

# YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 21

*Creative leaders have a number of qualities, what do you think they are?...*

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## The Qualities of a Creative Leader...

*"She accomplished more in her 28 years than most people do in a lifetime" Patrick Leahy US Senator*



**"Built by a creative leader"**

*What qualities do you need to cultivate to become a creative leader? ?*

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Browsing at the station news vendor at St Paul's, the leader article in the Independent stood out. A "framed" photograph of a young woman who was not a celebrity, but one whose life we should celebrate.

Maria Ruzicka was the unlucky victim of a bomb in Iraq and someone who, from the evidence in the article and whatever your political views, could teach us lessons about the qualities of being a creative leader. Try to pick them out in this brief story.

Maria was an American aid worker in Iraq. She was driven by a simple premise: if the US caused suffering it should try and help the innocent people who suffered.

As such, she established a charity, [CIVIC](#), to provide relief for the innocent victims of the war.

She negotiated government bureaucracy in Washington and personally lobbied senators to secure \$10 million funding to help people who had lost the family breadwinner.

In Iraq, she cultivated those US officials that decided who would receive compensation, to speed compensation to the right people.

In addition, she used her prodigious energy to successfully pester diplomats for aid, cajole journalists for promotion and to console victims who considered her a warm and open hearted person.

### SO

What qualities did you identify? I identified these:

A strong set of values

A clear premise on which to work

Vision - a well defined goal

Self confidence

Charisma

Courage

Drive and energy

Dedication

Influence

Empathy

Adept at negotiating bureaucracy

Do the above sit well with known theories of being a creative leader?

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Kanter argued that (in my words) a creative leader generates a vision, has the power to advance the idea and maintain momentum.

Goleman might argue that a creative leader has strong "emotional intelligence" (EQ) - Self Awareness, Self Regulation, Motivation, Empathy and Social Skill. Certainly that seems to fit here. (For a good summary of EQ click [here](#).)

Perhaps the qualities needed of a creative leader are context dependant? Do you judge Maria a creative leader?

## ACTION

Could you develop some of the qualities shown above? If not you, who? Who in your organisation or elsewhere could you identify as a creative leader or potential creative leader? Could you arrange to meet with them to help their cause, build a support group or mentor them? If a freelance, have you a client who might benefit from some unpaid support?

## TO CLOSE

You might have noticed courage in my list. Do we need courage to be a creative leader? No doubt, but we need it in varying degrees, depending on the situation. Fortunately, most of us will not need the degree of courage shown by Maria Ruzicka.

May you inspire someone this week.

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