

## An Innovative Approach to Meetings when Decision Making is Critical A practical application for Edward De Bono's 6 Thinking Hats Methodology:



- ✓ Start with **BLUE HAT** thinking:  
**Organise** the session, state the desired outcome requirements, state what are the issues/problems.  
**Key question** *What are our aims?*
  
- ✓ Move to **WHITE HAT** thinking:  
To get to the **facts** of the situation, what is known, what needs to be discovered.  
**Key question** *What information do we have?*
  
- ✓ Now use **GREEN HAT** thinking:  
To create and develop **possible solutions**, using brainstorming, mind-mapping and other group problem-solving activities. **Key question** *What ideas have we got?*
  
- ✓ Apply **RED HAT** thinking:  
To select the most **viable** potential solution. **Key question** *What do we feel?*
  
- ✓ Move to **YELLOW HAT** thinking:  
It can now be used to consider the **benefits** of each potential solution.  
**Key question** *What are the benefits of this idea?*
  
- ✓ Now use **BLACK HAT** thinking:  
It can now be used to discuss the **negatives** and **risks** of each potential solution.  
**Key question** *What are the drawbacks?*
  
- Finally, apply **BLUE HAT** thinking:  
To make a **choice** from all of the potential solutions and **agree on the next steps** moving forward.  
**Key question** *What are our aims?*

Dr. Edward De Bono was the *father* of lateral/parallel/creative thinking and the author of the book ***Six Thinking Hats*** in 1985.

He described the associated ideas of parallel thinking with the use of six different coloured hats and, he suggested that it was simple methodology which would provide diverse groups with a practical means to plan thinking processes in a detailed and comprehensive way ... and in so doing, to think together more effectively.

He stressed that **thinking is the ultimate human resource** ... whereas we often become limited thinkers, preoccupied with proving ourselves right. A situation that is encouraged by the current adversarial nature of our thinking ... based on judgement and argument. The Court system is traditional thinking at its best!

I became an early adopter of the six thinking hats as a way to:

- ✓ Create an innovative decision making process that encouraged team members to challenge their usual thinking style
- ✓ Establish a framework for enhanced and innovative thinking
- ✓ Simplify complex thinking into six different directions for thinking
- ✓ Become a way of encouraging parallel thinking and cooperative problem solving
- ✓ Appreciate the value of thinking through six different perspectives.

I strongly **recommend** the use of Edward De Bono's ***6 Thinking Hats*** and suggest that you review the wealth of online information and videos on how to become proficient in its use.

In closing and as a fun example of argumentative thinking ... which viewpoint is correct?

*There once was a man who painted one side of his car white and the other side black.*

*His friend asked why he did such a strange thing.*

*He replied: "Because whenever I have an accident, it is so much fun to hear the witnesses contradict each other in court".*



With acknowledgement to Dr Edward De Bono  
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