

YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 38

Look to see how you can make things simpler. This can save time and money...

Keep it Simple...

"Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler." Albert Einstein



"Hmm, maybe we could make this a little simpler"

Do you find some solutions are a little more complicated that necessary?

This week my son was ill and wanted to sleep with his Mum, so Dad slept in his bunk bed some five feet off the floor. Waking in the middle of the night I wanted some water, but was too lazy to climb down the steps.

Lying back, I invented a rope and pulley system in my mind on which I could haul up the water sitting in its beaker on the table below the bed. The pulley would screw in to the ceiling and the beaker would sit in a small container to catch any slops as I hauled it up.

Thankfully I dozed off to the imagery of little beakers of water gaily jaunting through the air in a very [Heath Robinson](#) fashion. The next morning

my daughter came in to wake me. I asked her to pass me up the water and explained my idea. "Oh" she said "Andrew has already done that. But he just put a little bucket on the window latch and puts his cup in it." Hah! I looked at his device and burst out laughing. Obviously I'm Einstein's "simpler" in his quote.

Heath Robinson made a good living for many years by creating caricature drawings of "complex inventions that achieved absurdly simple results" (quotation from BBC site). He believed that many machines were absurdly over complex, some possibly arising because of people trying to overcome patent laws.

SO

For the creative leader, the challenge is how to make things simple. Some ideas for this are:

- Don't settle for the first idea that comes along. The more choice of ideas you have, the more chance of finding a simple result
- Obtain input from people who are not professionals in your work and can see through the complexity
- Use the reverse exaggeration or "miminise" technique. E.g. Ask, "What if we had to achieve this in one hour and not four

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days?"; "What if we only had ten pounds to make this, not one hundred?"; "What if we removed three of the materials we use?"

- Keep asking, "How might we make this simpler?"

ACTION

Review one of your processes to establish how you might make it less complex.

Mix the group with those who use the process and those who don't, so that you receive fresh views on how to simplify it.

Do take a look at some of Heath Robinson's [drawings](#). Some of them are quite brilliant.

TO CLOSE

By chance, Heath Robinson had a house in my town that I regularly run past. I wonder what kind of running gear he would design for the mature runner. Something with very large oxygen tanks, jet propulsion and very springy soles and heels for creaking joints I trust.

May your ideas be simple.

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