

YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 73

Mind mapping is a good place to start when your creativity falters... ..

Mind Mapping - Creative Plumber...

"I have an existential map. It has 'You are here' written all over it." Steven Wright, US

Comedian



"Mind Map"

Do you need to unblock your creative pipes?

People sometimes ask me if I ever run out of ideas for Gorilla articles. Last week I thought it had happened. We were on holiday in Venice, a perfect place I thought, to get creative ideas for a Gorilla article.

I had five "triggers", the first being the picture on my mobile phone changing from the Houses of Parliament to the Leaning Tower of Pisa as I switched it on in Venice airport (what a lovely idea!). Normally, I sense a trigger and mentally fit it to a suitable concept for an article, but I couldn't fit any of these five. I had a creative block and needed a creative plumber to free it (and before you say it, help me tap in to my creativity).

Then my wife bought me a lovely notebook (Moleskine brand) which I promptly used to map out all the triggers in the form of a Mind Map.

(If you are unfamiliar with mapping, here is a [link](#) to give you some background)

Mapping my thoughts helped me find a connection, but I'll write about that in the next article, because I realised as I mapped that my mental block was a trigger and mapping is the article concept! When I got home I did a search on all of my Gorilla articles and realised that in 72 articles I had not mentioned mapping once, yet I use it all the time for taking notes, thinking and designing workshops.

SO

Map your thoughts. Mapping helps my creative process by forming links between concepts and enabling me to see them clearly. It "chunks" the information and helps clear my mind for new thoughts. Here are some tips on mapping. It's not exhaustive but for those of you who do map, it's worth looking at the tips again!

Use emphasis

- Use images throughout the map
- Use dimension for words and images

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- Use different sizes of print, line and image

Use association

- Use arrows to make a connection within and across branches
- Use colour and codes

Be clear

- Connect major branches to central images and lines to other lines
- Make central lines thicker
- Use one key word per line and write on the line

Overcoming blocks

- Add blank lines to the map
- Ask questions of yourself
- Add images

ACTION

- Become a creative plumber and unblock your thoughts with a mind map
- If you would like an article on mapping in groups please send an email with "Mapping" in the subject line. I'll be happy to send it to you
- Buy the Mind Map book by Tony and Barry Buzan

TO CLOSE

Whilst drawing the maps in my new notebook I realised just how powerful using pen and paper is for me. The act of drawing lines and filling in the arrows slows me down, helps me to think and gives a feeling of satisfaction. However, I also use iMindMap software for my workshop design work. This is a powerful tool but only one of a

range of mapping software and it's worth downloading some trials before you buy.

Here are some links:

[iMind Genius](#); [Mind Manager](#); [iMindMap](#);

[Personal Brain](#)

I know from running workshops on mapping, that it doesn't help some people – they prefer non visual methods. I'm happy with that, there's more than one way to unblock a drain.

May your creative pipes flow smoothly this week!

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