

## STEP 2: SIX THINKING HATS

### What Is It:








Six Thinking Hats is a system designed by Edward de Bono which describes a tool for group discussion and individual thinking involving six coloured hats. It is a simple, effective parallel thinking process that avoids conflict/arguments, and helps people be more productive, focused, and mindfully involved.

### How To Use It:

You and your team members can learn how to separate thinking into six clear functions and roles.

Each perspective or 'thinking role' is represented using a coloured symbolic "thinking hat." By mentally wearing and switching "hats," you can easily focus or redirect thoughts, the conversation, or the meeting. By using the Six Thinking Hats, you can get everybody thinking about the problem in a collaborative way.

Everybody can put on the same hat at the same time. The real key here is that rather than circular or deadlock debates, you focus the group on a particular viewpoint at a time.

	<p><b>Managerial:</b> The Blue Hat is used to manage the thinking process. It's the control mechanism that ensures the Six Thinking Hats guidelines are observed and keep people in the same 'hat' until it's time to move onto the next 'hat'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What problem are we facing?</li> <li>• How can we best define this problem?</li> <li>• What is the goal, aim and outcome?</li> <li>• What do we seek to achieve by solving this problem?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Neutral:</b> The White Hat calls for information known or needed. "The facts, just the facts."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the facts?</li> <li>• What do we know about this problem?</li> <li>• What don't we know about this problem &amp; need to find out?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Optimistic:</b> The Yellow Hat symbolizes brightness and optimism. Under this hat you explore the positives and probe for value and benefit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can I best approach this problem?</li> <li>• How can I logically and realistically make this work?</li> <li>• What positive outcomes could result from this action?</li> <li>• What are the long-term benefits of this action?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Judgement:</b> The Black Hat is the devil's advocate - why something may not work. Spot the difficulties and dangers; where things might go wrong. Probably the most powerful and useful of the Hats but a problem if overused.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What can go wrong?</li> <li>• What is the fatal flaw within this idea?</li> <li>• How many ways is this likely to fail?</li> <li>• What are the potential risks/consequences associated with this?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Intuitive:</b> The Red Hat signifies feelings, hunches and intuition. When using this hat you can express emotions and feelings and share fears, likes, dislikes, loves, and hates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you feel about this?</li> <li>• What is my gut feeling telling me about this solution?</li> <li>• Based on my feelings, is there a better way to go about this?</li> <li>• Intuitively, is this the right solution to this problem?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Creative:</b> The Green Hat focuses on creativity; the possibilities, alternatives, and new ideas. It's an opportunity to express new concepts and new perceptions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How else could we look at this?</li> <li>• What alternative possibilities could exist here?</li> <li>• Could this be done in another way?</li> <li>• How can I look at this problem from a unique perspective?</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Managerial:</b> After all hats have had their say, the blue hat continues to circulate between the hats in a logical way. It may for instance focus its attention on the red hat for further intuitive insights based on the green hat's creative ideas. Or it may ask the white hat to gather more facts and information about the dangers that the black hat brought to mind. After which it may ask the yellow hat to bring forth some logical positive solutions based on this new found knowledge and information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would we summarise our findings so far?</li> </ul>