

6 thinking hats

Six Thinking Hats, a creativity and problem-solving technique developed by Edward de Bono, can be a highly effective way to encourage diverse perspectives and innovative thinking within a group. Here are steps to facilitate such a workshop:

Preparation Phase:

1. Define Workshop Objectives:

Clearly outline the goals of the workshop. What specific challenges or issues will participants address using the Six Thinking Hats method? What outcomes do you hope to achieve?

2. Select Participants:

Identify individuals who should attend the workshop based on their relevance to the topic and their ability to contribute diverse perspectives.

3. Gather Materials:

Prepare materials, including Six Thinking Hats handouts, markers, a whiteboard or flip chart, and hats or coloured cards (optional) that represent each hat's colour.

4. Set a Date and Location:

Choose a convenient date and location for the workshop. Ensure that the space accommodates the number of participants and has the necessary audiovisual equipment if needed.

Facilitation Process:

1. Introduction:

Begin by explaining the purpose of the workshop and providing a brief overview of the Six Thinking Hats method. Mention that the hats represent different modes of thinking, each with its unique perspective.

2. Assign Roles or Hats:

Assign each participant a specific hat colour to wear or a role to play during discussions. The Six Thinking Hats are:

- White Hat (Factual)
- Red Hat (Emotional)
- Black Hat (Critical)
- Yellow Hat (Positive)
- Green Hat (Creative)
- Blue Hat (Meta-thinking/Facilitator)

3. Present the Issue or Challenge:

Present the problem, challenge, or topic that the group will be focusing on. Ensure that it's clear and well-defined. Gather different perspectives as follows:

- White Hat (Factual Thinking):

Begin with the White Hat. Ask the "White Hat(s)" and share factual information, data, and objective observations related to the topic.

- Red Hat (Emotional Thinking):

Move to the Red Hat(s). Encourage them express their feelings, intuitions, and gut reactions without needing to justify them. Emphasize that emotions are valid perspectives.

- Black Hat (Critical Thinking):

Transition to the Black Hat(s), a.k.a. devil's advocate. Identify potential risks, drawbacks, and obstacles related to the topic. Encourage critical analysis.

- Yellow Hat (Positive Thinking):

Now switch to the Yellow Hat(s). Focus on the positive aspects, benefits, and opportunities associated with the topic. Encourage optimism and creativity.

- Green Hat (Creative Thinking):

Move to the Green Hat(s). Invite them to think creatively and generate new ideas, alternatives, and solutions. Encourage "out-of-the-box" thinking and brainstorming.

- Blue Hat (Meta-thinking/Facilitation):

As the facilitator, your role is to put on the Blue Hat. Summarize the key points made under each hat, guide discussions, and manage the overall flow of the workshop.

4. Repeat as Needed:

Depending on the complexity of the topic, repeat the hat sequence or even change hats as necessary to thoroughly explore and analyse it.

5. Conclusion:

Wrap up the workshop by summarizing the insights gained and any action steps or decisions made. Thank participants for their contributions.

Follow-Up:

1. Documentation:

Document the outcomes and key insights from the workshop. Share this documentation with participants for their reference.

2. Implement Solutions:

If the workshop identified actionable solutions or strategies, work with the group to implement them.

3. Feedback and Evaluation:

Gather feedback from participants to assess the effectiveness of the solutions and identify areas for improvement.