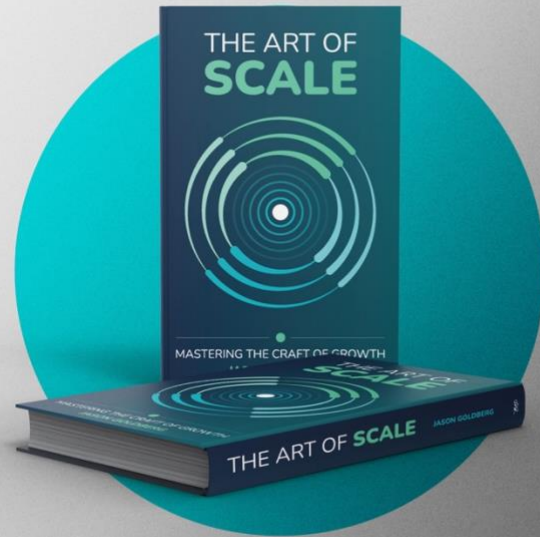


Preface

The background to this book is cryptically written on my back. Look and you will find scars, a back full of them.



The scars come from spending the last two decades scaling businesses in Africa. I have walked on glass as we've scaled Edge Growth and our related brands since 2007. I've had insomnia for half of my adult life, been so burnt out that my coach said I would never fully recover, seen most of my relationships pushed to the limit because I was so trapped in the frenetic job of keeping what felt like hundreds of glass balls in the air while burnt out, under-slept, and physiologically damaged by chronic stress. Along the way, my core business has been to fund, and help, other founders on their own version of the same harrowing quest to scale-up.

Today, if you Google 'books about how to scale a business', your search will return literally hundreds of results. That's very different to when we started out, when we had to figure things out for ourselves. There was no end to the flow of fresh insights on how to lead a lean start-up, and Jim Collins, among others, continued to inspire on 'going from good to great' in big firms. But in between... the bookshelves and blogs were deafeningly empty. We were left to navigate a difficult and painful process without much proven wisdom to lean on.

That has changed. There are now many go-to books and blogs about how to scale, and more and more serial entrepreneurs now mentor and coach first time founders to navigate this gruelling scale-up task.

But there are important gaps we hope to fill with this book - in a nutshell, what works for smaller scale-ups in emerging markets? Most of the successful scale-up books were written by leaders in firms with a mid-market client base, in developed markets. But context is everything. In smaller scale-ups in emerging markets, you're scaling in

smaller markets, on less capital, with less well-developed management teams, a less stable environment that is less supportive and requires you to solve problems developed market peers don't have to think about (like not having access to running water!). Growth is harder and the lifecycle stage transitions are more challenging in those contexts.

So, if you lead a scale-up with a 10-200 headcount in an emerging market, you are our hero, and you are our audience. This book is for you.

Subhead : A book + ...

This is more than a book because you need more than knowledge. Scaling is a craft - the craft of business building, a craft that takes time and diligence to master. You don't master a craft by reading; you master the tools of a trade by doing. This book is your gallery and guide to the toolroom. Every chapter ends with a key points roundup, a list of curated books to go deeper (find free summaries on [Artofscale.io](https://artofscale.io)), and a new group of tools and step-by-step guides in your toolroom (mostly available for free on [ArtOfScale.io](https://artofscale.io)). Consider this book your handbook for the craft of business building, and a guide to your toolroom.

Throughout the book, I've shared stories that are composites of founders, leaders and businesses with which we have worked as leaders, investors, board members, and coaches. People and companies have all been given pseudonyms and other details have been changed to mask company and personal identities.

Subhead: Who is 'we'?

I write as 'we' because I am largely an aggregator of wisdom and tools. I am standing on the shoulders of giants and sharing the cumulative millennia of scale-up experience of those unnamed sages. Too many contributors have been involved to name them all, but special mention must go to Wayne Hartmann and Jason Krause, Head Coach and CEO of Art Of Scale respectively, as well as Tanille Shadiack, Lin Kayton, Nicole Griffith Lisa Witepski, and the many Art Of Scale coaches who gave input.

It's a privilege to have your attention. I don't take it lightly. I trust this handbook will serve you well for years.

Are you ready to master the craft of growth? Let's go...