

Is Intuition an Important Leadership Trait?

What helped **Edison** to pick himself after each failure and continue his efforts till the light bulb turned on? What helped **Walt Disney** to make the movie '**Snow White**' when everyone around him believed that it was a mistake? What helped **Colonel Sanders** to venture out at an age that most people retire and build a billion dollar empire on his chicken recipe?

In the business world, the conversation is often about '**fact vs intuition**'. Ron Hieftz, the author of Adaptive Leadership, talks about the importance of balancing fact and intuition.

So what is intuition? Oxford Dictionary defines intuition as "the ability to understand something instinctively, without the need for conscious reasoning." When business leaders get together and decide on an ambitious target, which defies all facts, and it was not only achieved but also surpassed, did intuition play a role?

In the 20th century, intuition was restricted to the psychics and astrologers but today it is a desired leadership characteristic. For Edison, Disney and Sanders the key driver of their phenomenal success was intuition. The recognition of the role of intuition in business today has led to the coinage of the phrase 'Intuitive Intelligence'. There is a school of thought that believes that Intuitive Intelligence is the result of our brains patching together existent information and experiences to arrive at less predictable solutions and conclusions. As Barry Gordon states in his book (Intelligent Memory: Improve the Memory That Makes You Smarter) - "Since birth our brains compartmentalize experiences and information akin to an elaborate closet organization system. The brain warehouses existing knowledge into separate files and, when new data is received, it searches the stored files looking for similar information. Upon finding a match, the new information is combined with the existing knowledge to create a fresh thought. This process, called intelligent memory, is the basis for producing creative, breakthrough ideas." Gordon also shows that intuition and decision-making are inseparably linked.

We at [MMM Training Solutions](#) believe that Intuitive intelligence can be trained and below are some of the techniques we use in our [Leadership Training Program](#) to enhance intuition:

- **Be in the 'Here and Now':** Meditation is a proven way to enhance your awareness. During meditation there is an increase of Gamma Waves, which augments the functioning of the brain. It helps you to detach from the past experiences and helps you to stay in the present – the realm of possibilities.
- **Detach yourself from the picture:** See the whole situation for what it is rather than how it serves you. Focus on the few things that are most important and challenge yourself on the role that you are playing to stop the evolution of a solution. Understand your intention and ensure that there is purity and clarity of the same.
- **Total Commitment:** There has to be a fierce resolve to weather all storms and to stay on course till the goal is achieved. Challenges should be seen as opportunities and excuses should never be entertained. With such focus the brain will start to find alternate and unique ways to attain the end.

This three-step process used in our **Leadership Training** to develop intuitive intelligence helps the leader to see the situation as a whole, rather than as disconnected segments. It helps your brain to recognize patterns from past experiences and navigate faster through vast amounts of unstructured data and work around gaps and conflicts in the information. But ensure that there is a good balance of fact and intuition and have an attitude of 'learning from your mistakes'.