

Pondering Point

Whether in business, relationships or life, our ability to behave in a sensible way and make practical decisions develops our common sense. *Where does this ability come from? Can common sense be taught and are some born with a greater capacity for it?* Some may argue that our childhood environments play a role in how we acquire practical knowledge. Others insist common sense is a mixture of intuition, talent and natural instinct. **Whether by nurture or nature, our personality, temperament and ability to take risks and learn from them create the foundation for rational decision making.**

Since we view things from our own prism, what makes perfect sense to some may not make sense to others. As a leader, we may expect others to take the initiative and solve problems independently. We assume they will make rational decisions and act in our best interest. *In this assumption, can we take their common sense for granted? Are we establishing what knowledge is common? Do we sometimes fail to communicate fully because we simply assume others know what everyone should know?* **Instead of being disappointed by another's failure to execute our sense of common knowledge, perhaps we can learn to celebrate the different way others see things and how they solve the same problems.** We may learn something.

Is COMMON SENSE really that common?

Are we making too big a deal out of it?



Imagine... using common sense as the building blocks to solving problems.

— From Pondering to Practice —

Activity

Try This - Have a group discussion on a situation that may present a myriad of solutions.

(Example: A scheduling conflict - You have over-booked yourself to be at more than one place at one time.)

- How would you use common sense to problem solve?
- Have the group address some of the questions that were mentioned above regarding common knowledge and where it comes from.
- Answer these questions as well:
 - What are the different styles/types of common sense?
 - Is there a difference between book smarts and street smarts?

Reflection

- Do you think your childhood environment helped to shape your common sense?
- Do you believe that you are still developing your common sense?
- Has your ability to use your practical knowledge helped you in solving problems?
- Do you believe that common sense can be taught to those that seem to have less of it?

"Common sense is genius dressed in its working clothes."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson