



Trust the Gut

I know when I get goose bumps—whatever the idea—I just know it's right. Entrepreneurs have to make decisions fast, often based on their gut reactions. Science has shown that the over-thinkers, the hesitators, and the questioners rarely make the best choices. That visceral response in your brain when you taste tenderloin salad can't be explained away. In truth, it's a plethora of experiences and nuances stuck in various compartments of the brain coming together, saying, "Gee, I'd like the cold medium rare tenderloin, oh and soy sauce, and something crunchy and oriental. Oh, snow peas. Oh, and bow tie pasta." Suddenly, the idea bubbles forward. Trust the process.

When I bought my Land Cruiser, I didn't kick tires for months. I saw a used dark green one and said, "Can I test drive that?" After eight hours of annoying a couple of very young salespeople and chipping away at their resistance, I drove off thrilled. Forget the money I saved with my expert negotiating skills. I always wanted that car. I had watched the Paris Dakar transcontinental off-road races as a young girl. I knew in order to qualify as a support vehicle, the Land Cruiser had to go over brutal terrain and endure the worst climates in the world.

It was a total impulse buy. I wasn't looking to buy a car. And it wasn't an impulse buy. For years, I had been doing research and sticking it away in some dark recess of my brain. When I saw the car, my creative intellect assimilated years of collected mental notes. By the time I saw the car, that gut feeling telling me to buy was actually a compilation of years of research. I had gone to the dealer to get brakes repaired on another car. Used Land Cruisers are very hard to find in great condition with low mileage. Had I hesitated (it had just gone on the lot that day), I would've lost the deal.

Ten years later I bought a brand new Land Cruiser. E-mailed a few places and negotiated by texting and more e-mails. By the end of a week, I picked up my new car. The key to this method is the immediacy of the process. Do things go wrong? Sure. They would anyway. Stalling/procrastination is the nemesis of entrepreneurship. The human brain accesses information from a zillion different places to make one choice. I trust my gut, it's most often right.

I needed to make a new pasta salad. Generally, people like to see shrimp, salmon, lobster, tenderloin, and anything else that screams: the best available. I've made tenderloin. I've made Asian salads. One day this salad just seemed right. I knew in my gut it would be a hit.

Tenderloin Pasta Salad

Ingredients

2½ pounds tenderloin, cooked medium rare (*use tenderloin recipe*)
20 snow peas, steamed, al dente
½ red Bermuda onion, sliced thinly in circles, then in half
1 red bell pepper, sliced and steamed al dente (*same water treatment as above*)
1 pound bag bow tie pasta
½ cup vinaigrette dressing, divided (*use the recipe in this book*)
¼ cup soy sauce (regular, with salt)
¼ cup regular sesame seed oil

Make this up the day of the party. Cut cool tenderloin in circular slices, then on a 45° angle in half. Peel stem and remove seam from snow peas. Steam lightly, dunk in icy water, drain and dry, to keep crispy. Slice very thin circles of red onions. Cut off the top of the red pepper, clean out all seeds and slice the long way, ¼ inch thick. Steam lightly, put into cold water, then drain.

Cook pasta. (*Do not rinse. It will not absorb the vinaigrette the same way.*) Drain water and add ¼ cup vinaigrette.

With your hands as tools, mix together all the rest of the ingredients and add the rest of the vinaigrette to taste along with soy sauce and sesame oil. Serve at room temperature—not icy. Serve with a plain, all green salad, french bread (or homemade rolls), and a young, red Beaujolais wine.

One pound of bow tie pasta feeds 10 people.