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Imagine you are a manager in a company and the profit of the company is going down because it is facing huge competition from MNCs. Use 6-hat thinking and write in detail 6 different aspects and come up with a solution

Six Thinking Hats-Prof Edward De Bono in 1985 had devised this method and written a book on the same. It is a very powerful and innovative way to think about the problems and difficulties you may face in an organised and efficient manner. It shows you different perspectives and gives you a complete report of your current situation be it financial or not. It is an effective tool in reaching to a solution considering all aspects and possibilities.

The six different hats are denoted by six different colours with each one having its own significant meaning:

➤ **The White hat: Facts**

- It focuses on data, facts, information known or needed.
- What do I know?
- What do I need to find out?
- How will I get the information I need?
- Neutral objectivity

➤ **The Red Hat: Feelings**

- It focuses on feelings, hunches, gut instinct and intuition.
- My feelings currently
- Being intuitive while solving a problem
- Feelings can alter
- Allow feelings to be expressed without justification
- How does everyone feel about the current situation or problem?

➤ **The Yellow Hat: Benefits**

- It focuses on values and benefits
- Why something may work
- Think in an optimistic way
- Good points in our favour as we approach the problem.
- Logical reasons are given
- Includes positives and plus points mainly

➤ **The Black Hat: Cautions**

- Focuses on problems, difficulties and potential problems
- Why something may not work
- Find the negative aspects
- Cautious critical thinking
- Identifying the problems so as to find a solution for it
- Evaluating and taking points from the past judgment
- It highlights the flaws and makes the plan better
- Makes them prepared to face difficulties

➤ **The Green Hat: Creativity**

- It focuses on possibilities, alternatives, solutions and new ideas
- It is an opportunity to express new concepts and ideas
- Critical analysis of alternative ways to solve problems
- Using lateral thinking
- Reinforcing Yellow Hat values
- Thinking out of the box

➤ **The Blue Hat: Process**

- Focuses on managing the thinking process, focus, next steps, action plan
- Drawing conclusion and summary
- Launching action plans
- Assessing past information
- Involving in developing problem-solving ability
- Involves Time Management
- Taking decision

Being the manager of a company that is facing an issue of reduction in profit due to tough competition from other companies the six thinking hats would be a very useful and effective way to analyse and find out a solution for this problem.

Firstly, by using the white hat I would find out the actual facts. How much is the decrease in profit, in what areas is the profit or loss maximum or minimum. What are the areas I know on which me and my team can work and improve on? What are the methodologies and developments being used by other MNCs to offer similar products at competitive prices etc.

Using the red hat and consideration of other experts take a decision or draft out a rough plan regarding the further course of action. There are situations wherein just based on instinct some decisions need to be made or they seem correct, it gives a feeling of correctness and future profits.

Using the green hat to think of creative and innovative ideas to tackle the issue. Involving in lateral or out of the box thinking so improve our profit. For example, providing discount coupons or giving away free goodies or surprise gift hampers via lottery system. Reducing the production cost to sell the items at cheaper and competitive cost thereby increasing the price. A few more ways could be by using the intelligence to improve the engineering of the machines, finding alternative sources for raw materials, providing luring offers because a customer doesn't look for a product, he looks for benefit. Trying to provide additional services such a free home delivery or free support assistant.

Using the yellow hat to tap on my company's strengths and your potential customers or targeted audience. Making sure that the expected standards are maintained and the loyal customers are rewarded time to time. Working on the places where we are faring better than other companies and finding out viable and logical solutions to the problems we are facing. Analysing a plan and thinking that why it may work in our organisation and will it help us boost our profit either by reduction in cost or increase in sales.

Using the black hat to be prepared for the worst cases. Eliminating plans based on logical reasoning and why it may not work is not better than another plan. Taking into account a detailed study of the other MNCs and their products estimating how much profit or loss will be done and to what extent can the company bare those losses? Being able to find out the exact reason for the reduction in profit like due to high prices, better quality from competitors, stock availability, better service from other MNCs, lucrative offers and unique propositions, not being able to maintain the deadlines, not being able to bring out new things and ideas, trying to implement new and better technology to make better products.

Using the blue hat to control the whole process from analysing the problem to assessing it to finding out the most viable solution. It would involve laying out a roadmap for our organization based on what steps they need to implement in the future to maintain or improve our profit. At each step from the manufacturing to the delivery making sure that the process is done smoothly, all consumer requirements are met the company is able to make good profit. Help in developing the problem-solving skills of the employees and maintain the deadlines for the task. It involves giving and taking feedback from consumers and other company mates to develop a improvised action plan which is able to compete with other rivals in the market.

Overall, as a manager the working of all six hats simultaneously is necessary for the company to work on any given problem and improving the company's profit.