

# Creative Problem Solving Strategies

*Built for Zero Learning Session - October 2019*



Let's Dive In

# Learning Objectives

1. Describe common stuck points” in this work
2. Describe Dr. Edward de Bono 6 thinking hat technique to generate/evaluate ideas/solve challenges
3. Practice applying the 6 thinking hat method to evaluate an improvement idea

# Changes: What changes can we make that will result in improvement?

Methods to develop fundamental change:

1. Refer to your Driver Diagram and change package
2. Benchmarking or learning from others - Bright Spots
3. Learn from those with lived experience
4. Logical thinking about the current system
  - Observation
  - Describe a process
5. Creative thinking
6. Using change concepts

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# Creative Problem Solving Strategies

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How did we get here?

# Case conferencing

The reasons not to...





“The resistant provider”

“The resistant provider”

Charlottesville  
Waynesboro

# Other boulders

- “These people/agencies don’t get along.”
- “They don’t want to be housed.”
- “Our list is too big, we can’t get through enough names in case conferencing.”
- “We all work for different agencies, so we can’t keep each other accountable.”
- “Our HMIS stinks.”
- “This client is too hard to work with.”
- “This agency isn’t housing first.”

# What if these were problems to solve, rather than features of our systems.

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# Creative Problem Solving Strategies

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Re-Thinking Creativity:  
The 6 Thinking Hats

# The 6 Thinking Hats



# Edward de Bono's 6 Thinking Hats







- Is an exercise that forces you to move outside your habitual thinking style, and helps you to get a more rounded view of a situation.
- It has the benefit of blocking the confrontations that happen when people with different thinking styles discuss the same problem.

# The Basics

- There are six different imaginary hats that you can put on or take off.
- Each hat is a different color and represents a different type or mode of thinking.
- We all wear the same hat (do the same type of thinking) at the same time.
- When we change hats - we change our thinking.
- Hats can be put on and taken off easily.
- But, you don't have to physically wear a hat!



# Characteristics of the 6 Hats

					
What is the current information on the issue or problem?	How does everyone feel about the current situation, issue or problem?	What are the positive aspects of the current situation, issue or problem?	What are the negative aspects of the current situation, issue or problem?	What are new creative ideas or alternatives in solving the issue or problem?	What conclusions or summaries can we make in moving forward on the issue or problem?

# Benefits of Six Thinking Hats Framework

- Saves time
- Improves exploration
- Fosters collaborative thinking
- Enhances creativity and innovation
- Prevents one-sided decisions
- Encourages well thought out assessments and decisions by mixing ambition, skill in execution, sensitivity, creativity and good contingency planning.



# Creative Problem Solving Strategies

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Let's Try It!

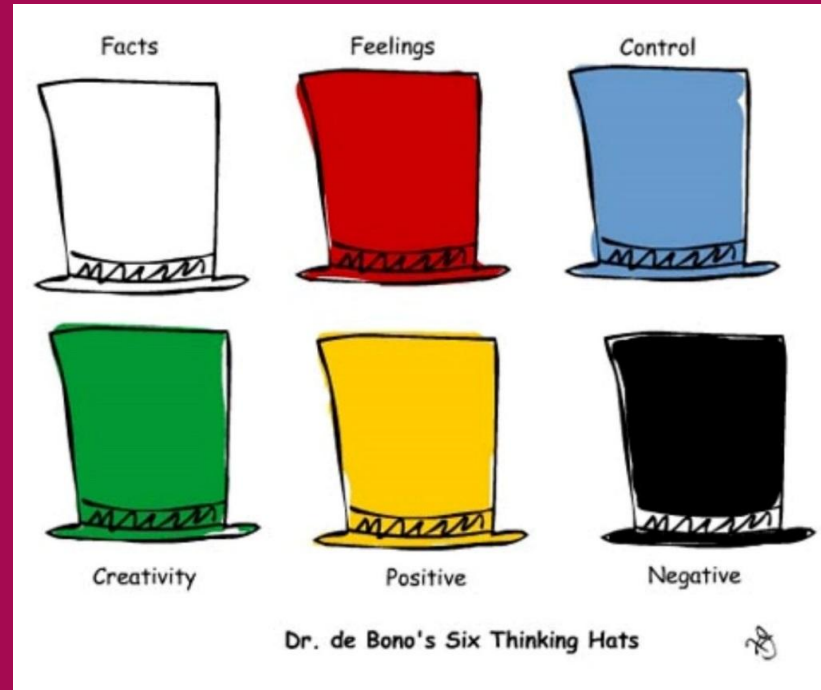


# Blue Hat Role = Process Control and Focus



- Wears blue hat only
- Manages thinking process
- Sets the focus and agenda
- Plans the sequence of hats
- Handles requests from the group
- Ensure the rules are followed
- Calls for a different hat
- Makes summaries and conclusions at end

