

Intuition science paper



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Intuition science is a relatively new field of research trying to understand how human intuition works and the environmental factors that catalyzed its development through evolution. Gerd Gigerenzer defines intuition, hunch, and gut feeling as a judgment: 1. that appears quickly in conscious, 2. whose underlying reasons we are not fully aware of, and 3. is strong enough to act upon. Traditional behavioral science relies solely on the human mind to explain why we do what we do. Western philosophy of mind has long believed that the mechanism that shapes and informs decisions has been the use of analytical, highly-ordered rational thought. Intuition science is unique because the mind and the external environment are both taken into account. Understanding the environmental factors responsible for the emergence of human intuition is crucial to understanding intuition itself because it is a major influence on our actions. Intuition arises from the unconscious mind. This means that the sub-conscious mind has a significant role in determining our conscious behavior—a role that is larger and more important in the decisions we make every day of our lives. Moral behavior is included in all this and intuition science sheds light on the cognitive processes that affect moral decision making. Our evolved brains have acquired the complexity and the capacities they have from the acquisition and storage of the information that the brain continually receives from external stimuli via the senses (seeing, touching, hearing, etc.). The brain stores all of this information starting at birth. This information quickly grows as we age and experience the world. The brain has evolved to simultaneously use all of the stored data and hardly use any at all. The conscious and sub-conscious parts of the mind each process the data in different ways, but ways that have allowed for the emergence of abstract

thought, the capacity to rationalize, and to become moral creatures. Intuition arises from the sub-conscious where the ocean of our recorded experiences resides. It achieves this by ordering the data into small packets that are associated with the specific circumstances in which they were originally recorded to memory. Gigerenzer terms these small but meaningful clusters of information rules of thumb. An example of a rule of thumb within an organization is: Don't break ranks. Simply stated, that rule of thumb means do as most of your peers do. Understanding which environments shape moral behavior can help us to make changes for the better (Gigerenzer, pg. 185 2007). This can be applied to the ranks of corporate or business executives with the hope of understanding the situations in which immoral behavior occurs in order to reduce its frequency. References Gigerenzer, Gerd (2007). Gut Feelings The Intelligence of the Unconscious. Penguin. Pfaff, Donald (2007). The Neuroscience of Fair Play. Dana Press. Reynolds, S. J. (2006). A neurocognitive model of the ethical decision-making process: implications for study and practice. The Journal of Applied Psychology, 91(4), 737-748. doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.91.4.737