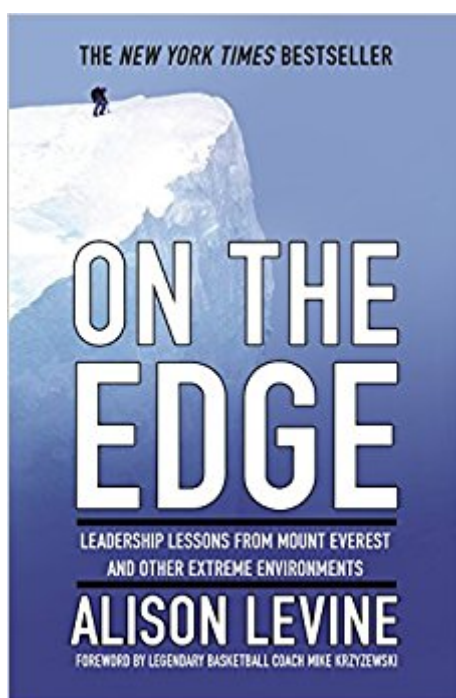


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On The Edge: Leadership Lessons From Mount Everest And Other Extreme Environments



Synopsis

FOREWORD BY LEGENDARY DUKE BASKETBALL COACH MIKE KRZYZEWSKI
On the Edge is an engaging leadership manual that provides concrete insights garnered from various extreme environments ranging from Mt Everest to the South Pole. By reflecting on the lessons learned from her various expeditions, author Alison Levine makes the case that the leadership principles that apply in extreme adventure sport also apply in today's extreme business environments. Both settings require you to be able to make crucial decisions on the spot when the conditions around you are far from perfect. Your survival -and the survival of your team-depend on it. Featuring a Foreword from legendary Duke University basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski who knows all about leadership, On the Edge provides a framework to help people scale whatever big peaks they aspire to climb-be they literal or figurative-by offering practical, humorous, and often unorthodox advice about how to grow as a leader.

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Customer Reviews

"A good read, filled with humor and shrewd observations about human nature."-- The Wall Street Journal
Publisher's Weekly Starred Review
"In her assured, personable debut, Levine-team captain of the first American Women's Everest Expedition and a former associate at Goldman Sachs-takes lessons learned on the slopes of the world's tallest mountains and applies them to everyday business challenges for executives at all levels, as well as politicians, educators, and students. On the premise that "everyone is in a leadership position," Levine covers topics including extreme

preparation, the importance of failure, succeeding in difficult conditions, networking, ego management, making the most of weakness, building trust and loyalty, and bringing your A-game to every challenge. Levine writes, "leadership in extreme environments requires the willpower, the teamwork, the high moral character, and the emotional intelligence necessary to overcome exceptional hurdles, solve complex problems, and face any sudden, uncontrollable, high-risk situation, including those that exist in today's business world." The book is best suited to readers looking for their advice framed in an adventure story; the lessons within are cast in broad strokes, appealing, perhaps, to business readers who prefer not to read the words "synergy" or "laser-focus" yet again. If they can get past the feeling of inferiority from reading the work of a business-savvy extreme climber who's also funny, readers will find much to learn here." "On the Edge is terrific, containing a mountain of valuable leadership advice that will appeal to executives, politicians, educators and students, parents, and athletes and coaches. Levine's peak performances give a whole new meaning to the idea of a leadership summit." -- SUCCESS Magazine "A unique approach to leadership development. While the advice in On the Edge might seem counterintuitive (like the practice of going without sleep or rewarding people who failed), Levine lays out her case using her signature humor style and real world examples from leaders in sports and the military, and she uses her own experiences as a mountaineer to support her unorthodox recommendations. On the Edge will make you re-think leadership." -- Shawn Achor, positive psychology researcher and NY Times bestselling author of Before Happiness "A completely different approach to leadership development that provides invaluable advice not only for business, but also for life's every-day challenges. Presented with humility and humor, ON THE EDGE guides us towards exploring the very best of ourselves." -- Jo Ann Ross, President, Network Sales, CBS Television Network "An irresistible book that gives readers a glimpse into the sensibilities of one of the finest natural leaders I have ever known. Alison Levine's ON THE EDGE offers amazing insights....timely, practical lessons and authentic inspiration delivered with candor and spunk." -- Brigadier General (Ret.) Tom Kolditz, Professor Emeritus, U.S. Military Academy, Dept. of Behavioral Sciences & Leadership "Despite the fact that Alison Levine lectures at West Point (Go Navy!), her contrarian approach to leader development makes for a compelling read. Using her amazing experiences as an accomplished mountaineer, Levine relates remarkable insights while revealing how leadership skills can be learned in any kind of challenging environment -- whether it be in the corporate world or climbing peaks in sub-zero temperatures." -- D. Michael Abrashoff, former Commander USS Benfold, Bestselling author of It's Your Ship

Alison Levine is a history-making polar explorer and mountaineer. She has climbed the highest peak on each continent, served as team captain of the first American Women's Everest Expedition and skied to both the North and South Poles. She holds an MBA from Duke University and served as an adjunct instructor at the United States Military Academy at West Point in the Department of Behavioral Sciences & Leadership. Levine is a sought-after keynote speaker on the topic of leadership development and has addressed audiences ranging from Fortune 500 companies to the World Economic Forum in Davos. Having spent prolonged periods of time in some of the world's most dangerous and inhospitable places, she addresses the topics of creating cohesive teams, taking responsible risks and developing no-nonsense leaders that can succeed in times of uncertainty. Levine serves on the advisory board of the Coach K Center on Leadership & Ethics at Duke University and is a strategic advisor for the Thayer Leader Development Group at West Point. She was a contributing author to the book *Leadership in Dangerous Situations: A Handbook for the Armed Forces, Emergency Services and First Responders* (Naval Institute Press).

