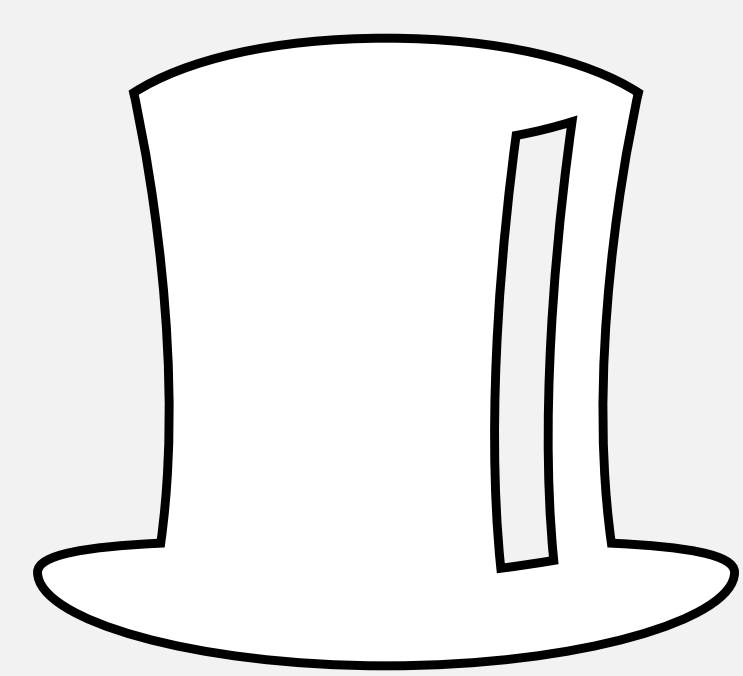


Six Thinking Hats

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.



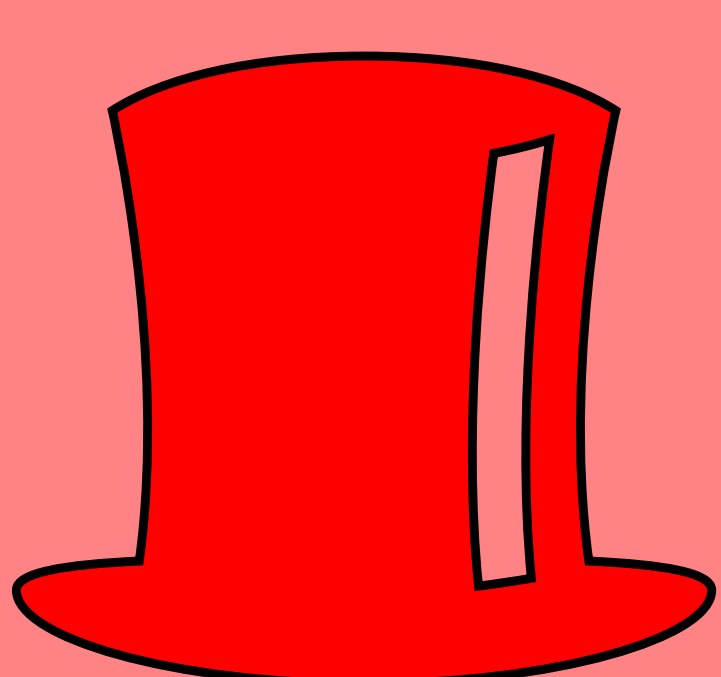
White hat:
The white hat involves purely facts/what is known. This could be data or documents. With this hat the world is viewed objectively without emotion.



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



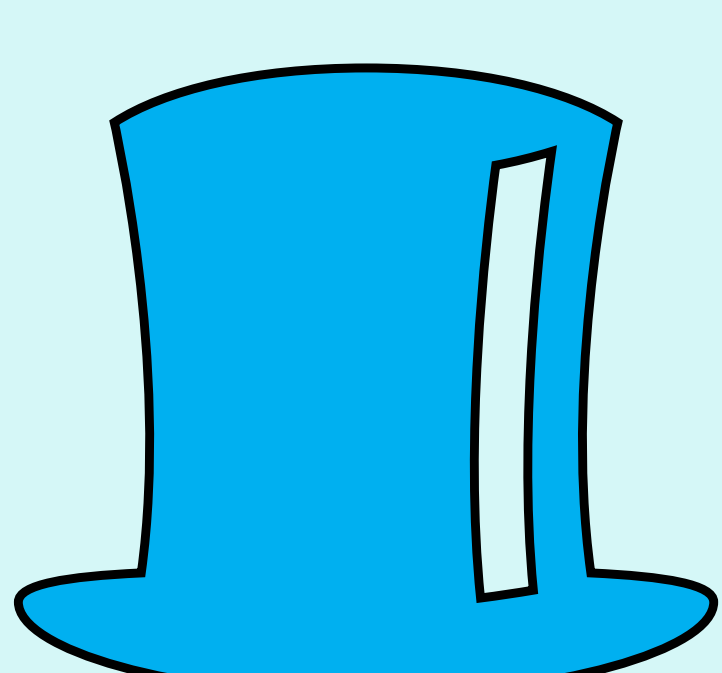
Black hat:
The black hat focuses on risk management. This could be searching for risks, problems and difficulties that may need to be overcome. With this hat you are playing devils advocate.



