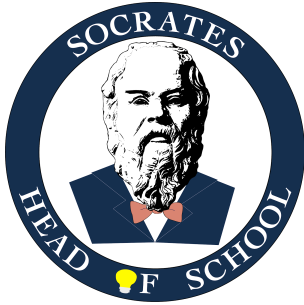


Stretch by Scott Sonenshein



Think you might want to read this book?

Stretch by Scott Sonenshein will encourage you to do more with less...and then show you how to do it. Concepts such as chasing, stretching, and being cognitively entrenched, combined with cautionary tales (Gerber singles, anyone?) and success stories (Yuengling and the book *Green Eggs and Ham*) to frame why it's important to think more about "stretching" than "chasing." The final result is a reframing of the resources we have at school, how we should set goals, and how we can go about achieving them.

What would Socrates ask?

- What if Admissions, Alumni Relations, Advancement, and Marketing were all spearheaded under one umbrella?
- What if we encouraged students to make interdisciplinary connections in all of their classes?
- What if we wrote rubrics in the middle of units as an admission to students that when we start we don't know exactly where the learning will take us?
- What if we shuffled class rosters periodically to keep diversity of voices in the classroom fresh?

Research

- Although career chasing led to obtaining higher salaries in the short term, it failed to predict a higher salary seven years out. More strikingly, career chasing negatively predicted career satisfaction seven years later.
- Research regularly finds that if you ask someone to design or build a product, you might get a handful of good ideas. But if you ask someone to design or build it while sticking within a budget, the chances are you'll get much better results.
- An outsider can regularly outperform experts in solving a problem in their own area of expertise, especially for complex challenges. The key to outsiders' results lies with the diversity of their experience.
- ...for areas with the most predictability, practice explains 24 percent of a person's performance, but this number decreases to 12 percent for moderately predictable events and to only 4 percent for low-predictability events. As challenges become less predictable-that is, as they become more like what we regularly face in many of our professional and personal efforts-practice doesn't always make perfect.
- ...executive teams who made quicker decisions relied on more information and a greater number of alternatives-the exact opposite of what we're led to believe by the speed-versus-accuracy trade-off.
- As we approach our turn to speak, we shift from listening to preparing to speak as much as nine seconds before, unknowingly blocking out what's being said just prior to our turn. When we direct our mental energy to planning our performance-making a terrific class comment, raising a clever point at a meeting, or arguing with our partner-we stop processing real-time information prior to our performance.
- McKinsey pegs the failure rate of organization change initiatives at almost 70 percent.

- ...people are at least 81 percent more effective when it comes to devising novel and appropriate uses for resources while walking compared to sitting. Walking, the researchers reason, frees the mind to wander.
- In 1965, college-educated men had slightly more leisure time than their counterparts who had only high school diplomas. By 2005, college-educated men had eight fewer hours of leisure time per week than high school graduates had.
- ...41 percent of Americans had not received any skills training at work in the past two years.

Concepts

- Chasers: orient themselves around acquiring resources, overlooking how to expand what's already in hand.
- Stretchers: ask what more they can do with what they have instead of asking what's missing.
- Functional Fixedness: an inability to use a resource beyond the traditional approach.
- "Little c" Creativity: a form of creativity not focused on producing creative works but rather on solving practical problems through new uses and applications of resources.
- Cognitively Entrenched: blinded to using resources in ways that depart from conventions.
- Perky Effect: having a prior mental image of something alters how we perceive and assimilate new information.
- Pygmalion effect: establishing high expectations for others enhances their performance.
- Threat rigidity: a threat label has a tendency to restrict resources to traditional uses, limit creativity, and obstruct problem solving.
- Fundamental Attribution Error: When it comes to success, we take a very different approach. We credit others' accomplishments to things outside of their control. ...if we were the person who got the job or landed the client, it would be because of internal reasons-out intelligence or our skills.
- Strategy scholars Chet Miller and Duane Ireland recommend a fast-feedback, slow-learning approach to minimize the injuries that can come from acting too quickly.

Quotes from the author

- We routinely overestimate the importance of acquiring resources but even more significantly underestimate our ability to make more out of those we have.
- Motivated by what others have, and fueled by a lack of appreciation for what they do have, chasing leads to working and living in ways that depend on a constant stream of resources, closing off the possibility of better using what's already at hand.
- People who knew lots of little things and drew from multiple perspectives routinely outperformed those who knew one big thing really well. It was the well rounded who excelled.
- The value of our resources dramatically increases when we join forces with outsiders.
- We end up spending a lot of time planning for a world that no longer exists, while tricking ourselves into believing that it does exist because that's what we planned for.
- ...we typically perform to the level of expectations of people who are authority figures over us-whether our teachers, managers, commanders, or recruiters.
- By saying no to more resources, we're saying yes to an entirely new outlook on working and living.

Quotes from others

- “While detailed knowledge of a single area once guaranteed success, today the top rewards go to those who can operate with equal aplomb in starkly different realms.” - Daniel Pink
- “To invent, you need a good imagination and a pile of junk.” - Thomas Edison
- “The creative person with limitless imagination and no money can make a better film than the talentless mogul with the limitless checkbook every time...Take advantage of your disadvantages, feature the few assets you may have, and work harder than anyone else around you.” - Robert Rodriguez

Gateways to further learning

- [Digital Archive of the Birth of the Dot Com Era](#)
- [Project 333](#)
- [Fischer Random Chess or Chess960](#)
- [Center for Positive Organizations](#)

Referenced books with the potential to impact leading and learning in education

The applicability of this book to education is ...

Author(s) Last Name	Title
Lewis	The New New Thing
Page	Difference
Pink	A Whole New Mind
Grant	Originals
Ferriss	The 4-Hour Workweek



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