

# YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 82

*If you allow time for your mind to freewheel you can be more creative ...*

## Give Yourself Space to Create...

*"I'm lazy. But it's the lazy people who invented the wheel and the bicycle because they didn't like walking or carrying things." Lech Walesa, former President of Poland*



**"End of London Brighton"**

### *Need to create some space for ideas?*

Have you ever had a near miss on a bicycle? My recent narrow escape led to a freewheeling of ideas, so hop on for the ride!

I was halfway through a 20km cycle ride on a long descent, enjoying the rest after a tough climb, when a white van cut in on me, causing me to swerve.

Recovering my composure, I noticed the van belonged to a plumber and my mind leaped to the deficient plumbers who had installed our bathroom.

I recalled they complained a lot about people not paying them and remembered the poor customer service they gave. This led to thoughts of how people differentiate themselves with great customer service.

As I freewheeled, this notion led on to the idea of "niche" strategies (finding a small segment of the market to compete in), which steered me to [Michael Porter](#)

Porter made me think of my MBA, which directed me to an ex student who had just contacted me, having set up his own business.

This trail moved me on to people who take their MBA as corporate employees and then set up on their own. Which sparked the thought that MBAs are designed around corporate life, so why not have an MBA about running a small business, but aim it at corporate employees?

And I still hadn't got to the bottom of the hill!

We're not here to consider the merits of the idea (although a quick search on the Web revealed no examples of this type of MBA), but the way it evolved in a very short space of time.

How? Because I:

- Was totally relaxed with no time constraints
- Had no pressure to generate an idea
- Had a catalyst (the plumber's van) which sparked the wheel of ideas
- Allowed my mind to freewheel metaphorically. without judgement

## SO

As an individual the message is evident, give yourself space to think. What about groups?

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A big issue I have in my work is clients who want to cram so much in to their meetings. It's understandable; we have fifteen people in a room for two days, let's make the agenda as full as possible.

Alternatively, here's an idea for your next off site meeting. Don't cram every minute with agenda items; leave some time free for a constructive discussion on whatever arises.

If that total absence of structure worries you, here's a brief structure for you that takes about an hour.

- Start with an improvisation exercise like "One Line Story" (stand in groups of five and tell a story one line at a time, each person contributing a line); this gets the mind working.
- Next, have people go for a walk in pairs and have them answer the question (or your own) "What positive, constructive change would you like to see happen at work?" (One person speaks while the other listens and then they swap round).
- Come back, put the change ideas up on a chart and have participants form small groups around the topics they would like to discuss. The only rule is they must build on the concept, not judge it (that can be done after the meeting).
- Have them capture what arises from the discussion, e.g. some ideas, some conclusions.
- Review as a group.

## ACTION

For your next team meeting, leave one item off the agenda and freewheel.

## TO CLOSE

I got in to our 1992 "run-around" car this morning and noticed that my wife had filled the tank with petrol. I mused that, with petrol now at 1.20 GB pounds a litre, each tank of petrol is worth more than the resale value of the car.

"That's a bit like a printer" I thought "the ink cartridges cost more than the actual printer." I pondered that fuel companies could now give you a car for free as long as you refuel it at their garages.

Now there's freewheeling for you!

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*Contact John or Kate Brooker:*

*Speak: +44 (0) 20 8869 9990*

*Write: [hi@yesand.eu](mailto:hi@yesand.eu)*

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