

The Six Thinking Hats



Blue Hat: The Conductor's Hat. Thinking about and managing the thinking process

The blue hat is the control hat. It is used for thinking about thinking. The blue hat sets the agenda, focus and sequence of hats, ensures the guidelines are observed and asks for summaries, conclusions, decisions and plans action.



Green Hat: The Creative Hat. Generating ideas

The green hat is for creative thinking and generating new ideas, alternatives, possibilities and new concepts.



Red Hat: The Hat for the Heart. Intuition and Feelings

The red hat is about feelings, intuitions and instincts. The red hat invites feelings without justification.



Yellow Hat: The Optimist's Hat. Benefits and Values

The yellow hat is for a positive view of things. It looks for the benefits and values.



Black or Grey Hat: The Judge's Hat. Caution

The black or grey hat identifies risk. It is used for critical judgment and must give the logical reasons for concerns. It is one of the most powerful hats.



White Hat: The Factual Hat. Information

The white hat is all about information. What information you have, what information you need and where to get it.

Important points to note:

- The hats can be used on your own or in a group.
- In group discussions, it is essential that everyone uses the same hat (mode of thinking) at the same time. This is to avoid personal preferences and conflicts between modes of thinking.
- The black hat is powerful and essential. It is a necessary part of thinking but often overused.
- We respect that colours have different cultural contexts. For example, in China wearing a green hat signifies an unfaithful spouse. While it would undervalue the black hat to assume it is a bad hat, we respect that you may prefer to use grey to indicate risk assessment. You may change the colours of the hats if you wish. For the method to be effective, it is important that there are six distinct modes of thinking and that everyone has a common language to communicate these.
- Training in the use of the hats includes how to structure the hats into sequences to address different situations.

The Six Thinking Hats were created by Dr. Edward de Bono and have been adopted in training programs by organisations around the world since 1991. The [de Bono](https://www.debono.com) network includes accredited trainers and facilitators in 72 countries through 18 training partners who act as [Authorised Distributors](https://www.debono.com/authorised-distributors). We provide in person and virtual training and facilitation, supported by interactive digital courses and applications, to help you apply the methods to topics that are important to you.

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