

# YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 15

*It is fine for you to challenge and build on techniques – even if they were devised by a genius ...*

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## Amending the Disney Technique ...

"...there were actually three different Walts: the **dreamer**, the **realist**, and the **spoiler**. You never knew which one was coming into your meeting." Associate of Walt Disney



Walt Disney

### *Must you adhere strictly to techniques?*

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Imagine this. It is 1.30 a.m. Your son has woken you by kicking his favourite toy off his bunk bed, you are wide awake with a mind full of ideas and you're cursing that barista in the coffee bar because you're convinced she didn't give you decaff cappuccino. Worse, you know you're to blame because it tasted burnt and you still drank it because it was so d\*\*\*\*d expensive. What are you going to do?

It is now 2.19 a.m. and I have crept to my office downstairs to write this article. Hopefully my wife won't think I'm a burglar and apply the new Government guidelines on tackling burglars (I realise this may not mean much to overseas readers).

Whilst lying awake, I had been running an idea through my head and using the Disney technique

to evaluate it. The Disney technique helps clarify your thinking by having you take the perspective of three characters - the "Dreamer" ("we could do THIS and it would be terrific"), the "Critic" ("THIS will never work because of...") and the "Realist" ("Maybe we could replace THIS with THAT and develop a plan").

Robert Dilts described in an [article](#) that Walt Disney adopted the different perspectives throughout his career to aid his creativity, albeit he never appeared to have regarded it as a technique.

As I lay in bed using the technique I noticed that another "character" was lurking very close and I decided to listen to him, (some of you may suspect alcohol rather than caffeine was the offending substance in my blood). He said "I can see the value in the idea but it conflicts with one of my core values." As a result I'm going to call this character "the Valuer" and may well call on him again.

Some of you might argue that the "Valuer" is just the "Critic" in disguise, or that it is a variation on De Bono's "Red Hat" which represents intuition or emotion (see "[Six Thinking Hats](#)" by Edward De Bono").

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These are valid points, but I am not arguing the merits of the adapted technique, rather that it is perfectly acceptable to adapt a technique [if it works](#).

When I first studied creativity, I thought that those who had devised techniques were “gurus” and their work should be held in awe. Now that I have a lot more experience, I realise they are simply people with a point of view which is not necessarily perfect (a “guru” thought the sun revolved round the earth).

## SO

Feel free to play with a technique. Try it out as written to see how it works and the results of using it. However, if you see a potential way to vary it and it gives a better result in a particular situation, don't be afraid to adapt it. If you would like to see some different techniques, go to our [web site](#).

## ACTION

Do absolutely nothing! (Oh yes! Wouldn't you love it if your boss said that at the end of a meeting)? But the next time you are using a technique, see if you can tweak it or build on it or challenge it in some way. There are only two criteria for a successful creative technique: “Does it help you to be more creative AND/OR does it enable you to think more broadly?”

1. If you are an NLP enthusiast, look up the Dilts article referred to earlier.

## TO CLOSE

It is now 3.10 a.m. My wife has slept soundly, the cat is whinging that her personal tin opener has failed to do his job and this is the fastest I have ever written an article. Maybe I should buy that barista a drink?

*One skinny burnt cappuccino to go please...*

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*Speak: +44 (0) 20 8869 9990*

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