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*I will trust my gut feeling*

Some follow their instincts first when making decisions, while others insist on using their intellect for the final determination. Several studies have shown that instinct as much as intellect leads to the right decision. Professor Marius Usher of Tel Aviv University's School of Psychological Sciences and his fellow researchers found that participants who were forced to choose between two options based on instinct alone made the right choice up to ninety-percent of the time. Usher and others point to a person's ability to average value based on a repository of stored information in the brain.

As we accumulate knowledge, the brain begins to recognize patterns, and then it unconsciously organizes these patterns into groups of information—a mechanism the late social scientist Dr. Herbert Simon called “chunking.” Our long-term memory stores these clusters of patterns into a larger composition that can be recognized as an impulse of intuition. Of course that commonly called “gut feeling” is not flawless, but it can be an important part of the decision-making process. It's actually a form of unconscious reasoning that comes from our brain's stored information.

Athletes in particular excel by trusting their instincts after extensive study and practice. During game time, overthinking can impede their ability to react quickly, so they allow intuition to direct their activities. In the professional environment when time is limited, “gut decisions” can often lead to greater progress, especially if corroborated with others and the facts. Steve Jobs said about trusting his gut, “it never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.” That small voice that nudges you when you're conflicted between two choices is real. Trust your gut.

*“Trust your hunches. They're usually based on facts filed away just below the conscious level.” ~ Joyce Brothers*

*“I believe in intuition and inspiration...at times I feel certain I am right while not knowing the reasons.” ~ Albert Einstein*