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



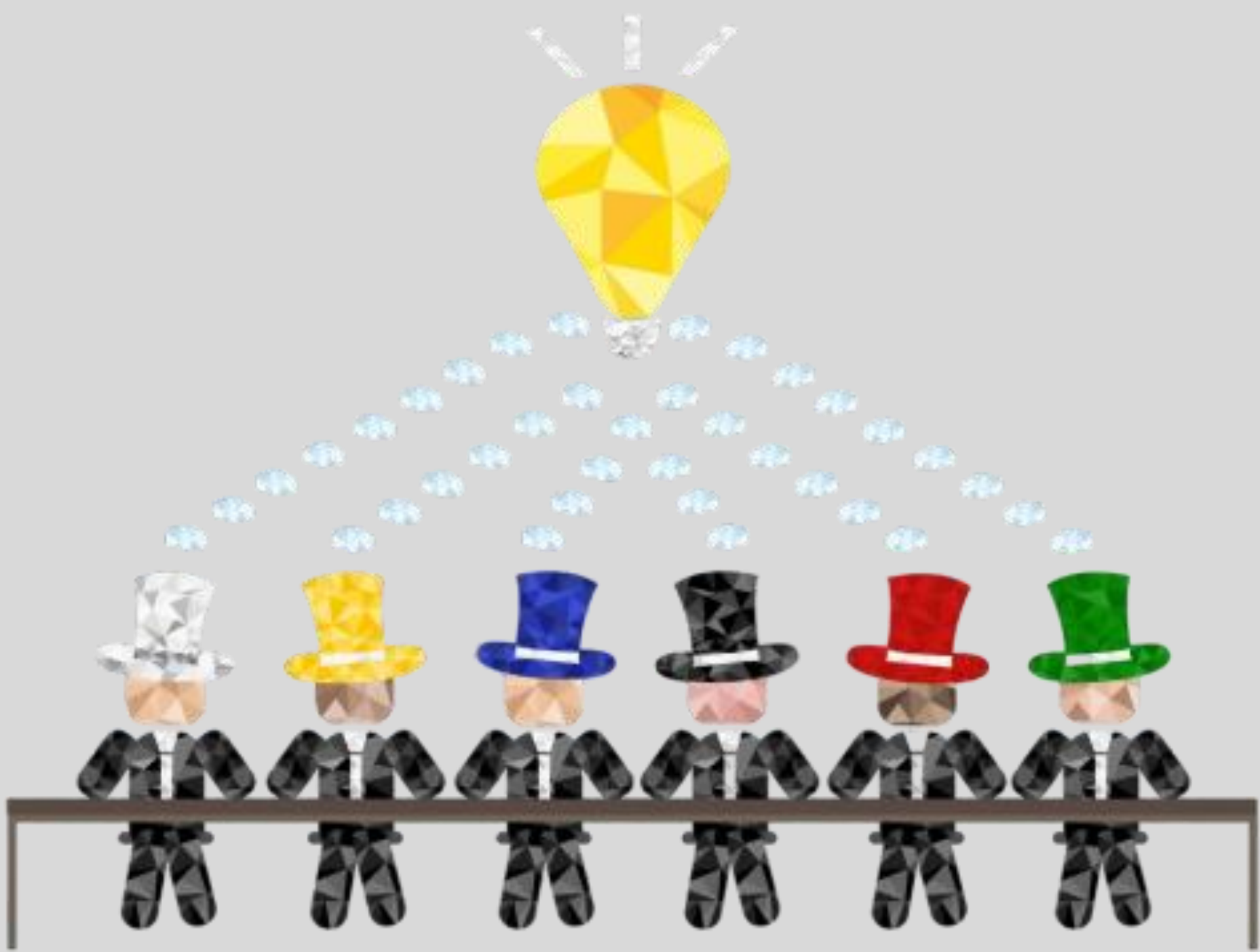
Green hat:
The green hat focuses on creativity. This could be finding new ideas, concepts, perceptions and alternatives. With the green hat you use your fantasy.



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 the subject and can contribute in parallel, without judgement.
- 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.