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Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Dear David,

 Ara Norwood

Jump into this issue of *Uncommon Sense*. I've got a lot in store for you in terms of food for thought.

The **Self-Development** column addresses a problem I see in most organizations. Read it and see if your organization suffers from the same delusion.

The most consequential election of our lifetime is just around the corner. Since I assessed Hillary Clinton in the previous issue of *Uncommon Sense*, I now turn my sights on Donald Trump in the **Elephant in the Room** column.


Finally, in the **Ara's Journal** column, I share some personal contemplations on the sensitive topic of grief and mourning.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood

The Fallacy of the Invincible

Great organizations provide great Training & Development offerings for their people. IBM, Amazon, Google, and Procter & Gamble are among some of the corporate titans that have well-managed teams consisting of professionals who understand talent, education, performance, learning, and training. In short, they know how to develop their people and to help them evolve their capacity to perform.

However, many organizations have fallen under the illusion that training is for the rank and file only, and that the higher up the organization you go, the less training is needed. This warped Seminar viewpoint imagines that the most senior people are immune to training of any kind, as if they are gods in possession of some sort of omniscience.

Organizations who think that way short-change their top executives. They deprive their most experienced managers of critically important development opportunities. And thus, the most senior management teams begin to grow stale; their skills and knowledge begin to atrophy. And they are less effective.

I understand that the most senior managers do not benefit from a remedial classroom program in basic interviewing skills. However, every Training & Development department should offer cutting-edge, advanced programs in every needed topic, either by hiring very experienced facilitators who know how to challenge and engage senior management, or by turning to outside organizations who cater to senior leaders. (Large, established training companies such as [Franklin Covey](#) are equipped for such work, but so are small, boutique agencies such as [Edinger Consulting Group](#).)

Any training initiative that fails to account for the unique needs of senior management is incomplete, and if not corrected, will move the organization's leadership toward a sluggish, languid sea of ineffectualness.


The Elephant in the Room

Assessing Donald Trump

Donald Trump is a flawed candidate. But he is less flawed than Hillary Clinton.

Donald Trump is brash, insensitive, ego-driven, crude at times, and thin-skinned.

But that is not the full story on Donald Trump. For he is a lot of things, many of them admirable.

Here is a candid assessment of Donald Trump as a candidate. In other words, I want to look at him through the lens of his Donald Trump occupying the White House, and not so much through the lens of his personal quirks. The key question is, What kind of President would he be?

His strengths as a President would include a dramatically different direction for the country, with different priorities and a different level of energy. He is unlike any candidate we have ever had, and would very likely be unlike any previous president, which has its risks and also has its benefits. No previous front-runner, from either party, has been cut from the same sort of cloth as Donald Trump. So if the *same-old, same-old* is what you want, then don't vote for Trump. If elected, he would absolutely shake things up, economically, militarily, and in terms of immigration issues.

If Trump is elected, a wall will go up along the southern border of our country, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials, (also known as ICE) will be empowered to actually do their job, something they are currently prevented from doing. Illegal immigration will be squelched. Sanctuary cities, which currently defy federal law, will be vanquished, and they will no longer be able to harbor illegal alien criminals that murder Americans.

If Trump is elected, our Foreign Policy will be one of strength and seriousness. Our military will be radically strengthened, ISIS will be crushed decisively, and our international foes will be sobered. A President Trump would very likely put the fear of God into them. We would become a nation of strength once again.

If Trump is elected, he will no longer tolerate a government that operates outside of a budget. Being a brilliant and successful businessman, a President Trump would ensure that a sound budget will be trimmed of fat, will be passed, and will not be exceeded. Because he understands the need to be fiscally responsible, he is unlikely to add more to the national debt which has continued to spiral out of control under Leftist President Obama, and would continue to spiral out of control under a Leftist President Hillary Clinton, eventually bankrupting the country. And Trump is an expert deal-maker. No longer would we be on the receiving end of treaties that weaken us while strengthening our enemies. There would almost certainly be job growth in this country at commendable levels.

If Trump is elected, he will very likely appoint people to the Supreme Court who believe in the Constitution, unlike Hillary Clinton who would appoint people who do NOT believe in the Constitution, but who believe in "social justice" (i.e., Leftism.) Mrs. Clinton did not even mention the word *Constitution* when she described what kind of judges she would appoint to the Supreme Court during the debates.

