

YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 16

You have a choice of techniques you can use to tackle your challenges and it doesn't matter if you mix and match them, if they work

Creative Techniques...

"Lister: "They're not comin' back... I'm lost in deep space... I'm three million years from home... No life, no bed, no nothin'... Just me... and 3 1/2 tons of curry. [pause] Fan-smeggin-TASTIC!"

(From, Red Dwarf, a UK TV programme)



"Challenge a few rules"

It is 11.00 p.m. You have been out for the night in a Welsh town. It is too far to walk home so you want to get a taxi. You are also hungry and want an Indian meal. Unfortunately, you have only enough money either for the taxi or the curry. How might you satisfy both needs??

I was at dinner with a team from a client the other day and one of them, Duncan, recounted the story above. His solution was both funny and ingenious. He knew the restaurant would deliver meals over a certain cost to your home. So he went in, ordered a home delivery meal and then asked if they could drop him off at the same time as the meal. Which they did!

I thought Duncan's solution showed real creativity so let's analyse it to see what we can learn about the creative process.

First, he proved a formula of creativity, $\text{Creativity} = \text{Knowledge} \times \text{Imagination} \times \text{Evaluation}$ [source Parnes, with thanks to [Min Basadur](#) for providing the reference]. I will leave you to work out how Duncan proved C.

He also proved, (by asking for what he wanted), that creativity is useful only if we add the formula $\text{Innovation} = \text{Creativity} \times \text{Action}$ [my addition].

I then mused on what technique he (probably subconsciously) used to tackle the challenge. Loosely, you can categorise techniques in four ways and the acronym **CARP** is a useful way to remember them (some of the more robust amongst you may want to rejig the acronym!).

Challenge – challenge assumptions, problem boundaries, "rules" about how something should be used, done etc

Alternatives – find and create alternative perspectives, alternative uses. Who else has done this, what else is similar, where might something like this be done, has this been done previously etc?

Random connection – find random items (words, pictures, objects) and force fit them to your challenge

Provocations – use the characteristics of metaphors and analogies for example,

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and relate these to your challenge to provoke ideas

SO

What category of technique do you think Duncan used? My thoughts are below.

ACTION

1. Take some of the creative techniques you use and identify which of the above categories you would put them in. Even better, (because you may know I like to challenge all ideas, even my own), see if you can identify a separate category and let me know).
2. If you would like to see a model that explains how to use metaphors as provocations, click metaphors.

TO CLOSE

I think that Duncan challenged a few “rules” e.g. ‘that the way to get home is by taxi and that taxis are paid for’. But if you chose “alternatives” as in ‘he looked for alternative ways to get home’, I wouldn’t argue. After all, it doesn’t matter which technique you use as long as it gives you a good idea, does it?

I had quite a response to my recent Dead Poets article. [Dave Kemp](#), a fellow Gorilla kindly sent me a recording of a radio programme (PowerPoint and the Decline of Civilisation) plus a link to a [web site](#), which shows the Gettysburg address in PowerPoint format. It’s a hoot and very clever; do take a look at it. Thanks to Dave for sharing that.

Enjoy your next curry.

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