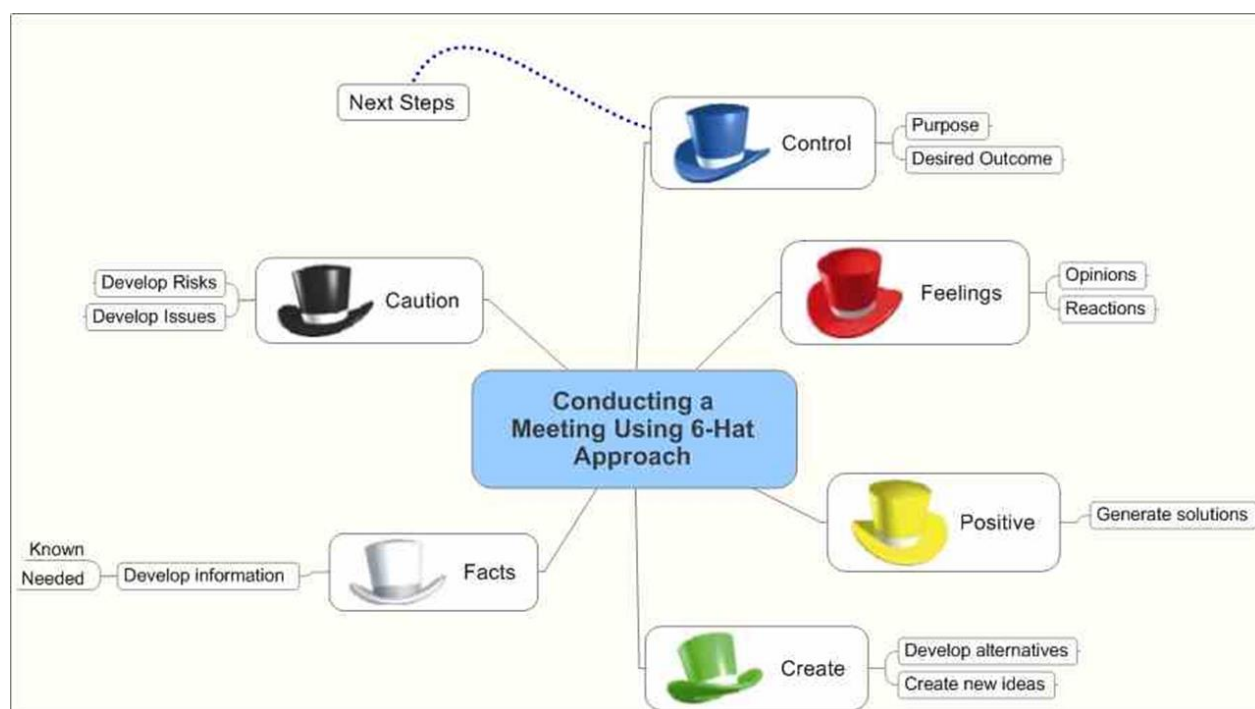


Parallel Thinking – De Bono’s Hats

Six Thinking Hats is a good technique for looking at the effects of a decision from a number of different points of view.

Six Thinking Hats is a simple, yet powerful tool created by Edward De Bono based on a principle of parallel thinking: everyone thinking in the same direction, from the same perspective, at the same time. It helps people step outside the confines of fixed positions and one way of thinking.

Western thinking style is based on adversarial debate: people thinking and interacting from differing perspectives and positions. This tool enables us to look at things in a collaborative way, beyond our normal perspective to see new opportunities. It allows necessary emotion and scepticism to be brought into what would otherwise be purely rational decisions. It opens up the opportunity for creativity within Decision Making. The technique also helps, for example, persistently pessimistic people to be positive and creative.



De Bono’s Hats: How to use them

A good way to explore with a group if an idea is likely to work.

Explain to the group that this is quick technique to explore and evaluate each idea:

- First, brain storm ideas – all ideas are welcome. Pick an idea to take through the hats.
- Write down the advantages (1 min)
- Then the concerns (1 min) before
- Spending 1 min on what further information is required.

- There is no discussion during each section; everyone shares advantages, concerns, etc at the same time.
- Once all this is captured, go round the group and ask them to say how they feel about the idea in one of two words, ie excited, apprehensive, fearful, enthusiastic, happy.
- Finally, based on the information collected and the feelings expressed, decide whether you will take the idea forward for testing (eg Plan, Do, Study, Act).
- If the decision is taken not to proceed with testing, repeat the cycle with another idea.

Rapid Fire Hats

Green - ideas generation (2 mins)
Yellow – what is good /advantages (1 min)
Black – negatives / concerns (1 min)
White – what more info do we need? (1 min)
Red – feelings (20 seconds)

Total time spent: 5 – 6 minutes