


Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

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Dear David,

 Ara Norwood

Great to have your attention once again.

In the **Self-Development** column, I broach one of the most pivotal topics in all of success. Read it and know that more is coming down the road in the near future.

The **Elephant in the Room** column continues to raise some observations about how the losing side is reacting to the election of Donald Trump to the Presidency.


Finally, in the **Ara's Journal** column, you will find some helpful advice involving the ramifications of talking about people when they are not present.

OK, let's get started.

Ara Norwood

Formulating a Strategy and Executing it Relentlessly

A lot of people do a lot of talking. Some even go so far as to bloviate, apparently finding euphoria in the sound of their own voice.

Talk is fine to a point. Often times we need to talk to communicate. But leaders do far more than merely talk. They execute.  Strategy

And execution is one of the most important skills any achiever or would-be achiever can acquire. In fact, I would rank execution ahead of public speaking ability any day. I would rank it ahead of organizational development prowess, negotiation, team building, and conflict resolution.

Once you have a large-scale, significant goal selected, you have to accurately assess where you are today in relation to that goal (Point A) and where the attainment of that goal will actually have you situated (Point B.) Then you must begin the process to map out exactly what has to happen in order to traverse the jungle that lies between Point A (current reality) and Point B (desired future.) Usually lot's of things have to happen. And you are not going to be cognizant of all of them at the outset, for the shifting sands of reality will require you to pivot and shift and angle and pivot again. You will have to be flexible and you may have to change course a bit. In fact, circumstances may demand you abandon your original strategy and adopt a different one -- perhaps slightly different, or perhaps profoundly different. That's the nature of the beast.


And the best of achievers have the staying power to not give up in the face of challenges and obstacles that will inevitably surface. Conflict and opposition seem to be part of the nature of life on this planet. Therefore, we should not be surprised when losses, setbacks, or other opposing forces batter and buffet us.

We have to maintain our equilibrium and our commitment to pursue our goals. The close of 2016 is not far off. What can you do over the next month to pick up your pace and bang out the goals that you set for yourself for 2016?

We will be spending some time on goal setting and execution over the next several issues of *Uncommon Sense*, so stay tuned. . .

The Elephant in the Room

The Shrill Irrationality of the Left

America swatted the Left during this last election, and the Left is going into convulsions of agony, writhing  Leftist Hysteria with excruciating vexation, bearing their fangs, and showing their true colors like never before. Here are some examples:

- I teach a course in management at the local college. One of the recent class sessions I taught shortly after the election results were in concerned the key differences between the Left in America, and Conservatives. The lecture was a segment about the broad environment that exists outside of organizations but which can influence organizations (so we covered the drug culture, competition, natural disasters, the economy, and, yes, political philosophy, hence the Left vs. Conservative differences.) One of the key lessons was that the Left favors big government but is generally opposed to big business (or even small business) since business owners stand a chance to build wealth and the Left favors total equality, including financial equality (i.e., Socialism.) Although I did an even-handed presentation that was objective and void of any mockery or sarcasm, one of my students (a committed Leftist) has lodged a complaint to the Administration in an effort to have me fired from my job. The totalitarian instincts of the Left are unmatched when compared with anything one might find among the staunchest conservative.
- Less than a week after the election, actor Michael Shannon (Nocturnal Animals) suggested that it's time for those who voted for Mr. Trump to die. He also advised any people who have parents who voted for Mr. Trump to disown them, not go home for Thanksgiving, and never speak to them again. But other than that, Mr. Shannon doesn't seem to have strong feelings on the matter.
- Yet Mr. Shannon's firebrand rhetoric is catching on. One of my friends posted Mr. Shannon's diatribe on her Facebook Wall, and did so approvingly. And all of her Leftist friends (I may be the lone conservative, and I'm probably not seen as a friend any longer by her) agreed that people should die if they voted for Trump. My friend who originally posted the Michael Shannon piece indicated that she didn't want anyone to die except bigots, racists, rapists, homophobes, and hypocrites, among other targets. I take that to mean that she does want everyone who voted for Mr. Trump to die, since in her mind it is a foregone conclusion that a person who votes for Trump is, by definition, a bigot, racist, rapist, homophobe, and hypocrite. (Hypocrites should be put to death? I wonder if this new-found Leftist support of the Death Penalty extends to those guilty of first-degree murder. . .)

So the hysteria on the Left is a thing to behold. But it is getting old. I am tiring of them, and I find them largely irrelevant now. We are about to see some real leadership unleashed on this country. The Left will not have a seat at the table until we forget the lessons we should have learned from 8 years of Mr. Obama and vote in another Leftist.

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

Speaking Unkindly

It's better to speak kindly of other people who are absent than it is to speak disparagingly of them. I've seen the following scenario play out numerous times:



Journal
Writing

I'll be talking with someone I don't know very well. A name will come up -- someone we both know (or know of.) The other person will say something derogatory about the other person. I will then mention that I have had a very positive experience in my years of association with that person. And then the conversationalist I am with will realize they made a huge blunder, will back-pedal, will try to take back the words they said, but it's too late. Of course, one of their worries is that I will share the bad-mouthing with the person who was being bad-mouthed. (I won't, but the bad-mouther doesn't know that.)

I was once on a large university campus for a visit. After attending a scholarly symposium, I attended a reception where I was introduced to a woman who was an up-and-coming scholar in her field. We began a friendly conversation when the name of JW came up. I have known JW for over 30 years and was his research assistant when I was an undergraduate. JW is one of the most prominent scholars in his field, having made numerous contributions to scholarship that have stood the test of time. He is also an extraordinarily gracious and decent man, and I have been the recipient of his genuine goodness and kindness over the years. So I was a little surprised when his name came up and the woman I was speaking to called him an egotist and a phony. All I had to say in response was, "I've known JW for many years and have worked for him. It's interesting that you see him in that light, for somehow I have missed those character deficiencies." She immediately realized her mistake. I could see the embarrassment in her face. In fact, she said, "I should not have said those things about JW. I'm sorry." I told her not to worry. I left it at that.

But I learned a valuable lesson. How often am I prone to speak disparagingly about someone when perhaps what I know about the person in question may be only partial, or may not reflect reality at all? And if I am prepared to say something negative about a person, am I prepared to stand by my comments if that person were to confront me about it?

Worth thinking about. . .

The World of Words

Pandemonium

Building Your Power of Expression



Dictionary

Pandemonium, n.

Pronunciation: pandə'mōnēəm

Meaning: Wild and noisy disorder or confusion is the basic meaning of this word. Any time there is a chaotic uproar taking place, you have pandemonium.

Usage:

- *I told them the news, and then an argument started, first respectfully, and then it gained a life of its own and descended into pure pandemonium.*
- *We need to double security at this event in order to curb any tendencies towards pandemonium.*
- *Pandemonium broke out in the meeting as a little mouse was running to and fro, trying to find a way out of the room.*

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,

Ara Norwood
Leadership Development Systems, P. O. Box 801681, Santa Clarita, CA 91380-1681
Leadership Development Systems

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