



“Complaining about the severity of the competition is really just a complaint about one's own lack of good ideas.” Walther Rathenau

Creativity Technique: The 6 Thinking Hats

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The 6 Thinking Hats

Component	Description
Creativity Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Good for complex questions/issues and when there is a variety of personalities involved in solving the problem▪ Good tool for evaluating and selecting from a pool of ideas
Helps reduce barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Participants/employees can try out a variety of roles and see things from multiple perspectives.▪ If there is a dominant person in the group or, for example, a mix of personalities, the 6 phases help the group to move on only when EVERYONE has had a chance to contribute.
Time	1 – 3 hours
Number of people	4 – 10 People
Material	Flipcharts and Cork Boards
Background	The creativity technique is from Edward de Bono and is based on 6 different thinking processes or roles which are found in a brainstorming process. These 6 roles are named after colors: white, yellow, red, green, black and blue. These roles are in turn represented symbolically by hats and allow people to look at ideas and issues from different perspectives. Each person in the group simultaneously wears the same color hat – allowing everyone to think and see things from the same perspective (thus keeping things on track).



The 6 Hats

The facilitator first introduces the task, issue or topic to the group. Then the six hats and the methodology is explained to the group. The colors have the following meaning:

White



The **White Hat** calls for information known or needed. "The facts, just the facts." White stand for neutral, analytical thinking. In this phase, participants collect numbers, data and facts. They avoid forming an opinion or evaluating or judging the data collected..

Green



The **Green Hat** stands for Innovation, Newness and Growth. In this phase participants produce new ideas and make creative suggestions. No criticism is allowed in this phase: ideas are only generated and collected.



The 6 Hats



Yellow

Yellow is the opposite phase of the black hat (which can follow). What we are looking for here is realistic optimism and why (some of) the ideas will work. Positive argumentation, objective chances and advantages are the main focus of the **Yellow Hat**.



Black

The **Black Hat** stand symbolically for the pessimistic critic. The critic focuses on objective, negative argumentation and focuses on why something will not work. In this phase participants examine risks and objections.



The 6 Hats



Red

The **Red Hat** stands for subjectives, emotional thinking. In this phase participants form a personal opinion and trust their gut feeling – be it positive or negative emotions about the ideas generated.



Blue

The **Blue Hat** stands for the big picture (blue like the sky) and helps create structure:

Where are we now in the thinking process?

Have we got all the fact we need to move on?

Are we satisfied with the ideas or do we need to go back and revisit a hat?

Can we choose an idea now and develop an action plan?

Etc



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