

YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 18

You have to be a bit brave to innovate, but it is worth the risk...

Be Brave to Innovate...

"It's a different kind of scary." [Michael Neill World Class Coach](#)



"Me and Friends"

Do you ever fail to put forward an idea because of the risk of rejection, or do you demand too much extra information because an idea might be risky?

Next week (by the time you read this it will be over), I am piloting a new course, "Teaming with Llamas", using llamas to help people understand team working.

I have planned it, rehearsed it and invited along a group of friends that I know will provide honest and constructive feedback. Even so, I am nervous that it may go wrong.

What has that to do with creative leadership? Simply, for innovation to happen it requires a number of factors, one of which is to be able to face risks.

In the book, "[How to Start a Creative Revolution at Work](#)", by Dave Allen et al, the authors call this "Bravery". I hesitate to use that term in my case but, using the llamas for context,

let's take a look at what they call: "The five steps to creative bravery". (I have adapted a few points for brevity).

Step 1: Face your fear ~ go your own way and discuss your fears. One of my fears was that people would think using llamas to develop learning would be a ridiculous idea. Indeed, I did get a few wry grins from people I discussed it with. But I got sufficient positive feedback to give it a try.

Step 2: Know your comfort zone. I knew that I would put myself in the "Stretch Zone" with this course but have enough experience to know I am not going to hit the "Panic Zone".

Step 3: Have a positive vision of the future. I imagined the course working really well and having lots of demand - which would be great because it is completely different to my usual working environment. Needless to say I have had the opposite fear (that nobody will buy it) but that has prompted some creative thinking on how to sell the course.

Step 4: Change habits today ~ start small; speak in positive language; ride small waves. I decided I wanted to run a pilot (small) and set a date when I would run it (positive). One of my justifications for running the course is my belief

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that out there are a few companies who are looking for something different and a trend towards more stress free activities - perhaps I can ride that wave?

Step 5: Have support systems ~ share and support; learn from mistakes; recognise risk taking. I'm not running this alone. I have the support of my llama loving wife, my friends who train llamas and the people who will attend the pilot. No Oscar speech here, but I acknowledge I couldn't have done this without them, that they are taking a risk too and the lessons I gain from working with them can only help me in the future.

SO

As individuals and organisations you don't have to have the bravery of Mel Gibson in "Braveheart" (and I don't mean wearing his kilt) to innovate. But if you or your organisation is not what is termed "innovative", it may be that you require just a little more bravery to set you on your way.

That small step might just be saying out loud in a meeting the crazy idea that crosses your mind. Or it may be shelving your demand for 6 months' research and a 52 page business plan the next time someone suggests a new business idea. Would a quick and dirty trial suffice?

ACTION

What first step towards creative bravery might you take today?

TO CLOSE

My quotation this week came from that great coach Michael Neill, who was leading a course I attended and discussing fear.

He said (my words) that there is the kind of fear that jumps out on you at night in a dark alley and there is the kind you get at the top of a roller coaster before it plunges. They're both scary, but the roller coaster is a different kind of scary.

So, if innovation is up a metaphorical dark alley for you or your organisation, you might like to change the metaphor to make it a different kind of scary.

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