**WHAT IT IS**

Often solving problems is done through a process of adversarial thinking and argument. People try to persuade others of the merits of their own solution. Six Thinking Hats switches us from an “argument” style to the “mapmaking” style. Thinking becomes a two-stage process. The first stage is to make the map; the second is to choose a route on the map.

Six Thinking Hats, developed **by Edward de Bono,** is a simple, yet powerful technique used to review decisions from different perspectives. This helps us move away from habitual thinking styles and towards a more rounded view of a situation.

**THE PROCESS**

There are different imaginary or real hats that you or team members can put on or take off. 6 Thinking Hats can be used to provide a framework for meetings. Each hat represents a different style of thinking.

In a session using Six Thinking Hats the facilitator should:

* + Define the focus of the thinking
  + Plan the sequence and timing of each thinking
  + Ask for changes in the thinking if needed
  + Handle requests from the group for changes in the thinking
  + Capture periodic or final summaries of the thinking for later consideration

**KEY POINTS AND PRACTICAL TIPS**

* The technique allows emotion and scepticism to be brought in to what might be a purely rational decision
* Help you to avoid possible drawbacks before you have committed to a decision.
* Helps you to look at problems from different views.

**THE BENEFITS**

The main benefits of this technique are:

* Reduces the risk for members to speak
* Helps drive an understanding that there are diverse perspectives.
* Supports a switch to a different focus
* Consciously changes a perspective
* Drives more creative thinking
* Enhances communication
* Supports decision making



White Hat: Objective, neutral thinking in terms of facts, numbers and information. With this hat, you focus on the data available.

**Red Hat:** Signifies feelings, hunches, and intuition. When using this hat you can express emotions, gut reactions, and share fears, likes, dislikes, loves, and hates.

**Black Hat:** Relates to negativity and is used for critical judgement. Sometimes it is easy to overuse the black hat.

**Yellow Hat:** Symbolises brightness, and optimism. This hat helps you to think positively and to see all the benefits of the decision and the value in it.

**Green Hat:** Focuses on creativity, the possibilities, alternatives, and new ideas. It is an opportunity to express new concepts and new perceptions.

**Blue Hat:** Is used to manage the thinking process. The blue hat asks for summaries, conclusions, and decision.