



The concept of “common sense“

Spring is now bearing down on us, bringing with it brand new as well as perennially recurring ideas. Surely you allowed your “common sense” to prevail over the Easter holidays and only consumed healthy and regional products! No?! Tsk-tsk ...

Commercial interests have recently dusted off a well-known, time-tested concept, that of basing decisions on “common sense”. Implicit in this thinking is that we can solve anything if only we apply common sense. I ask you: is this really true?

Especially in our daily consultancy activities, we see companies which would gladly solve complex problems and procedures with common sense only fail time and again to achieve viable results. What could be the reason for this? Could it be that some causalities are so complex and interwoven that a quick review, a snap decision or a “gut feeling” alone is not enough? Could it be that a “generally-accepted majority” – as common sense is so often defined – is insufficient when it comes to new approaches and innovation?

The concept of “common sense” tends to be radically oversimplified, with decisions being made on the basis of pre-existent, preconceived concepts. “Rational thought”, a holistic view and technical profundity are things not easily attained. But please don’t misunderstand me! It’s not that I’m striking a blow for the complicated problem-solving approach, an approach one has to struggle to come to grips with, but a deeper consideration of the subject at issue as well as a more precise contemplation of cause and effect will usually have a very positive impact on the outcome.

To be sure: at times our eyes may also only be opened by the point of view we’ve chosen, with a nod to Antoine de Saint Exupéry: *“Seeing clearly often only takes a change of perspective”*. And with this step, it is no doubt “common sense” which is inherently there to guide us.

Yours,
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