Data-Driven vs. Gut-Driven Decisions

# Decision 1: Launching a new marketing campaign for an underperforming product

**Type:** Data-Driven

During my internship, we analyzed sales data for a product that was consistently underperforming. The data showed a significant drop in sales, but our gut feeling was that the product was still good and that it just needed more promotion. We decided to conduct a deeper analysis, gathering information on customer demographics, competitor pricing, and market trends. Our analysis revealed that a specific demographic—young adults aged 18-24—was showing little interest in the product. Instead of relying on a generalized marketing push, we used this data to create a targeted digital marketing campaign on social media platforms that this demographic frequently uses, highlighting features and benefits that would appeal directly to them. This led to a 15% increase in sales for that demographic within one month. This decision was successful because we used **data** to identify a specific problem and create a **targeted solution**, rather than simply acting on a hunch.

# Decision 2: Hiring an intern for a specialized project

**Type:** Gut-Driven

A project team was in a hurry to hire a new intern for a specialized project, but we didn't have enough time to go through the usual data-driven hiring process (e.g., skill assessments, multiple rounds of interviews, and background checks). We had to make a quick decision. Our team lead, who had over 20 years of experience in the industry, conducted a brief interview with a candidate. During the interview, he noticed a great deal of enthusiasm and confidence from the candidate. The candidate also asked insightful questions about the project that demonstrated a deep curiosity about the work. Although the candidate's résumé didn't have extensive relevant experience, the team lead had a good feeling about the candidate's attitude and potential for learning. He trusted his intuition and hired the candidate on the spot. This was a **gut-driven decision**, but it paid off: the intern quickly learned the necessary skills and became a valuable member of the team, contributing significantly to the project's success. The team lead's decision was based on his personal judgment and intuition, not on a thorough analysis of data.