Now Trump has been shown to be crude at times, and immature, and hyper-sensitive. He also has virtually no political experience and so he is not as informed about a large host of issues as is his opponent. But as President, he would have impeccably-experienced and wise advisors who would give him the pertinent facts that he needs to make a sound decision. As President, Mr. Trump would instinctively realize that his every decision is going to have profound ramifications for the country and, often, for the world, and thus, he would be far more circumspect and far more judicious when he makes such calculated decisions.

Bottom line, for all his flaws, for all his pettiness, for all his lack of political experience, and in light of the very real damage that a Clinton-Presidency would

likely bring about, I say that although Trump is nowhere near what I would call an ideal candidate, he is the preferred candidate of the two.

And that, my friends, is the latest elephant in the room.

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* * * * *

*"I purchased Norwood's résumé guide last month and it's amazing! He goes through the processes step-by-step and you end up with not only a résumé that will get you that interview, but the skills necessary to be confident so you succeed in your interviews resulting in you receiving job offers (yes, offers)." **D Smith, Santa Clarita, California***

*"I could not have gotten my first job without your expertise. Thank you so much! I learned that I had to reword and improve my résumé in order to be taken seriously in the workforce. I had been given tips from my professors in Health Science and other professionals but your advice was just what I needed. It took weeks of frustration waiting for interview calls when I happened to stumble across your website and discovered that I needed help. Your publication enlightened me with your knowledge on the wording and format needed to attract an employer. Furthermore, your booklet helped me recognize certain skills and work experience that I would have never considered important until you got me thinking about it. Thanks for a great product!" -- **R. Espana, Valencia, California***

Good Mourning

I'm not particularly sad right now. But I'm thinking about sadness as a phenomenon.



Journal
Writing

In contemplating the emotion we call grief, I am mindful of the very unique properties it brings. Again, I am not experiencing grief in my own life as I type this. But because of the power of imagination, I am vicariously envisioning deep grief to remind me what it means to be human. For part of what constitutes humanity is the very poignant and painful state known as grief.

Grief typically is brought on by loss. Simple, less consequential losses may include misplacing a piece of jewelry, or missing your flight because you were late getting to the airport. A more stinging grief would be the death of a pet dog or cat. If you've grown attached to these furry friends over the years, their sudden absence can be quite painful. A friendship that ends, whether you initiated it or whether it was forced upon you by the other party, can be profoundly painful if that friendship had enjoyed many seasons of warmth and intimacy. The same is true with romantic relationships, which enjoy a different level of intimacy. When a love-interest falls apart, and especially if it involves the marriage relationship, the scars run very deep, and the grief can be overwhelming.

Perhaps the most intense grief involves the death of a loved one. Whether a friend, or parent, or other family member, death is a profound separation. Even for those who are deeply religious and who believe in an afterlife, the loss of someone to death can test our faith, and make us wonder: *Will we ever see this person again?* Tears can flow freely and frequently as we come to grips with the seemingly unbearable reality that this person whom we love is gone from our orbit for the remainder of our days on this earth.

But although it is inevitable that we will face grief in our lives, mourning is good for us. Mourning has a cleansing affect on our soul. Mourning heightens our humanity, making us more compassionate and decent. Mourning makes us less petty and less selfish. Mourning has a humbling effect on us, making us more contrite, pure, and real. Facades seem to melt away when we are in a state of mourning. Pretense, showmanship, positioning, posturing, popularity, all seem to stop mattering. We become good and pure and true when we mourn.

I don't wish for myself or others to experience the great losses that bring inevitable grief and mourning. Yet, all of us will, as that is the reality of the life we are saddled with.

But I am grateful for the good effect that mourning has on us.



Obfuscate, v

Pronunciation: äbfəʃkāt

Meaning:

To render something obscure, unclear, or unintelligible. When pundits answer tough questions with circular reasoning and gobbledygook, they are obfuscating, or engaging in obfuscation. I have a colleague who placed in the signature of his emails the adage "eschew obfuscation," a perfect example of irony and a nice witticism.

Usage:

- *Our messaging needs to be free of jargon, cliches, and obfuscation. We must be clear.*
- *He is very pompous and is far more likely to obfuscate people with his vast and imaginative vocabulary than to enlighten them.*
- *The spelling changes she proposes will deform some familiar words and obfuscate their etymological origins.*

New subscribers, the Special Report "11 Ways to Beat the Odds" should have been sent out to you already. If you have not received it, please communicate that to me via email (ara@aranorwood.com).

For more information on my work, follow me on Twitter ("Ara Norwood"), or on Facebook (keyword "Leadership Development Systems") or via my website: www.aranorwood.com

Sincerely,

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