

Welcome to *My 2 Cents*  
by Creative Action Marketing, LLC  
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This month I'm continuing the leadership theme with 2 recent articles from McKinsey Quarterly.

The first article is *How to test your decision-making instincts* (May 2010 – Andrew Campbell and Jo Whitehead). This article discusses how to trust gut instincts and offers test questions to identify unconscious biases.

Over the years the idea of following your instincts has been either applauded or ridiculed. This article recommends 4 questions to understand and balance your gut instincts:

1. Familiarity – how often have you experienced this type or similar situation? (Sufficient experience to make a sound decision.)
2. Feedback – did you receive reliable feedback in past experiences? (Emotional experience versus objective information/assessment.)
3. Emotions – are your emotions connected to a past experience balanced by impartial inputs? (Past highly-charged incidents can generate poor decisions today.)
4. Personal gain – do you have any personal biases or attachments? (There is no room for personal interests when making sound leadership decisions.)

When any one of these questions uncover a weakness it's best to augment the decision-making process by gathering more data, increasing the discussion, and/or seeking others' experience. Gut instinct definitely enters into every leadership decision so it's important to have steps in place to test its appropriateness.

The second article addresses finding balance in what customers want in a successful vendor relationship. *The basics of business-to-business sales success* (May 2010 - Nate Boaz, John Murnane, and Kevin Nuffer. Source: Marketing & Sales Practice). The article features information from 1200+ purchasing decision-makers of various sized organizations in the US and Western Europe. Their purchasing action indicated that weak product knowledge and too frequent sales calls were the most direct causes in losing the sale versus what they stated – product and price. To correct this think about:

- Creating a uniform product message and strong value proposition.
- Combining product and more experiential training (i.e. on-the-job mentoring) for sales reps.
- Providing online tools for the minute product details or specialist support for more complex products.
- Determining the best times to talk to customers can center on key product triggers – product enhancements, new products, special customer assessment offers/workshops. Each contact must offer meaningful information.

The article concludes with 3 insightful questions to ask about your sales approach so be sure the check out the article's last paragraph.

Complete articles can be found @:

*How to test your decision-making instincts* (May 2010 – Andrew Campbell and Jo Whitehead):  
[https://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/Strategy/Strategic\\_Thinking/How\\_to\\_test\\_your\\_decision-making\\_instincts\\_2598](https://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/Strategy/Strategic_Thinking/How_to_test_your_decision-making_instincts_2598)

*The basics of business-to-business sales success* (May 2010 – Nate Boaz, John Murnane, and Kevin Nuffer. Source: Marketing & Sales Practice):  
[https://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/Marketing/Sales\\_Distribution/The\\_basics\\_of\\_business-to-business\\_sales\\_success\\_2586](https://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/Marketing/Sales_Distribution/The_basics_of_business-to-business_sales_success_2586)

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