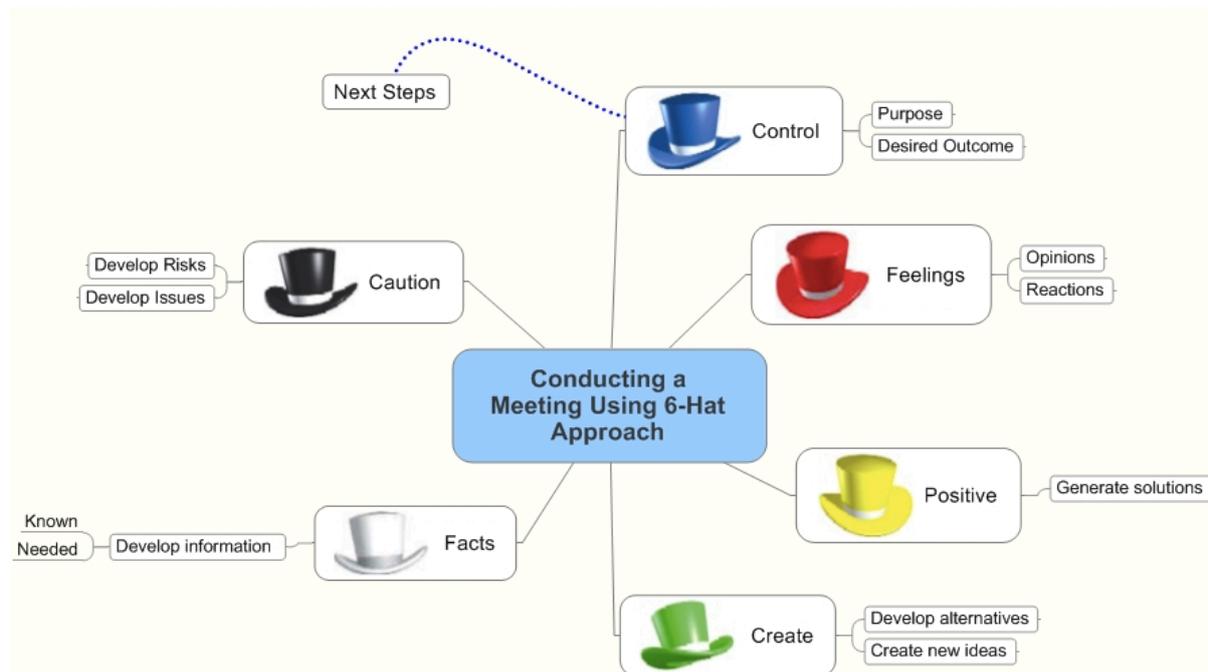


Quality Improvement

Edward De Bono – 6 Thinking Hats

Six Thinking Hats is a system designed by Edward de Bono which describes **a tool for group discussion and individual thinking** involving six colored hats. "Six Thinking Hats" and the associated idea parallel thinking provide a means for groups to plan thinking processes in a detailed and cohesive way, and in doing so to think together more effectively.



Because everyone is focused on a particular approach at any one time, the group tends to be more collaborative than if one person is reacting emotionally (Red hat) while another person is trying to be objective (White hat) and still another person is being critical of the points which emerge from the discussion (Black hat). The hats aid individuals in addressing problems from a variety of angles, and focus individuals on deficiencies in the way that they approach problem solving.

Even with good courtesy and clear shared objectives in any collaborative thinking activity there is a natural tendency for "spaghetti thinking" where one person is thinking about the benefits while another considers the facts and so on. The hats process avoids this. Everyone considers and all look in the same direction together. These can also be problems, or the benefits, or the facts, reducing distractions and supporting cross pollination of thought. This is achieved because everyone will put on one hat, e.g., the white hat, together, then they will all put on the next hat together. In this way all present think in the same way at the same time.

Rapid Fire Hats

The quick, interactive way to evaluate ideas with a group.

1. Brainstorm ideas. Don't allow the group to discuss the ideas just capture as many as you can.
2. Using a flip chart select the idea to be evaluated
3. Divide the flip chart into 4 boxes: Positives (Yellow), Negatives (Black), Information (White) and, Feelings (Red)
4. Lead the team through a rapid "brainstorm" of each of the areas. 1 min to 90 seconds on each hat. Generally, after a minute or so the main positives or risks have been identified.
 - **Yellow** – what is good /advantages (1 min)
 - **Black** – negatives / concerns (1 min)
 - **White** – what more info do we need? (1 min)
 - **Red** – feelings (1 mins)
 - **Blue** – decision – good idea/ bad idea/ next steps
5. Be strict with the group and ensure the group stays in the correct thinking hat!

IDEA:

 Yellow:	 Black:
 White:	 Red: