



DeBono's Six Thinking Hats

Dr. Edward DeBono said in his book, *Six Thinking Hats* (Little, Brown & Company, 1985), that “thinking is the ultimate human resource.” He explored how people think in different ways. By using DeBono’s six descriptions of thinking listed below, everyone’s contribution in a discussion can be appreciated and their “nuggets of knowledge” harvested for the association’s future use.

White Hat

Gives the facts and figures, defines with information, and asks a lot of questions in any discussion—gives an objective look at the data,

Asks: *What information and resources do we need to address this properly?*

Red Hat

Expresses emotions, intuition, hunches, and feelings. Used to expressing authentic emotion on an issue without the need to justify with facts—legitimizes feelings, hunches, and intuition.

Asks: *How do people feel about this?*

Black Hat

Provides the past and future context, caution, and logic. Often appears to be in a negative position when actually only providing suggestions for why something may not work—provides a “risk assessment” judgement with caution.

Asks: *What would prohibit this from succeeding?*

Yellow Hat

Seeks a positive, yet speculative, position through logic and constructive thinking. Searches for why something will work and reveals potential benefits of the action—provides a logical position with feasibility and benefits.

Asks: *Why is this a valuable idea?*

Green Hat

Thinks creatively about alternatives and actions. Provides provocative ideas and proposals—new ideas and creative thinking.

Asks: *What else is possible?*

Blue Hat

The conductor or manager of the thinking process exhibited by the other five types—controls the thinking process.

Asks: *What have we achieved and what's next?*