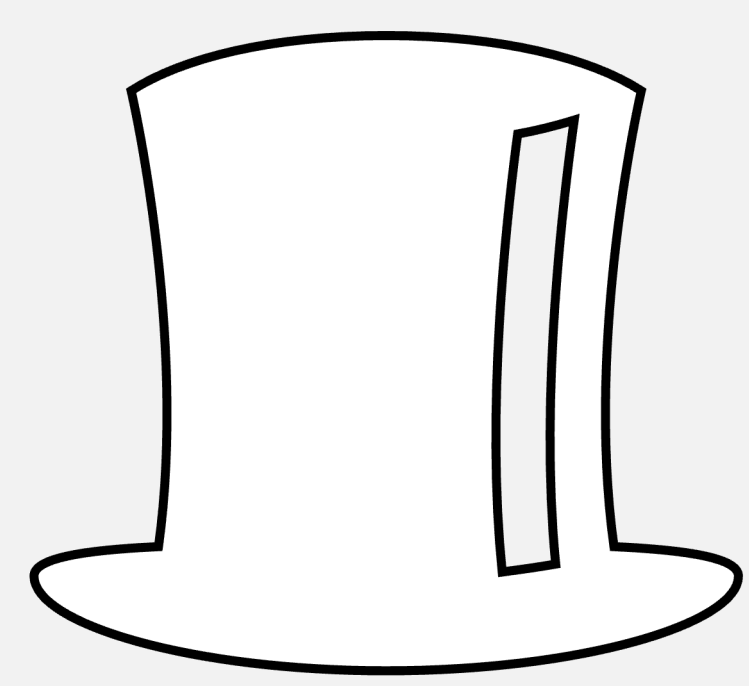


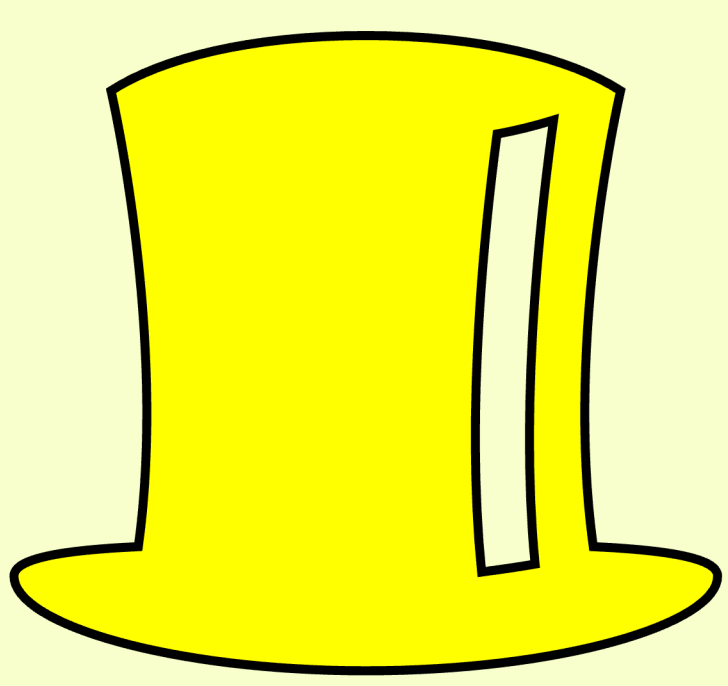
# Six Thinking Hats

A detailed discussion by Will Makins, Ruijie Wang and Alex Hawkridge.

The idea of this method is that you can break down human thinking into 6 separate sections. That collectively cover all areas.



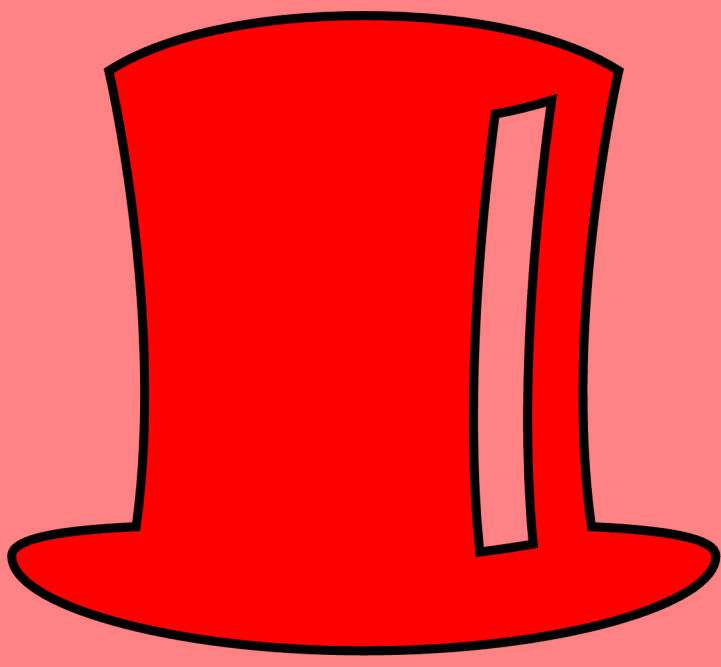
**White hat:**  
The white hat involves purely facts/what is known. This could be data or documents. With this hat the world is viewed objectively without emotion.



