



Edward de Bono's Thinking Hats can be a great tool for dealing with a specific project, new intervention or examining an issue. The biggest benefits are often seen in team working and collaborative problem solving as they can empower diverse groups of people to work together with a common perspective in mind.

Here's how to do it:

Consider your scenario one hat at a time and appoint a facilitator/leader:

The six hats can be used in any order during a meeting or discussion. However, by using the hats in order you can direct a discussion in a more logical fashion. The order below will provide a flow for any meeting or discussion:

1. Blue
2. White
3. Green
4. Yellow
5. Red
6. Black

Even with this order in place a facilitator can reintroduce a hat that they feel is appropriate to the discussion. For example, it may be felt that the solutions identified using the green hat need to be interrogated, so participants can wear a white hat to dive into the facts around those solutions.

Blue Hat – The blue hat is metaphorically worn by the individual chairing a meeting, controlling a team, or managing a situation. They will often provide the ground rules in the form of an agenda, goals and scope.

White Hat – The White hat is used at the beginning and end of a session. Used at the beginning to concentrate on the facts or data available. Used at the end of a session to question ideas derived from using the other hats.

Green Hat – The green hat is used to encourage new and innovative ideas. Thinking outside the box where anything should be considered. No negative thinking or comment is allowed at this stage in the process.

Yellow Hat – The yellow hat is the optimistic hat, used to consider the possible merits of ideas which may have been generated by the green hat process.

Red Hat – This is the intuitive hat where feelings and emotions can be expressed, such as fears and dislikes. These feelings do not need to be justified they just identify gut feelings.

Black Hat – The black hat is the negative but logical hat as it looks at possible solutions or ideas to determine if they may or may not work. Negativity without reason must be avoided as this is a red hat function. The black hat examines things from a critical thinking perspective.