Stanford

Robert Sutton

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Bio

BIO

Robert I. Sutton is an organizational psychologist and best-selling author. He studies leadership, innovation, organizational change, and workplace dynamics. Sutton has published over 200 articles, chapters, and case studies. His focus recently is scaling and leading at scale—how to grow organizations, spread good things (and remove bad things) in teams and organizations, and enhance performance, innovation, and well-being in big organizations.

Sutton received his PhD in Organizational Psychology from The University of Michigan and has served on the Stanford faculty since 1983. He served as Professor of Management Science & Engineering until 2023 and is now Professor Emeritus at Stanford. Sutton is co-founder and former co-director of the Center for Work, Technology and Organization, co-founder of the Stanford Technology Ventures Program, and co-founder of the “Stanford d.school.” Sutton was a resident Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences during multiple years. He has served on the editorial boards of numerous scholarly publications and as an editor for Administrative Science Quarterly and Research in Organizational Behavior.

Sutton has served as an advisor to McKinsey & Company, Bain & Company, and Microsoft, a Fellow at IDEO, a board member of the Institute for the Future, a Senior Scientist at Gallup, and on faculty at the World Economic Forum in Davos. He is currently an advisor to Teamraderie and Asana’s Work Innovation Lab. Sutton is the academic co-director of Stanford executive education programs including Customer Focused Innovation and Innovation and Entrepreneurship. He has given more than 200 keynote speeches in more than 20 countries.

Sutton’s academic honors include the award for the best paper published in the Academy of Management Journal, induction into the Academy of Management Journals Hall of Fame, the Eugene L. Grant Award for Excellence in Teaching, the McGraw-Hill Innovation in Entrepreneurship Pedagogy Award, and the award for the best article published in the Academy of Management Review. The London Business School selected Sutton for the 2014 Sumantra Ghoshal Award “for rigour and relevance in the study of management.” The American Management Association selected Sutton as one of the top 30 leaders who most influenced business in 2014 (ranking him 10th).

Sutton’s eight books and two edited volumes include (with Jeffrey Pfeffer) The Knowing-Doing Gap, selected by Jack Covert and Todd Sattersten as one of the best 100 business books of all time, and Weird Ideas That Work, selected by the Harvard Business Review as one of the best ten business books

of the year. Hard Facts, Dangerous Half-Truths, and Total Nonsense was selected by Toronto's Globe and Mail as the top management book of 2006 and by Strategy+Business as one of the best 10 books in the last decade.

The No Asshole Rule—a New York Times (NYT), Wall Street Journal (WSJ), and Businessweek bestseller—was translated into over 20 languages and sold over 900,000 copies. Good Boss, Bad Boss is a NYT and WSJ bestseller. Scaling-Up Excellence (with Huggy Rao) is a WSJ bestseller that was selected as one of the best business books of the year by Amazon, Financial Times, Inc., and others. The Asshole Survival Guide was selected as book of the month by the Financial Times.

Sutton's latest book (with Rao), The Friction Project, unpacks insights from their seven-year learning adventure using academic research, case studies, classes and workshops, and ongoing dialog with scholars, executives, and innovators to learn how smart organizations make the right things easier and the wrong things harder.

Sutton's research and opinions have appeared in the press, including NYT, The Times (of London), Financial Times, Fortune, WSJ, Wired, Vanity Fair, Washington Post, and more. Sutton has been a guest on numerous radio and television shows and podcasts. Learn more at bobsutton.net

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Professor Emeritus, Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence (HAI)

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- PhD, Michigan (1984)

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

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