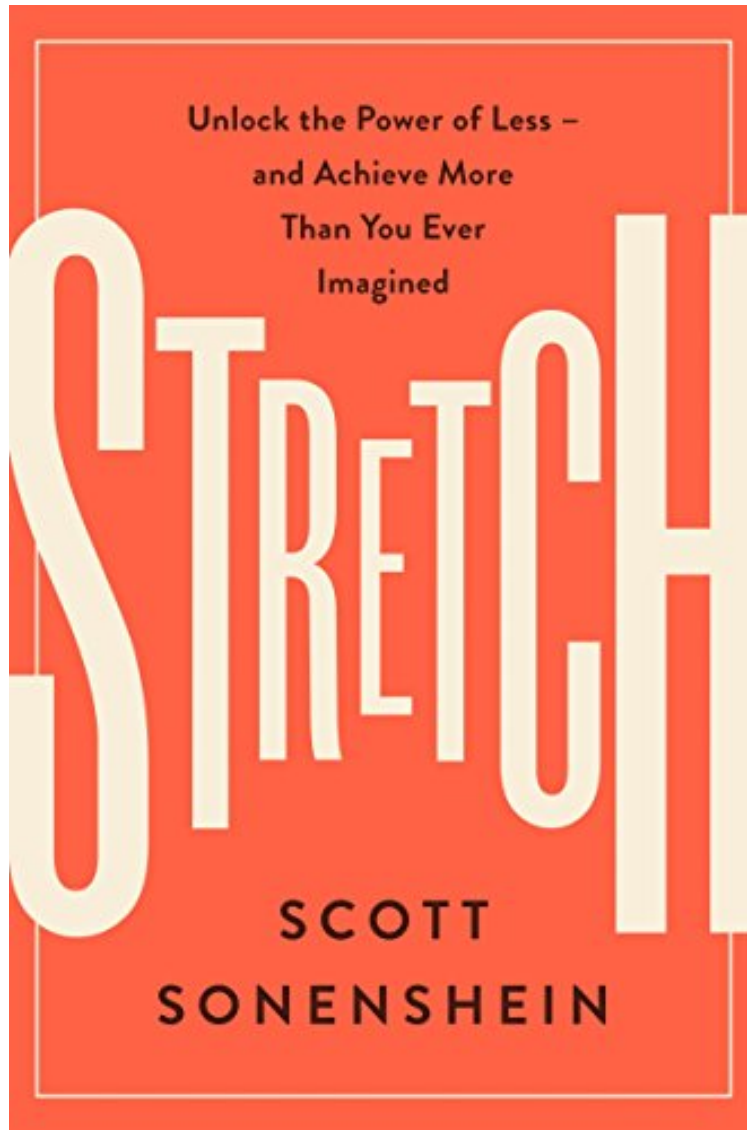


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Stretch: Unlock the Power of Less -and Achieve More Than You Ever Imagined

Scott Sonenshein

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Scott Sonenshein : Stretch: Unlock the Power of Less -and Achieve More Than You Ever Imagined before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Stretch: Unlock the Power of Less -and Achieve More Than You Ever Imagined*:

14 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Outstanding book for creating an innovative culture By Allie F. Stretch is one of the most impactful books that I have ever read. As a PhD scientist who has worked in both small start-ups and large corporations, Sonenshein's insights resonated with me. I highly recommend this book for

anyone in business or academics who wants to develop a more innovative culture. I especially appreciated his points about avoiding the temptation to over-resource and to focus on action. This book is well researched with several novel examples that support his hypotheses. I especially enjoyed the chapter on food truck culture. I am not sure if this was intentional, but throughout the book Sonenshein referred to several examples of his wife, "an extraordinary stretcher". As a working mother in a dual career family I appreciated how Sonenshein drew from his own personal examples highlighting his wife's decisions and successes. We need more examples of couples who support each other with high powered careers and thrive by supporting each other! I could not put this book down and look forward to sharing this book with colleagues and friends. I hope that Sonenshein is working on his next book because I cannot wait to read it.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Stretch Makes It Into My Permanent Business Resource Library

By Gene Morphis

Have you ever watched, or been involved in, a business failure, where, despite the best efforts of hardworking people, the business doesn't survive? Scott Sonenshein lived through it, as he describes in the Introduction to his engrossing book *Stretch*. (In some books, the reader can skip the intro- not this one; the introduction is a must-read part of the book.) He was hired by start-up Vividence in Silicon Valley at the very apex of the tech boom. Despite prestige VC backers, top-tier hires and \$50 million, Vividence didn't make it. As his career continued, that experience led to an interest in why some well-funded operations don't succeed, while other, more resource constrained, do.

Peter Senge wrote about reinforcing cycles as part of his book *The Fifth Discipline*, which I consider one of the finest business books ever penned. In it, Senge describes the downward cycle that some companies fall into, and why it is so difficult to reverse. Sonenshein explores those cycles from different point of view- an organization and resource perspective- and develops concepts for the reader to consider on how organizations and individuals can take a fresh look at resource availability and achieve much more success with fewer resources.

In full disclosure, I had the pleasure of working with Randi Sonenshein, Scott's wife, who is a highly-accomplished executive in her own right (and a delightful person) and assisted Scott in writing *Stretch*. And I met Scott on a few occasions. (He is now a Professor of Management at Rice University). Further, while I was part of Silicon Valley, my employer at that time he was at Vividence was a product and service provider to numerous established tech firms as well as start-ups, and thereby I had a first-row seat as some of our customers flourished and some vanished. Those experiences clearly shape not just one's thinking but entire career.

