

Management Savvy ness is Common Sensical

Management savvy ness isn't about management theories that you may have learned in school or through the school of hard knocks. Most of what works comes from your own common sense – what you do and learn every day managing people, your company, and your business. These are what I call Common Sensical Dots - data points about management that, as you might guess, make sense. When you connect the dots, you get the whole picture. Some people go about building their businesses with their primary focus on winning and making money. While making money certainly is one of the objectives and will keep the business operating, it shouldn't be the main concentration. When we focus on the act of winning alone, we allow virtually any type of behavior, as long as it's accomplished in the name of winning. Furthermore, the converse is flaunted - anything less than winning is losing. If you subscribe to the thought that if you don't win you lose, it leaves much of our population in the "losing" column. A rudimentary view of life would have you believe that winning is associated with success, therefore losing is associated with failure. It doesn't matter if we are talking about managing a business or a family or a relationships-this is not a positive orientation. How can we turn that around? The "how" is in the desire to win. There isn't a thing wrong with wanting to succeed. Beneficial competition and respectable conduct is the reality of our business and personal world. In it, people do lose and some achieve less than they hoped. We also learn from our losses and people with healthy attitudes about losing see losses as temporary impediments, rather than failures that devastate their desire to win.

You can take this desire-to-win attitude into the business world and still concentrate on the goals you set for your business or yourself. Most important is to recognize you will make mistakes, you will sometimes slip up, and you will slight someone. If you concentrate positively on the desire to win, you can do just that while allowing for mistakes and compromises. Your success rate will rise and you can only be a winner!

Here are my five Common Sensical Dots that are beneficial as points to concentrate on when you find yourself confused. Start anywhere with the dots and connect them.

Marsha Lindquist's Common Sensical Dots

Dot #1 Always ask and focus on "Who is my client and how can I fulfill their needs?"

Dot #2 High Road Thinking – When you must choose between doing the right thing and doing something right, do the right thing!

Dots #3 Only choose excellent to work with you.

Dot #4 Make key decisions deliberately while you pay attention your intuitive voice.

Dot #5 Stick with the basics and change only when it makes sense to do so.



Common Sensical Dot #1 Always ask and focus on "Who is my client and how can I fulfill their needs?"

This principle is the most important of all those listed. If you don't know who your client is, then you don't know what you are aiming for. You have to know the territory. How can you deliver if you don't know who wants what you offer? You also have to know what their needs are. Just offering what you do or have to sell won't just make business happen. Knowing what your clients' needs are, gives you the ammunition to marry what you have to offer with what they need.

The second part of this dot understands your clients' businesses and how you can facilitate fulfilling your clients' needs. Focus on making each client successful should be your most cherished objective. It puts your attention and care where they should truly be. And what's more, it's more likely that you will have a satisfied, raving, repeat client for the future.

Common Sensical Dot #2 High Road Thinking – When you have to choose between doing the right thing and doing something right, do the right thing! People usually say, "Of course, I always try to do the right thing". When you get involved in the emotions of everyday business, sometimes things just fall apart and you get caught up in doing things right. Or at least, what you perceive as right.

Business changes, the environment changes, and so do the players in our business. We respond to changing market conditions and our clients' needs. Sometimes we get so caught up in the day to day issues that we forget what our main objectives are for the business. We think we are focusing on the forest but it's the trees that we see. As company leader it's critical to maintain a visionary position and to convey it to the rest of the company. It's important to ask any activity you are doing furthers the goals of the organization. If the answer is yes, then keep doing the right thing. If not, change the focus and activity.

Common Sensical Dot #3 Only chooses excellent people to work with you. The caliber and attitude of the people you hire reflect on you and your business. If you surround yourself with folks who have the right attitude you'll succeed every time. The right attitude frequently makes up for experience and knowledge. Of course you always want the best and the brightest. Their excellence will make you shine. I always surround myself with people who excel in areas where I am vulnerable. These gifted individuals make a joyful workplace and also challenge you to be the best.

Hire people first with the attitude that matches your business philosophy. Then look for the talent that compliments your own.

Common Sensical Dot #4 Make key decisions deliberately while you pay attention your intuitive voice.

Key decisions change or set the stage for the direction, longevity and size of your business. These decisions must be made with substantial thought, purpose, and intention. They require significant planning, input from others, and commitment to the organization. Because of their obvious importance, they ought to be made deliberately.



This doesn't mean that you ignore your intuition and just make key decisions based upon the facts you know. Remember that your intuition includes all of your past experiences, knowledge, and rational thought processes. They are already in good working order. Make use of that inner voice when you are considering key issues. Sleep on it.

Common Sensical Dot #5 Stick with the basics and change only when it makes sense to do so. Another way to say it is, "Don't leave the lady you took to the dance." This is one of the "oh yeah" guiding principles that I use when I'm considering a new direction. Does the new direction take me or my company too much away from what has been successful? If you lose sight of what got you to success, you might discover that newer and bigger and brighter won't really make your business grow. It's doing what you do best that will continue to carry you on even in tough times.

None of this is to say that you don't ever change. But when you consider changing, don't leave the basics behind. That includes not only what you do (the core business you started), but how you do it as well. When you start doing the fancy stuff, don't forget to keep doing the basic things as well. And that means keeping it simple. If it works for you, don't abandon it for glossier heights. It makes good sense. These Common Sensical Dots are straightforward and could be part of your basic management philosophy. Consider reviewing them from time to time. Basics are like that. We just need a reminder of how simple they are.