSED EMOTIONS - THE CASE OF BILL COLLECTORS** *ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE QUARTERLY*

  SUTTON, R. I.

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- **THE SOCIOLOGY OF EMOTIONS - ORIGINAL ESSAYS AND RESEARCH PAPERS - FRANKS,DD, MCCARTHY,ED (Book Review)** *ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE QUARTERLY*

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- **SWITCHING COGNITIVE GEARS - FROM HABITS OF MIND TO ACTIVE THINKING** *HUMAN RELATIONS*

  LOUIS, M. R., SUTTON, R. I.

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- **BUSY STORES AND DEMANDING CUSTOMERS - HOW DO THEY AFFECT THE DISPLAY OF POSITIVE EMOTION** *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT JOURNAL*

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- **ORGANIZATIONAL DECLINE PROCESSES - A SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE** *RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR*

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- **REACTIONS OF NONPARTICIPANTS AS ADDITIONAL RATHER THAN MISSING DATA - OPPORTUNITIES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL RESEARCH** *HUMAN RELATIONS*

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- **THE EXPRESSION OF EMOTION IN ORGANIZATIONAL LIFE** *RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR*

  Rafaeli, A., SUTTON, R. I.

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- **UNTANGLING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DISPLAYED EMOTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL SALES - THE CASE OF CONVENIENCE STORES** *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT JOURNAL*

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  1988; 31 (3): 461-487

- **DETERMINANTS OF WORK FORCE REDUCTION STRATEGIES IN DECLINING ORGANIZATIONS** *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT REVIEW*

  Greenhalgh, L., Lawrence, A. T., SUTTON, R. I.

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- **THE PROCESS OF ORGANIZATIONAL DEATH - DISBANDING AND RECONNECTING** *ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE QUARTERLY*

  SUTTON, R. I.

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- **HOW SELECTING AND SOCIALIZING NEWCOMERS INFLUENCES INSIDERS** *HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT*

  SUTTON, R. I., LOUIS, M. R.

  1987; 26 (3): 347-361

- **THE STIGMA OF BANKRUPTCY - SPOILED ORGANIZATIONAL IMAGE AND ITS MANAGEMENT** *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT JOURNAL*

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  SUTTON, R. I., Rafaeli, A.

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- **EXPRESSION OF EMOTION AS PART OF THE WORK ROLE** *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT REVIEW*

  Rafaeli, A., SUTTON, R. I.

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- **MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL DECLINE - LESSONS FROM ATARI** *ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS*

  SUTTON, R. I., EISENHARDT, K. M., JUCKER, J. V.

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- **FUNCTIONS OF PARTING CEREMONIES IN DYING ORGANIZATIONS** *ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT JOURNAL*

    Harris, S. G., SUTTON, R. I.

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- **WORD-PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY AND PERCEPTIONS OF CONTROL AMONG CLERICAL WORKERS** *BEHAVIOUR & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY*

    Rafaeli, A., SUTTON, R. I.

    1986; 5 (1): 31-37