

# THE THINKING HATS

by Edward de Bono

Imagine that there are six imaginary hats. Each hat is a different colour, and represents a different type of thinking. When you 'put on' a hat, you operate exclusively in that mode of thinking. When you change from one hat to another, you change thinking modes. And importantly everyone thinks the same way at the same time – so avoiding futile positive versus negative conflict.

## WHITE HAT

### Facts & information

It looks at what is known and what information could be missing.

## RED HAT

### Feelings & intuition

It focuses on what people feel about the issue under discussion. Importantly, there's no need to rationalise or explain.

## YELLOW HAT

### Benefits & advantages

Optimism is represented here. The team all think about the possible advantages, benefits or opportunities an idea can present.

## BLACK HAT

### Caution & problems

The focus here is on problems, risks and challenges that this idea might pose.

## GREEN HAT

### Creativity & solutions

This hat asks the team to consider new approaches or to build on and improve an existing approach. This hat is often used in a brainstorm to generate ideas.

## BLUE HAT

### Managing thinking

Unlike all the other hats, the Blue Hat is only worn by one person, who chairs the discussion. He ensures that everyone wears the right hat at the right time.



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