



Pacing for Growth: Why Intelligent Restraint Drives Long-Term Success

Alison Eyring

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Go the Distance!

Whether you're running a race or running a company, pacing is everything. Go too fast and you'll burn yourself out--too slow and you're left in the dust. So how can leaders find the right speed? Growth expert Alison Eyring, who is also a long-distance runner and triathlete, found the answer in endurance training. It's a concept she calls Intelligent Restraint. Eyring shows leaders how to evaluate their company's and team's current capacity for growth and identify the right capabilities and pacing strategies to increase growth steadily and sustainably. She masterfully weaves physiological and psychological research, in-depth business case studies, examples from real leaders, and practical tools with her own narrative of endurance training. The result is a revolutionary new mindset for enduring success.

Pacing for Growth: Why Intelligent Restraint Drives Long-Term Success Details

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From Reader Review Pacing for Growth: Why Intelligent Restraint Drives Long-Term Success for online ebook

Serendipity Marie says

Pacing for Growth: Why Intelligent Restraint Drives Long-Term Success is a business leadership advice book from a woman with 3 decades of business consulting experience. It presents the benefits of and provides learning strategies for, what it terms, the “intelligent restraint” model. The well-written, easily consumed prose of Alison Eyring makes it worth a read, whether you run a team, business, or are just curious about your own personal growth.

Her advice model is based on evidence-driven methods culled from years long studies with a variety of companies. But it shines most in readability through the use of Eyring’s own endurance running journey as a metaphor throughout. It excels over similar business and leadership books in its clear use of a strong research design and execution for developing the strategies it presents.

The model of “intelligent restraint” is built on an understanding of one’s own capacity and capabilities and leveraging both through exertion and restraint. This particular delivery of the model is laid out with a combination of personal experience, relevant company stories, bullet summaries, and self-reflection questions and exercises. It is ideal for both a corporate or organizational training. It could also be perfect for a book club focused on leadership or self-help books.

The model described is clearly one that could be fleshed out even more beautifully in a longer, more novel-like approach. However, this 180 page version works well.

I received my copy of the book in exchange for an honest review.

Tirtha says

It's a great book.

Jo says

Good, thought-provoking. I took lots of notes and really felt like I could apply the information to my current position/organization to hopefully progress our environment for the better. A lot of parts felt extremely repetitive so I really took my time and read through this one over a greater length of time ((endurance reading!)). I would definitely recommend this one to other professionals looking to enhance their work life and the overall quality of their organization.

Robin says

So true that in our day and age people want to get things done quickly and move on to the next thing. Many

things worth doing right take patience and time. This book covers those tenants.

Lisa Kosak says

“Some leaders run the wrong race because they focus only on short-term performance. Some focus on quarter-by-quarter sales volume, others on year-on-year profit. What matters most is enduring growth – that is both long-term and profitable. It’s the holy grail” - Alison Eyring

One of my weaknesses is being over enthusiastic about new ideas or projects. I dive right in with endless energy only to short out and realize that I may not quite have enough stamina or resources to make it to the end. I've had to learn to step back, plan more thoroughly, and pace myself or those around me. It can be very frustrating. We live in a society that values quick action, fast growth, and bottom line results. There's minimal time to catch our breath and really look from afar to see if we are taking sensible actions, advancing change slowly, and driving optimal long term results.

Alison Eyring is a distinguished long distance athlete enduring incredible triathlons all over the world that would make most of us weak just thinking about it. She is also the successful founder of Organisation Solutions where she advises global executives and companies on leadership and growth. Alison combined her experience and adventures in these two roles to bring us the book Pacing For Growth – Why Intelligent Restraint Drives Long-Term Success.

Pacing For Growth takes a unique and relevant approach as to how business should approach sustained growth. Leaders have excessive priorities to focus on to keep everyone happy. They need innovation, increased market share, higher margins, and key employees. The list goes on and on. Often, leaders try to achieve everything at the same time and the result is ultimately achieving less. There needs to be a balanced approach to growth. If you grow too fast you will burn people out, miss opportunities and lose momentum. Growing too slow will result in lost momentum, stalled technology and new product lines and the competition will reach the finish line first. So what is the answer? Intelligent Restraint.

Intelligent Restraint is a term that Alison coined through her years of consulting. It is a balanced long term method of approaching business decisions. The idea is to push teams, change, and the business as far as we can but within our capacity. Slow and steady wins the race. This may mean accelerating at one time but pulling back and slowing another. Leaders need to have the patience to build capacity for growth which translates into new capabilities from inside the organization. Growth and capacity work together but need to survive the test of time. Pacing growth enables us to build capacity for future success. Pacing For Growth is divided into 3 parts to effectively illustrate what Intelligent Restraint is and how to engage it within an organization. Part 1 outlines the principles themselves. Part 2 reviews the rules of Intelligent Restraint. Part 3 offers ideas, tools, and examples of putting this principle into action. Following is a synopsis of each part to whet your appetite or paced growth.

3 principles of Intelligent Restraint to guide leaders:

Capacity determines how far and fast you can go – maximum capacity is the absolute peak performance that a system can perform at without crashing.

The right capabilities increase capacity – Alison focuses on two capabilities in particular in her book, outside-in thinking and customer-aligned innovation.

The right pace wins the race – we all know what happens when we push to fast and run out of steam.

3 rules of Intelligent Restraint:

Focus overrules vision – growth needs to be more than just a vision.

Routine beats strengths – strengths can ultimately become weaknesses and routine will “conserve energy” and help create new methods of thinking.

Exert, then recover – continual exertion exhausts people, systems, and cultures. It’s critical to know when to take a step back to recover in order to stay on the path to long term growth.

These rules are critical to making key trade-offs and decisions for teams and the business as you build capacity for growth.

The final section of Pacing For Growth brings everything together for us. Alison shows us how to put Intelligent Restraint to work. First, we need to focus on scaling to grow. Leaders need to increase capacity fast enough but pace the change and growth within human and cost limits. She suggests picking one capability at a time to focus on developing faster, rather than several. Alison stresses how critical routines are in making this happen. For instance, you should create the right routines for development, find routines that really stretch people and systems, create new routines that build sound decision making capabilities, or use them to “leverage moments of truth”. To maximize development Alison shares her FAST framework that she utilizes with leaders. FAST = Focus, Act, Support, Test. In the book she leads us through the framework to catalyze growth in a responsible manner.

I am a visual person and stories always bring new information home for me. Alison devotes a chapter to sharing real experiences in the trenches from leaders. These are people who have put Intelligent Restraint to use and this really helps to bring the concept home. Moreover, it gives us food for thought about how we can use her thoughts in our own roles. Pacing For Growth also ties up all these concepts with some online resources including a Pacing For Growth checklist that is relevant, simple, and practical.

Pacing For Growth offers a sound and practiced approach to growing our organizations within capacity. Today, too few companies take a restraint growth attitude towards growing which only has negative impacts on people, systems, and processes. Corporate America needs to adapt a long term growth mentality so that they are around in the future. Alison shares stories about icons that have flourished or failed over the years, leadership tools and tips for pacing growth and capacity, and keeps us mesmerized with her own personal stories and experiences.

Thom says

Very informative and can use it !
