

An overview of Edward de Bono's

The Six Hats®

Efficient & Effective Decision-Making

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The Six Hats®

Efficient & Effective Decision-Making

A method for thinking created by Dr Edward de Bono.

This innovative system of processing information can not only save hundreds of hours of debate, it eradicates the frustrations that can often occur in team meetings. It is simple, fast, effective and efficient.

The tools are easy to learn and recall and can be used immediately. It will significantly improve productivity with the added benefit of removing unnecessary conflict.

The six hats process can be used in meetings and within teams - in fact anywhere that requires clarity.



Why Hats

A hat represents specific thinking states. A uniform that includes a hat reinforces the need to think in a specific way, ie policeman's hat requires risk management thinking.

The same principle is applied to the SIX Hats. (also know as Parallel thinking).

Each hat denotes the type of thinking currently used and can easily be changed by mentally 'switching hats' and thereby, adopt a different type of thinking.

This will also change the direction of your thinking.



The Six Hats

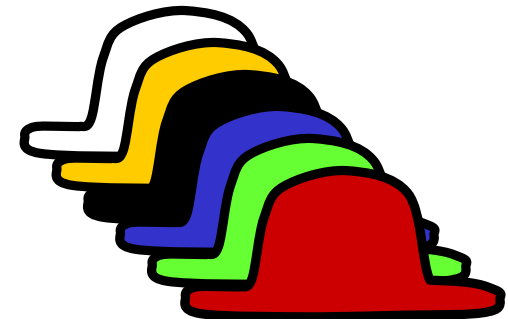
The difference that *makes* the difference for a business to succeed, is the accuracy and speed that decisions are made.

The ability to collaborate and consolidate a teams thinking, enables a team to utilise their collective wisdom.

Once the Six Hats methodology is employed by a team, benefits for both individuals and the collective are obvious to all the participants. This includes:

- Increase in productivity
- Improved creativity
- Reduction of conflict (or increased conflict resolutions)

This will result in a positive business culture and better teamwork and critically, better outcomes.



What's wrong with current thinking

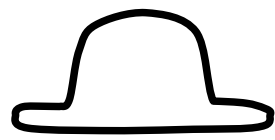
Most discussions are filled with a variety of views and tend to be based on each person having their perspective understood and accepted by the others.

Our nature is to think either positively or negatively, we become adversarial (I am right, you are wrong), and this is not often conducive to effective decision-making.

Often information is lacking and views are shifted by those who have authority or are loudest, rather than working together to achieve the best outcome.

In some instances, people withdraw from this environment, and the group itself loses a richness of perspective.





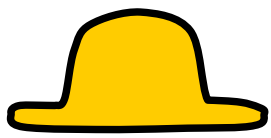
The White Hat

The white hat deals with factual information. It is interested only in the facts.

Whilst wearing the white hat, the teams focus is in contributing all the facts they know about the particular objective within the discussion.

Additional information may be needed that is not available at the time and needs to be sought. "What do we need to know?"

The quality of information also needs to be considered. How factual is it? Does the information come from a reliable source?



The Yellow Hat

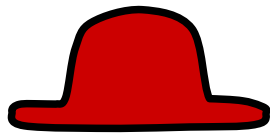
The yellow hat is interested in extracting all the positives, the benefits and the values from taking action. Unless there is a value in doing something, there is no point.

The mind is designed to be cautious and is attuned to seeing the dangers.

Therefore it takes effort to extract the benefits, especially if the idea appears unattractive.

A degree of caution needs to be employed in cases where unrealistic expectations are likely to occur.

The yellow hat is the motivator for decision-making.



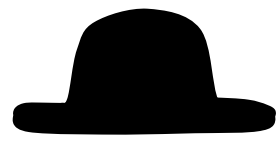
The Red Hat

Expressing our feelings without justification is the purpose of the red hat.

It gives licence to express your feeling, intuition, hunch and emotion without judgement or criticism.

The idea is that everyone at the meeting has/must express what they feel, even if they say “I have mixed feelings about this” they can express the mix of feelings they are experiencing.

No explanation is required or necessary when expressing feelings, no attempt needs to be made to justify. Our intuition can be wrong at times, nonetheless, it adds value to our thinking when we reach the time for an informed decision.



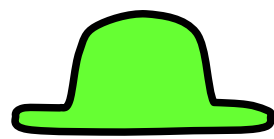
The Black Hat

It is important to identify potential risk when making a decision to act or not act. In business it is important to understand the implications.

The black hat gives an opportunity to express areas of concern and explore possible dangers, difficulties and problems that may exist. There could be concerns about the profitability, perhaps there are legal ramifications that need to be considered, it may be that the decision could impact upon another area of the business. All these things need to be considered.

The black hat tends to be fairly easy to use because as human beings we have a natural propensity to see the dangers in a situation. The mind is designed to do this – it is part of our biology.

There needs to be caution to ensure that the negative is realistic and adds value to the overall thinking process and is always focused on the objective.



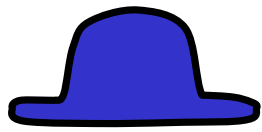
The Green Hat

Time to explore new possibilities, new ideas, new concepts. Using the green hat gives licence for the team to get creative. There are no limits to the ideas proposed.

Everyone to some degree is creative, especially when using the lateral thinking tools. The green hat considers what else could be done. It empowers the individual and the team to 'think outside the box'.

Many ideas could be generated in a team meeting that may later on be looked at to explore their feasibility.

The green hat is all about seeking other ways of addressing the situation at hand. "Are there other ways of doing this?"



The Blue Hat

Without a clear objective there is likely to be chaos.

The blue hat is the process that manages direction – it is the facilitator. The blue hat sets agenda and ensure it stays on track, “What is the focus of this meeting?”.

In addition to wearing the blue hat, the wearer also uses the other hats. The only difference is that whilst wearing the other hats the blue hat also ensures that the meeting remains focused. The objective is to ensure that the meeting is structured – to achieve a positive outcome.

Timing, sequence and discipline are decided by the blue hat, as are any requests made by others in the group. (i.e someone asks if the time could be extended in wearing a hat and this would have to be approved by the blue hat).

Disruptor of the mind in the pursuit of dreams.

For further information on training
in the use of Six Hats please email
or call to discuss your needs.

Email: gp@gpabc.com

AUTHOR
EDUCATOR
TRAINER
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MENTOR
THERAPIST

*Certified Dr. Edward de Bono Thinking Systems Trainer
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