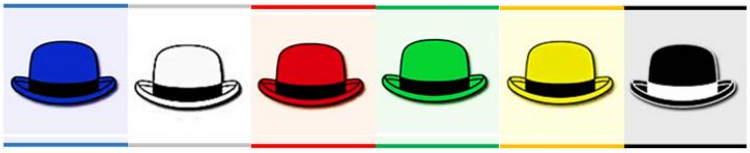
Edward De Bono's

6 Thinking Hats



This is a methodology that encourages people of different personalities and attitudes to think—*collectively and systematically*—using *different* thinking styles.

During meetings, every individual typically uses his/her habitual way of thinking.

Some are naturally enthusiastic and some generate ideas easily. Others are always looking at the downside in every idea. Some consider facts rationally, while others base discussion solely on the basis of their emotions.

So in this method, EVERYONE present has to use ALL the different styles. A different thinking style is used for certain time, then another style as would be directed by the person chairing the meeting. Each thinking style is referred to as a differently coloured thinking hat.

The Blue Hat – chairs the meeting and it is used to set our thinking objectives so that everyone is clear about the process that will follow. The Blue Hat introduces the other hats (processes) and keeps everyone on tract during the meeting. **At the end** of a meeting, this hat returns to summarise and facilitate an agreement or a decision.

The White Hat – encourages everyone to think objectively and assess the available data. We use factual information to draw conclusions and to learn from it.

The Red Hat – is used so that everyone can express themselves emotionally, that is how they feel or express their intuition about the subject at hand. During this thinking process, *no justification is required* whenever anyone expresses how they feel.

The Green Hat – generates possibilities; a bit like *lateral thinking,* asking "How else?" or "What if?" This process explores different options and encourages change.

The Yellow Hat – 'is the voice of optimism' in the group. Meeting members explore the positive aspects that may be expected from a situation or from suggestions being generated. This is meant to *generate enthusiasm and focus on benefits*.

The Black Hat – may be seen as 'the voice of caution' or the Devil's Advocate, meant to stop us from rushing into some disaster. It's not meant to be pessimistic, but realistically cautious.

PROCESS



Blue Hat – Process

Thinking about thinking.
What thinking is needed?
Organizing the thinking.
Planning for action.

FACTS



White Hat – Facts

Information and data.
Neutral and objective.
What do I know?
What do I need to find out?
How will I get the information I need?

FEELINGS



Red Hat – Feelings

Intuition, hunches, gut instinct.
My feelings right now.
Feelings can change.
No reasons are given.

CREATIVITY



Green Hat – Creativity

Ideas, alternatives, possibilities.
Solutions to black hat problems.

BENEFITS



Yellow Hat – Benefits

Positives, plus points.
Why an idea is useful.
Logical reasons are given.

CAUTIONS



Black Hat – Caution

Difficulties, weaknesses, dangers.
Spotting the risks.
Logical reasons are given.

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