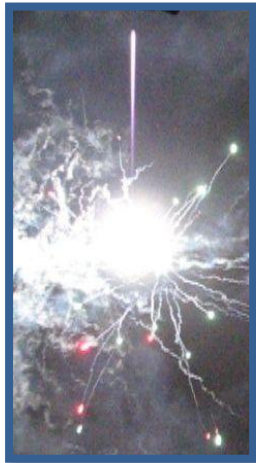


YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 100

Everyone can be creative; with the right process, techniques and a little magic ...

Facilitate People to be Creative...

"Nowadays, we have become so obsessed with process, we go to restaurants and eat the menu!" Unknown



" One shaft of light that shows the way..."

How can you help people be creative?

Footballer scores 99 goals but stalls before the hundred. Cricketer hits 99 runs and stalls before the hundred. Gorilla writes 99 articles and stalls...

After the 99th article, I decided to write something "special" for the 100th. I thought I would review all 99 articles, identify the themes and write about them. I didn't realise how busy I would be and how long it would take to review 99 articles. And, when I had done it, I had no enthusiasm for it!

So tonight in my hotel room I gave up on the idea. My 100th goal would not be a thirty metre volley in to the top corner of the net. My 100th run would not be a six in to the crowd. Instead, I would scramble the ball over the line, sneak a quick run, write on any topic and... Just write it...!

And a question arrived. In the three months since writing the 99th article, what was the stand out

moment about creativity that has stuck in my mind? Here it is.

I was running a residential weekend on creativity with MBA students. Two of the students were, I suspect (I didn't measure it), adaptive rather than innovative in their style and they were both more introvert than extrovert. They were great people and always positive, but I sensed from their demeanour that they tolerated rather than embraced the idea of creative techniques.

I suspected that I would never convince them and prayed the creative process would help me, until, on the second day...

We were using creative techniques for idea generation and I asked the group to consider the issue from the point of view of a five year old. My two sceptics were working in a team of three and whilst the other teams were noisily generating ideas, I could see that not much was happening in their team.

I don't know if it was frustration or "one shaft of light" (see "It's a Kind of Magic" lyrics) that made me do it, but I asked the whole group to get on their knees and BE five year olds. My pair gave each other a bemused look and gamely got on their knees, whilst I watched discreetly.

Fortunately, they entered in the spirit of the exercise and within one minute, they had conceived the idea that received the most "votes" when we came to the point of reducing down ideas. I was delighted.

YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 100

SO

What were the lessons here? I think:

- Everyone can be creative with the use of creative techniques, if they are prepared to be open minded
- If it isn't working, do something different
- As a facilitator, trust in the process, even when you despair; a kind of magic can happen

ACTION

All of us who believe in creative thinking must get moments of despair when we wonder if it is worth carrying on. Fixed mind sets, bureaucracy, all manner of obstacles get in the way. If that happens to you, don't give up; trust in the process, believe in the techniques, experiment, look for each small sign of creative thinking in action and build on it. And having reviewed the other 99 articles, that is a pretty good summary of them!

TO CLOSE

I received a note from one of my "sceptical" students, after the residential school. In it he said: "Although it was a bit "weird" for me, I must say that YOU made it enjoyable... and even managed to get me somewhat enthusiastic in this area - which is not that easy." For, me that felt like scoring England's winning goal in the 2010 World Cup Final! Magic!

And...Thank You

I would like to say a big thank you to all of you, my fellow Gorillas. Thank you for reading these articles, especially those of you who have read it since article 1, which just happened to be about a student who thought he could not be creative. Thank you also for the kind notes you send occasionally; I much appreciate these.

A big "Thank You" too, to my wife, Kate, who edits the Gorilla, correcting my grammar and improving what I write; it would be a poorer output without her.

Finally, do something you enjoy this week, in fact, do something you enjoy for the rest of your life. And please read the next 100 Gorilla articles. Having scrambled number 100 over the line, 101 will be hitting the net very soon! I hope the alpacas, with whom I shall be sharing my summer holiday, might inspire

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