The core concept that the author develops is that of opposing approaches and mindsets: one that we might label as the conventional U.S. approach of more and better results are obtained by having or acquiring more or better resources. He labels that approach chasing, and the practitioners chasers. The alternative approach is stretching (and stretchers) which requires looking at the available resources in unique and thoughtful ways to get better results from better utilization.

Mr. Sonenshein explores those two viewpoints and the effect each has on society, enterprise and the individual. The book title likely gives away that he concludes that stretching is almost always better. The book is liberally peppered with examples of business leaders who've employed stretching to optimize resources. While some stretched from lack of an alternative- the beautiful example of young black woman Sarah Breedlove Walker, born in the post-Civil War-South, lifting herself, and then other black women, out of abject poverty by starting a business from almost nothing; other examples feature enterprises like D. G. Yuengling and Son, which could have afforded to devote additional resources to launch a growth strategy, but chose instead to stretch existing resources, acquire used equipment and the like. As opposed to some of its competition at the time- Sonenshein calls out Stroh brewery's aggressive growth via acquisition strategy only to crash- Yuengling remains as America's oldest continually operating brewery.

In closing chapters, he provides various techniques to examine existing resources to ferret out alternative uses, warns of traps to avoid, and how stretching as individuals can lead to personal growth.

Stretch is not only useful, it is an entertaining read. I totally enjoyed it, and it goes in my personal library of business books worth keeping as a reference. Probably next to *The Fifth Discipline*.

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Excellent read, look forward to more applications and research.

By Laiza Otero

I work a lot with nonprofit organizations, and I find that the tools and concepts here are as useful, if not more useful than the corporate-side strategy. Based on thoughtful examples in a number of different fields to understand different strategies and tactics to support and thrive through creatively dealing with resource "adversity." Good business, personal, life book. Strongly recommend.

A groundbreaking approach to succeeding in business and life, using the science of resourcefulness. We often think the key to success and satisfaction is to get more: more money, time, and possessions; bigger budgets, job titles, and teams; and additional resources for our professional and personal goals. It turns out we're wrong. Using captivating stories to illustrate research in psychology and management, Rice University professor Scott Sonenshein examines why some people and organizations succeed with so little, while others fail with so much. People and organizations approach resources in two different ways: "chasing" and "stretching." When chasing, we exhaust ourselves in the pursuit of more. When stretching, we embrace the resources we already have. This frees us to find creative and productive ways to solve problems, innovate, and engage our work and lives more fully. *Stretch* shows why everyone- from executives to entrepreneurs, professionals to parents, athletes to

artists—performs better with constraints; why seeking too many resources undermines our work and well-being; and why even those with a lot benefit from making the most out of a little. Drawing from examples in business, education, sports, medicine, and history, Scott Sonenshein advocates a powerful framework of resourcefulness that allows anybody to work and live better.

"We rarely have as much of anything as we want, but we can learn to do more with it. Scott Sonenshein is a gifted thinker whose insights have sharpened my work for over a decade, and his fascinating debut book reveals how resourcefulness is a skill that's waiting to be learned. Get ready to unleash your inner MacGyver." --Adam Grant, bestselling author of *Originals* and *Give and Take*"I always appreciate a book that challenges me, forces me to think, and creates constructive discomfort. And I especially value such a book when its key conclusions have a base of research. Dr. Sonenshein has accomplished all this with *Stretch*, and I am thankful for the chance to grow from reading his work." --Jim Collins, bestselling author of *Good to Great* and *Great by Choice*"It's easy to feel like we never have enough time, resources, or money. Scott Sonenshein's surprising and entertaining book inspires and instructs us to make the most out of what we already have. The result is more-more creativity, more engagement, and more satisfaction." --Daniel H. Pink, bestselling author of *To Sell is Human* and *Drive*"*Stretch* is a masterpiece. Whether you want to build a better life or a better business, Scott Sonenshein reveals how the power of constraints sets you free and why the lust for more is bad for your mental health and—ironically— your personal success and the success of your business. I love the stories, rigorous research, and especially, how Sonenshein's warmth and wisdom fill every page and make *Stretch* a joy to read." --Robert Sutton, Stanford professor and author of *The No Asshole Rule*"Well-informed and frequently enlightening; Sonenshein is an amiable guide to attaining the benefits of stretching. A convincing argument within a compelling narrative—recommended for business managers and resourceful individuals alike." --Kirkus"In Silicon Valley successful entrepreneurs value constraints to help define both the problem and solution. In *Stretch*, Scott Sonenshein explains how to turn limitations into valuable assets, helping us achieve our goals both at work and at home." --Ann Doerr, Chairman, Kahn Academy

From the Back Cover
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About the Author
Scott Sonenshein holds a PhD from the University of Michigan and is the Henry Gardiner Symonds Professor of Management at Rice University. He has served as an Associate Editor at the field's top publication, *Academy of Management Journal*, and sits on four other distinguished editorial boards. He lives in Houston, Texas, with his wife Randi and two daughters.

Audiobook Narrator Bio: Mike Chamberlain is an actor and voice-over performer in Los Angeles. His voice credits range from radio commercials and television narration to animation and video game characters. Stage trained at Boston College, he has performed works from Shakespeare and the classics to contemporary drama and comedy. His audiobook narration has won four AudioFile Earphones Awards.