Alison Levine's *On The Edge* has been miscast as a book about leadership principles. It is far more than that. The book recounts compelling stories about remarkable human achievements. Ms. Levine's achievements, mostly through which one may glean more than business or leadership lessons, and more of what I regard as life lessons that apply beyond sports and business environments. Along the way while reading about Ms. Levine's adventures and tribulations toward achieving the Adventure Grand Slam, you will absorb life lessons like: do the right thing; always; show up prepared for whatever lies ahead; complacency will kill you; develop strong relationships; find ways to bring out the best in others; you are not special; it's not always about you, but about those to whom you are accountable; empower those around you; progress doesn't always look like progress; and own your failures and learn from them. It's easy enough to read that list and say, "yeah, seems like a sensible list, I got it." But absorbing these life lessons by traveling along on Ms. Levine's journeys helps make them unforgettable and a part of you. (And, by the way, if you read about Ms. Levine's adventure achievements and you think you know someone who's accomplished more, I'd like to meet him or her.) The lessons that Ms. Levine conveys would benefit people of all walks of life: mothers & fathers; teenagers & college students; those just beginning careers of any kind and those much further down the path. Heck, have your youngsters

try it. Please. In our era of domination by “millennials,” it behooves us to help young people begin to learn the life lessons that Ms. Levine conveys. Perhaps the members of the everyone-gets-a-trophy-for-showing-up generation will appreciate that leadership and achievement are not about what I can accomplish for me, but about how I can bring along others for broader achievement. (Now get off my lawn!) Part of the appeal of *On The Edge* is the force of Ms. Levine’s character, outlook and relatability. And all one has to do to confirm this view is troll the hundreds of Twitter raves about Ms. Levine’s personal appearances and speeches given about the same themes in her book. Or, you could be fortunate enough to attend one of her presentations. The comments from audiences as diverse as the Girl Scouts, West Point cadets, conventions and corporation audiences attest to the wide appeal of her story, message and personality. I mentioned relatability. The book is neither pedantic nor overbearing nor preachy. It’s easy to read, and the adventure stories keep it moving along. And Ms. Levine is relatable, too. Relatable like sitting down for a soda with Thor or Iron Man and talking about what they’ve been up to. Perhaps this recommendation comes a few weeks too late, as high school and college graduation season has just about passed us now. But for all those with the laudable practice of bestowing Dr. Seuss’s “Oh, The Places You’ll Go” on your favorite recent grad, I suggest you now give two books: Dr. Seuss, of course, and Alison Levine’s *On The Edge*. Two are great guidebooks for a most excellent adventure.

I had the great pleasure of hearing Alison Levine speak, in May 2016, at a training event held by my employer. I was hesitant to go to the event because I was still recuperating from recent knee surgery, but something inside kept telling me to go anyway...and now I know why. From the very outset of Ms. Levine’s presentation I was captivated by her message; and it’s the message delivered in *On The Edge*. Ms. Levine’s experiences in mountaineering and polar exploration are fascinating all on their own, but how she relates those experiences to life and leadership in a corporate environment really drives the point of this book home. I know there are those who will discount the principles outlined in *On The Edge* as being too “out of the box”, and that’s fine. I’m sure those companies and their leadership groups will go on to be successful in their own right. But, they’ll probably never know what greater heights (mountaineering pun intended) they could have achieved had they made the fundamentals put forth in this book a part of their everyday corporate philosophy. I absolutely have incorporated them into my professional life as well as my personal life.

My favorite line from the book is, "What you do every day matters." It does. And so does this book.

I bought this for my daughter as a Christmas present. Alison Levine spoke at a breakfast and she was great. My daughter, a college honors student and former high school English teacher and journalist really enjoyed it. According to my daughter Kelli, this book is not just for woman. It is very funny and packed with lots of life lessons from climbing that can be applied to the business world. I saw her speak and she is great!

As a first year student in the MBA program at Duke University, I was fortunate enough to hear Alison deliver a keynote address to our student body. I was captivated from the moment she took the stage, and couldn't wait to order her book. Her work is easy to read and fascinating. Through her incredibly unique experiences, she offers keen insight about teamwork, motivation, and leadership. These lessons can be applied not only to the business world, but to life and relationships in general. Alison is the ultimate role model, and her work is accessible to any reader who wishes to develop his or her leadership abilities. She is also an incredibly kind person. My father is fascinated with Everest, and was envious that I had a chance to hear Alison speak, so I sent her an email and she actually sent him a signed copy of her book for his birthday! I really couldn't give a higher recommendation for a book that will teach you a lot and will support such a talented and kind person.

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