

YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 104

Controls need to take in to account the behaviour they provoke ...

Make your controls work for you...

“Police said crashes happened because motorists slowed down ahead of the camera and then speeded up once they were clear of it.” Report in Daily Mail (England) 7 Jan 2009



“Go on, just a little bit faster”

How can you ensure controls achieve what you want?

Have you noticed when many motorists see a “fixed speed” camera, which measures an excess speed at a fixed point, they slow down until past the measuring lines and then accelerate madly – like the camera has some weird acceleration beam? However, when driving through sections of motorway with “average speed cameras” that measure your speed over a fixed distance, most people keep to the limit, although some slow down and speed up to meet the average.

Passing through an “average speed” control area recently, I wondered how we might relate these behaviour patterns to organisations. Finding no instant answers, I placed a question on the Giants, Wizards and Goblins forum on Linked In.

Here is a summary of the responses. What questions might they raise for your organisation?

- Speed cameras are a control to stop people taking risk. They should be sited only where there is most risk if they are not to have an adverse effect on traffic
- Speed cameras form part of an overall system to reduce fatalities. There is little evidence to show they have this effect [\[Source\]](#)
- Speed cameras, both types, measure speed. They do not tell us if the driver is incompetent, the tyres bald or the car uninsured
- Speed cameras are viewed as revenue earning systems by many motorists. This alienates them and can provoke adverse or inappropriate behaviour
- The different types of camera reflect the different types of controls organisations have to reduce risk. The fixed speed cameras are like snap audits. The average speed cameras are similar to scorecards and regular feedback on performance

As well as cameras, two other controls on roads might also provide some insights in to organisational controls:

- Signs which show your speed. Apparently these achieve up to 88% improvement in compliance. However, as drivers become used to the signs, the effectiveness reduces.

YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 104

[Source: "The use of active speed warning signs". T. Kathmann & R. Cannon. - Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers, 2000, vol. 141.]

- Engineers use variable speed limits on some motorways to help maintain traffic speed. Research shows this has some success. [Source: US Federal Highway Administration]

SO

Based on the above, here are some questions I think a creative leader might ask to justify organisational controls:

- Do we need this control; does the risk justify it? What alternative is there?
- Does this control help achieve the overall goals of the system (e.g. Do procurement controls help to control overall costs?)
- Does this control reduce our effectiveness? Does the risk justify this?
- Is this control really reducing the risk or just the easily observed risk?
- Does this control appear fair and sensible to the people adhering to it?
- Does this control generate a positive behavioural response?
- Could we flex controls to the circumstances, so that they are more appropriate?

ACTION

What questions might you add to mine? Please let me know! Think about one control measure in your organisation you are not happy with. How might you change it?

TO CLOSE

To end on a humorous note. If you'd like to see one team's way of beating speed cameras, please view this TV video on [You Tube](#)...

I have never been caught by a fixed or average speed camera, in case you wondered!

I would like to thank David Onigbanjo, John Constable, Karl Davies, Christopher Bird, Elena Ermilina Louicellier and Mike Healey for their contribution to this article. I much appreciate your input.

Have a great week.

John Brooker | Facilitate, Innovate, Transform.



We facilitate leaders and teams in medium to large organisations internationally to:

- *Make Meetings Outstanding*
- *Make Transformation Simpler*
- *Make Innov8ion Flow*

Imagine what we can do for you...

Contact John or Kate Brooker:

Speak: +44 (0) 20 8869 9990

Write: hi@yesand.eu

Read: www.yesand.eu