

# YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 54

*If we signal that we are trying to be creative it may make others more receptive to our ideas*

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## Signal Your Ideas...

*"You can ring my be-e-ell, ring my bell." Lyric ~ Frederick Knight*



**"JB in action"**

*Are your creative efforts faltering because people fail to recognise that you are being creative?*

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You are cycling along a wide path. In front of you, someone is mooching along in a day dream, walking a dog on an extending lead, so you slow right down and move two metres to the left to overtake them.

Suddenly, the dog makes a dash to the left and your brakes squeal as you perform an emergency stop to avoid garroting it on its lead. "You should get a bell," says the dog owner defensively. "I have," you reply curtly. "Try using it then," retorts the dog owner. "Try keeping your dog under control," you respond and pedal off, furiously.

Of course that would never happen to you, would it, because if you had a bell on your bike, you would ring it? Well, I was that cyclist and I

thought, "He's two metres to the side; I don't need to ring my bell."

That incident happened two weeks ago. Cycling round this morning, I made a point of ringing my bell whenever I approached a dog owner from behind, even if there were plenty of space to pass. I received many "thank yous" and pondered the different scenarios.

These people were in a relaxed mode and instead of me creeping slowly past and startling them, I rang my bell, giving them time to respond and not become startled and perhaps defensive. "Hmm, could we relate this scenario to creative thinking?" I wondered.

Imagine yourself at work in a routine meeting. People are discussing a problem when suddenly, you have a great idea. The idea excites you, so you eagerly tell everyone. They become defensive, give you three reasons why it won't work and you leave, muttering about what an uncreative company you're in.

In reality, might the outcome have arisen because you failed to signal your creativity? They were in analytical mode, you were in creative overdrive. You didn't ring your bell; they were startled and reacted accordingly.

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## SO

You will find that using a structured method is the optimal way to tackle challenges, so that you aren't in ideas mode whilst colleagues are exploring the challenge. However, if the group is not using a structured method during a meeting (and I suspect that is many meetings!), consider signalling to people that you are in ideas mode.

Some ways you might do this:

- "Would it be fair to say the challenge is xxx (seek agreement)? If so, I have an idea to tackle it..."
- "I can see we're all in analytical mode here. I would like to suggest a creative idea that might help"
- "I have an idea which I haven't fully thought through yet, bear with me and let's see where it goes..."
- "I can see you are busy and I have an idea to tackle that challenge we have. Do you have time to listen to it now or can we make some time to discuss it?"

## ACTION

Think of times when people have rejected your ideas. Could you have failed to ring your bell?

Try signalling the next time you propose an idea and see how it works out.

## TO CLOSE

Yesterday, we returned from Spain where I noticed on the power lines above the motorway, they had large red balls to warn helicopter pilots about the cables.

Maybe we could transpose that idea to extending dog leads, so that inflatable balls pop up on the lead when it extends and make it visible. Alternatively, we could fit cycles with bells having two volumes, a considerate, gentle "ting" for "Hi, I'm here" and one reminiscent of Big Ben for "GET THAT LEAD HAULED IN NOW, DOGGIE WALKER!"

Ring a few bells this week..*John Brooker | Facilitate, Innovate, Transform.*

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