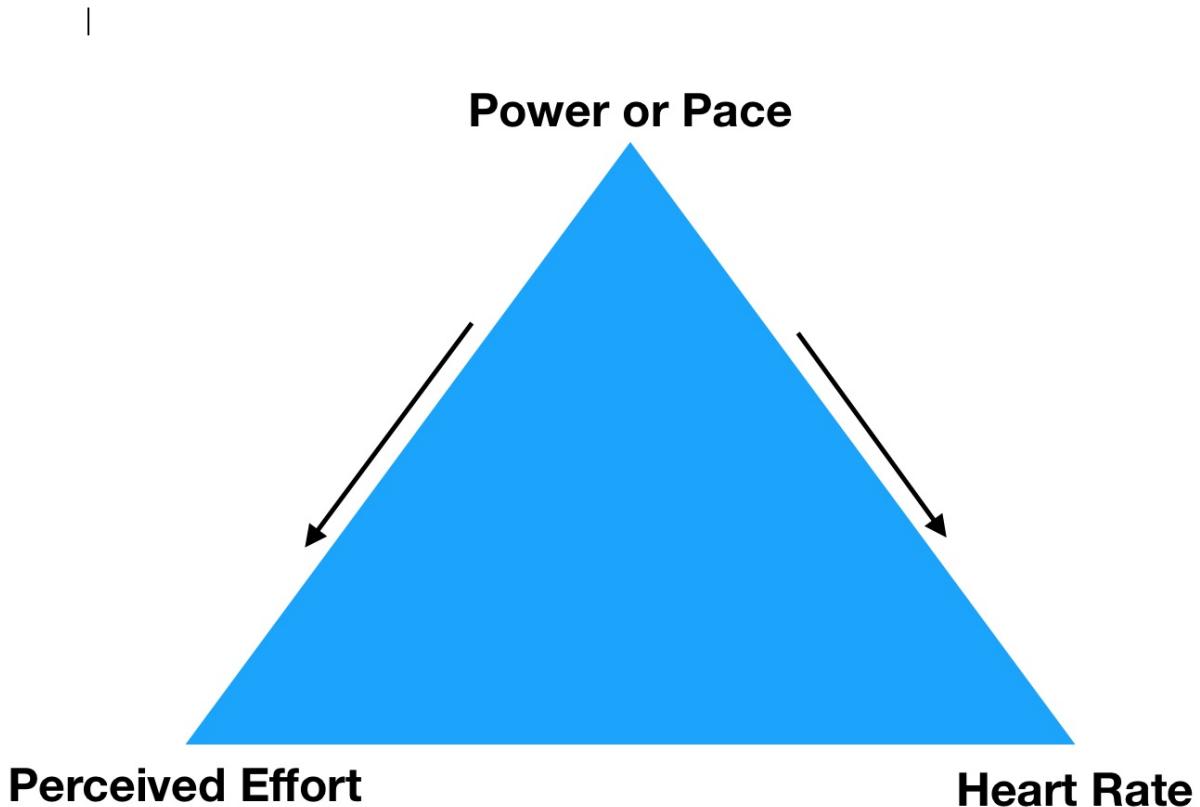


Triangle of Effort



© FeWoman, LLC

Power/Pace - Establishing your power/pace zones happens from testing or training. There are all kinds of methods out there to choose from including race data. Just choose something consistent and avoid the FTP bloat effect. This is where your ego guesses that your FTP is higher than your reality. Yes, it seems size matters even here.

Heart Rate - Establishing your heart rate zones happens from testing or training. Or you can also use this simple calculator located [here](#). I like this one because it ballparks the end of your easy zone and the start of your hard zone.

Perceived Exertion - I keep this simple with Easy, Steady (140.6 pace), Moderate Hard (70.3 pace), Hard (Olympic pace).

In training, pace/power are the most important metric we use to establish an appropriate level of training stimulus. Heart rate is an important input. Perceived exertion is the canary in the coal mine.

Power/Pace > Heart Rate > Perceived Exertion

In the middle of the summer (my racing season), I roll each workout targeting my power/pace. I use my heart rate to determine if I am getting fitter (heart rate will decrease at the same work load), if I am dehydrated (heart rate may be higher than normal) or glycogen depleted (heart rate may be lower than normal).

Have you ever driven a car with the Eco function? I play a game when I rent one to see how I can maintain my speed with the lowest use of fuel. This is the same game I play in training. How can I maintain my power/pace zone with the lowest possible HR. Knowing full well that sometimes my heart rate is affected by things beyond training; weather, lack of sleep, stress etc.

And what about perceived exertion? You don't have to feel well to train well. I have started many a workout feeling like crap and within twenty minutes I end up feeling all world. Why is it the canary in the coal mine? If I find my effort feels at least two zones harder than it should, after a solid warm up, I will pull the plug. This is usually a sign for me that I am overreached or I am getting sick. A day or two of consolidation (easy recovery efforts) will quickly reboot my system.

In the winter or my base, I may rotate the triangle for a period and focus on my heart rate. These are the base miles after a season ending break. I want to get sensibly fit and my heart rate is a great way to do that without testing and racing.

Bottom line is that we have lots of data points to chart our path. Your coach will be using all three metrics to help you learn how to train your best to race your best. Listen and practice!

There is no easy way!