

YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 80

If we want to have more creative ideas, we need to change our signals and divert other trains of thought through our brain station ...

Broaden Your Thinking to Innovate...

"There are trains that don't come by again or ones that don't even stop at the right station."

Juande Ramos, Coach of Tottenham FC, discussing his reasons for joining the club."



TORINO P.N.	REG	11.09
PADOVA	REG	11.18
ROMA T.NI	ES*	11.22
TRENTO	REG	11.26
MILANO	ES*	11.30
SACILE	REG	11.35
ADRIA	REG	11.39
PALERMO-SIRACUSA	EXPR	11.46
VERONA	REG	11.51

Platform Board Venice

Do you need to change your signals?

We were on holiday in Venice, a perfect place I thought, to get creative ideas for a Gorilla article. Certainly there were catalysts; the picture on my mobile telephone changing from the Houses of Parliament to the Leaning Tower of Pisa, as I switched it on in Venice airport (what a lovely idea!); the way the Venetians use the water for everything (e.g. collecting the rubbish); the absence of modern buildings; the speed of the vaporetti (water buses) helping to destroy the foundations of buildings the Venetians are trying to save.

I had so many ideas they were all running round in my head until my wife bought me a wonderful blank pagged notebook (Moleskine brand) and I sat on a train from Venice to Padua and began sketching the ideas in a radiant map. As I mapped I thought how maps are reminiscent of railway junctions, which set me thinking about metaphors for creative thinking and so I had yet another idea!

Information bombards us all the time through our senses and the brain filters out the information we don't need at that time so we don't go crazy. To use the railway metaphor, think of information like a train bearing down on a junction.

Our filters are like the signals on the track; certain trains (information) get routed in to our "station" for processing whilst others are routed away to other destinations for later processing or into a siding for storage. The signals are so efficient, we tend to get a pattern of trains that we let through and those we route elsewhere.

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SO

This is fine until we have some kind of issue. At this point we need to start letting in trains that we divert, but those signals just keep working. Hence we need something to change the signal.

That's where tools and techniques for changing our patterns of thinking come to the fore, not just in the idea generation stage (as with my radiant mapping) but also in the other stages of tackling a challenge.

So, if you are looking for a way to explain the need for creative thinking to someone, I hope this might help.

ACTION

Play with this railway metaphor and sense how you might refine it. One way to do that is to generate as many railway related ideas as you can and then force fit them to the idea of creative thinking.

For example, a railway porter could lead to you using other people to help stimulate ideas. A derailment could lead to using radical tools to change your thinking.

TO CLOSE

Remember, your competitors are likely to have the same signals set as you, so you need to start thinking how you are going to change the trains, the signals or maybe even the track to ensure that you get different ideas to them!

My apologies for the delay in getting this article to you, I have been quite unwell and unable to concentrate on anything.

Get those signals moving this week

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Contact John or Kate Brooker:

Speak: +44 (0) 20 8869 9990

Write: hi@yesand.eu

Read: www.yesand.eu