

# YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 34

*If you can recruit a few people in the organisation as champions of creativity and innovation then you should be able to increase the organisation's capability without trying to convert everyone to your mission.*

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## Encourage People to Change...

*"Perhaps some day we shall know how to heighten creativity. Until then, one of the best things we can do for creative men and women is to stand out of their light." [John W Gardner](#) ~ US Educator*



**"Stand out of their light"**

*Is your organisation trying to convert the  
unconvertible?*

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Last night I attended a concert by Harrow Young Musicians, my daughter being a member of the group.

The standard was mixed, as you can imagine with children aged from seven to eighteen, but the evening was enjoyable. There were six conductors and when the whole group played (over a hundred children) four people conducted simultaneously. It worked!

It seemed that each conductor was a creative leader, passing on their passion and enthusiasm for music to this large number of children.

And if these six people can do that, surely we can use this as an analogy for increasing creativity and innovation (C & I) in organisations? Let's mix in a metaphor of "traffic lights" ("robots" if you are reading this in South Africa!) and try.

Imagine the conductors as the "green light" people in your organisation. These "green light" people enjoy C & I, believe it can do wonders for an organisation and will happily "bore for their country" on the topic if allowed and given the resources - even if it is not in their objectives.

The child musicians are the "amber light" people in your organisation. They can see some benefit in C & I and will play along if given leadership and incentives. Some of these will become "green lights" though sadly a few may become "red lights".

"Red light" people are the kids outside the orchestra who find other things to do, constructive or otherwise - just like in your organisation. They don't care about C & I although some may see the change it brings as a threat.

A tiny few, those who "jump the lights" or "run the red", may even seek ways to hinder C & I.

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## SO

How can you relate this to you? Organisations spend so much resource trying to convince their "red light" people to take part in organisational initiatives – they pour leaky buckets of training money, termite hills of consultants and torrential floods of management sweat at the problem... to achieve what? Another initiative screeching to a halt at the "red lights" of inertia.

So take a different approach for C & I.

Focus initial resources on the "green lights"; use them and additional resources to enthuse the "ambers lights". Be indifferent to the "red lights", encourage those who show some interest, but make sure the others don't hinder the "green" and "amber" lights.

With the latter groups, build up some solid evidence of success on smaller projects and use this to persuade everyone that C & I is worthwhile so that the "red lights" turn amber of their own free will.

## ACTION

Consider how you might do this in your organisation.

If you are senior management, this is probably easier for you. If not, consider setting up an informal group of "green lights" and work out how you might use "guerilla" tactics to increase C & I on the group's projects.

## TO CLOSE

Two weeks ago, my daughter said she wanted to leave the orchestra but the next week, she

wanted to stay. Today, I asked her why she changed her mind. It appears the day she wanted to leave, the cello players had sat around and had got bored. She also lost 50 pence in the vending machine. The following week the leader kept her busy, the vending machine dispensed and she came home enthused.

So there you have the secret to motivate the "amber lights" in your organisation. Keep them busy, fix the vending machines and they'll conduct business happily. Simple!

May all your lights be green this week!

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