

YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 76

You can influence your life by applying leverage in a way that works for you...

Using Levers to Transform...

"Mind is the great lever of all things." Daniel Webster – American statesman



Signals Romsey Hampshire

Could you lever some basic strategies to make you more effective?

I'm usually a fairly positive person but towards the end of last year, I found myself a bit rudderless and less than motivated. Does that ever happen to you?

I could have attributed it [my lack of motivation] to the plumbers (a referral from our bathroom suppliers) who installed our new bathroom, tradesmen so bad we in Britain call them cowboys. They came in, spanners blazing and certainly made me miserable with their lies and bodes.

On reflection though, I realised that I was not paying attention to the levers that influence my life, those key factors that give me direction, motivation and a sunnier outlook.

"Levers" are a metaphor for those key things in our life that we influence to achieve a certain outcome. These levers will be different for everyone but in my case they are:

- The amount of exercise I do
- The time I spend meditating
- Mapping what I have to do regularly
- The amount I snack

You may wonder why I include the last one. Surely, if I snack more, that's a bad thing? True. Essentially, if I increase the first three and reduce the last, I feel better and act more effectively; you don't have to move levers the same way! I moved mine appropriately and feel more motivated and positive as a result.

SO

You can apply this "lever" metaphor to creative leadership by asking, "What levers make the most difference in my organisation?"

These will vary by organisation. In Yes! And... I can use the first three levers because my motivation and attitude are intrinsic to my business. By adding the lever of "communicating to others" (e.g. I invest my time in writing articles, doing talks etc) I have a simple model to work by.

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Notice that my levers are not outcomes such as “increase revenue” or “improve quality”; because there is no lever I can pull to increase revenue or improve quality directly. However, I can decide that my article distribution is too small and increase that, which may influence my revenue. In other words, you can equate a lever to those factors on which you make a decision.

Some examples of levers you could move in other organisations could be the:

- Number of staff you have
- Amount of money you spend on advertising
- Training you do or provide
- Products you launch

If the lever metaphor doesn't work for you, try “throttle” or, dare I say it (in view of the plumbers), “tap”.

ACTION

Consider what your levers are in your personal and business life. Keep it simple, you don't want a long list. What are the top three levers you can adjust that really make a difference, ones that you can recall on your fingertips?

If you like the concept, you might develop a matrix to illustrate the levers and outcomes.

TO CLOSE

Our new plumber, brought in to remedy the problems and finish the job, explained to me today how I could adjust the valve on the new

radiator so that more hot water could flow to other radiators. He explained that by adjusting the valve on all radiators in the house, we could balance the distribution of heat for maximum comfort. That's a pretty good analogy for using levers I thought, but as the family prefers not to freeze or bake, I'll leave it to a qualified plumber.

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