**Yellow hat:**  
The yellow hat focuses on positivity. This could be searching for opportunity and value. With this hat the world is viewed benevolently.



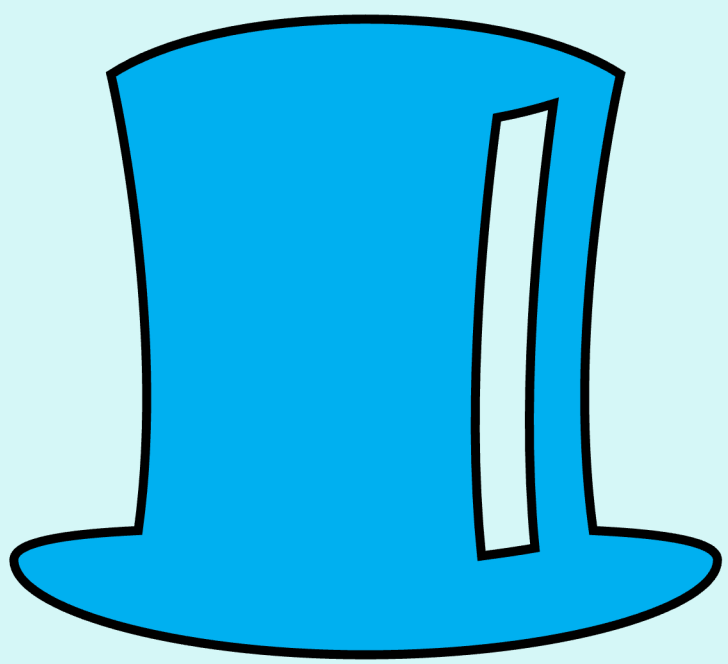
**Black hat:**  
The black hat focuses on risk management. This could be searching for risks, problems and difficulties that may need to be overcome. With this hat you are playing devils advocate.



**Red hat:**  
The red hat focuses on gut feeling and emotion. This could be hunches or likes and dislikes.



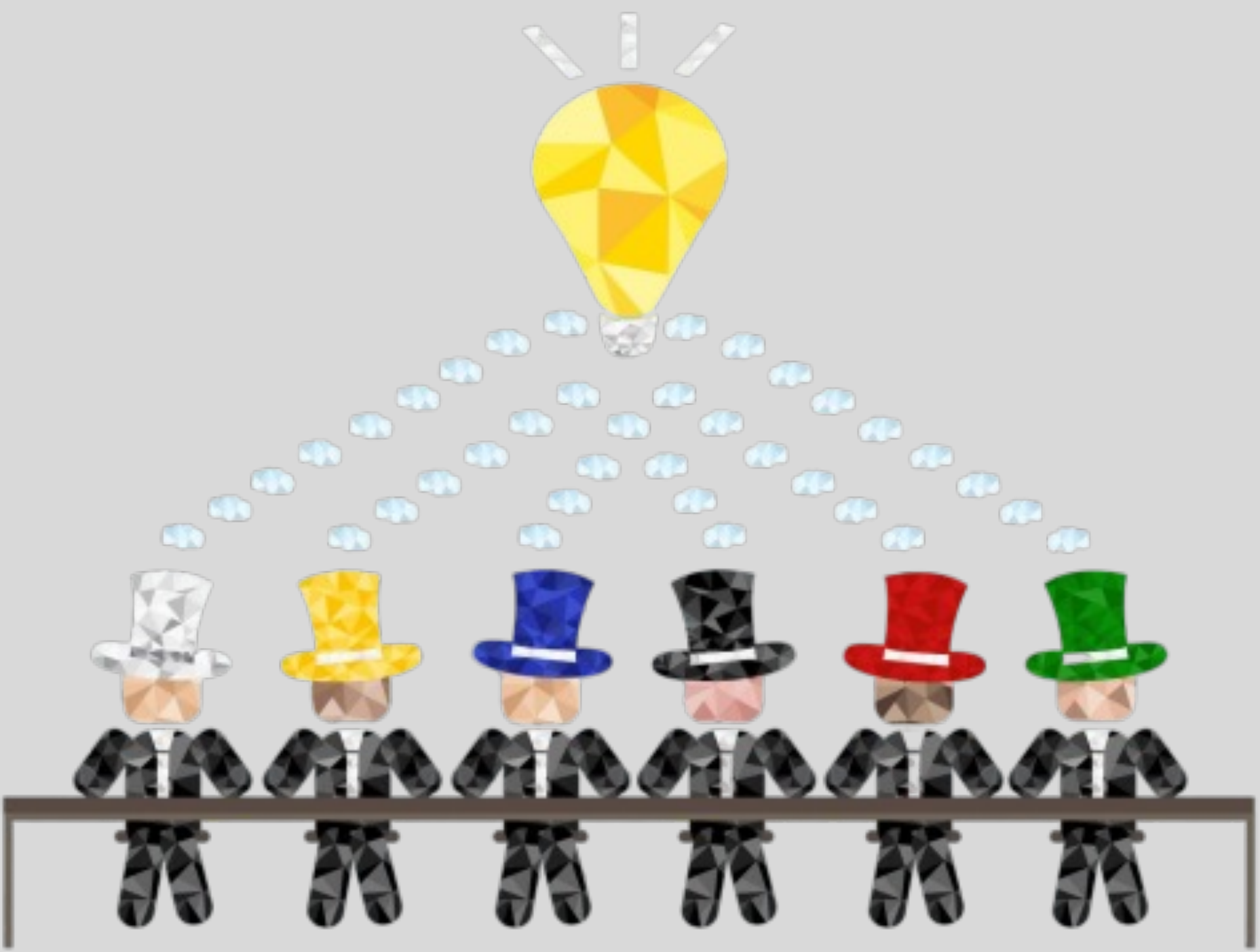
**Green hat:**  
The green hat focuses on creativity. This could be finding new ideas, concepts, perceptions and alternatives. With the green hat you use your fantasy.



**Blue hat:**  
The blue hat brings together all ideas from all the other hats. This could be summarizing thoughts, evaluating hats equally, considering consequences and open questioning.

## Mode of operation

1. Define a question: A specific question or decision
2. Assign a blue hat: Leaders should wear a blue hat and chair the meeting process.
3. Assign other hats: Assign each group a different hat and record the ideas under the current hat.
4. Rotate hats: Rotate hats between groups, and let each group consider the current problem from different thinking hats.
5. Make decisions: Based on the different ideas, discuss the final results and make decisions.



References:  
<https://www.atlassian.com/blog/productivity/six-thinking-hats>  
<https://www.tsw.co.uk/blog/leadership-and-management/six-thinking-hats/>  
<https://www.debonogroup.com/services/core-programs/six-thinking-hats/>  
<https://blog.hptbydts.com/6-thinking-hats-praise-criticism>

**“How to solve the problem of complaints from coffee shop customers due to long waiting times?”**

**Blue hat:** Explore ways which can solve the problem (buy a new coffee machine)

**White hat:** Analyse data about customer waiting times and the possible influence.

**Yellow hat:** Evaluate the benefits of solutions

**Black hat:** Consider the potential challenges of the solutions.

**Red hat:** Intuitive view of solutions

**Green hat:** Find innovative ways to reduce customer complaints

## Pros

- Parallel Thinking – Term coined by De Bono himself, where all members explore subject where all participants can contribute in parallel.
- Intuitive – The thinking process is not overly complex
- Neutral – No way of thinking is weighted heavier than any of the others.
- Boosts Creativity - By having to view the problem from a different perspective it prevents jumping to conclusions or overlooking details.

## Cons

- Misuse - Critics have often pointed out that this method may be more suitable in application of brainstorming.
- Extravagant Claims - De Bono makes some bold claims about the effectiveness of his method yet the scientific evidence to support them is lackluster.
- Labels – People may be associated with their hat used inside the meeting even when outside the meeting.
- Time Consuming – Having to switch between several different hats and adapting to perspectives.