Let's try them on... Pull out your Handout



# The Challenge: The Noisy Nightclub



The Provocation

Silence the night club.

## EXERCISE: Set Up

- Niñon will play blue hat role (focus & control the process)
- You will have 3 minutes to “wear” each hat.
- You will need to pick a table ([blue hat](#)) facilitator who will **record your ideas** and **help you stay on track**.
- We will call time for each hat, then you will switch to the next hat



## Table Facilitator Role (deputy blue hat)

- Keep the conversation on track
- Keep things going quickly (3 minute rounds)
- Record as many ideas as possible on your flip chart
- Summarize table experience and learnings (from all 5 hats)

**\*Table Facilitator will wear deputy blue hat throughout the exercise**

# Participant Role

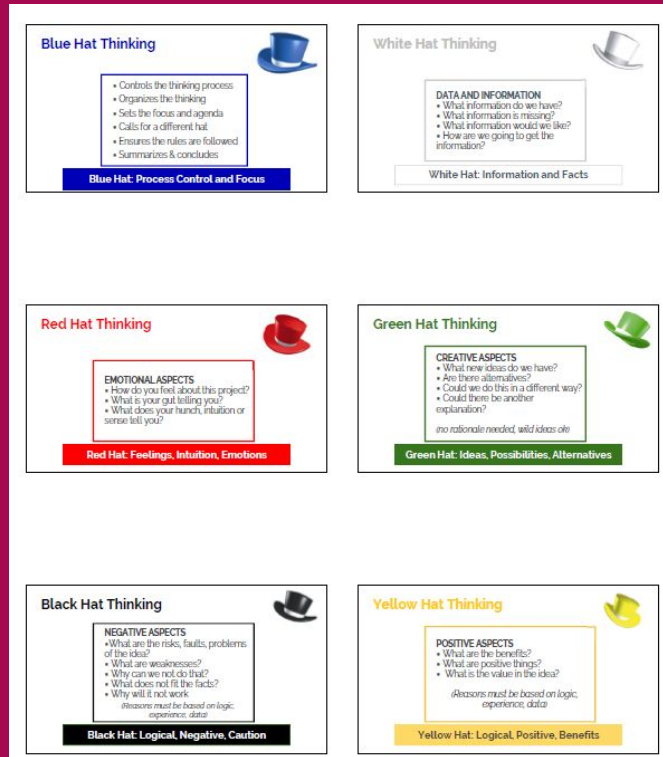
- Follows the lead of the table (blue hat) facilitator who keeps the round robin flow going and records ideas, but does not contribute ideas
- Help each other stick to the hat (thinking focus) in use
- At your turn call out your idea only, not your rationale, pass if nothing comes to mind
- No discussion of ideas, just rapid round robin
- Work within the short planned time limits (3 min)
- Move on to next hat when time is called

# Simple Rules

1. Think with the **same hat at same time**
2. Keep your thinking on the hat in use
3. Use short bursts of thinking (3 minute rounds)
4. No in-depth discussion, use rapid round robin
5. Extend the time if the thinking is flowing and on one color, do so explicitly and in small increments. (today we will use 3 minute rounds and not extend)
6. Use a focused and simple sequence of hats (I will do this for you today)
7. View thinking as a skill

Hat  
#2

Hat  
#4



Hat  
#1

Hat  
#3

Hat  
#5



# Blue Hat Thinking



- Controls the thinking process
- Organizes the thinking
- Sets the focus and agenda
- Calls for a different hat
- Ensures the rules are followed
- Summarizes & concludes

**Blue Hat: Process Control and Focus**

# White Hat Thinking



3 Mins

## **DATA AND INFORMATION**

- What information do we have?
- What information is missing?
- What information would we like?
- How are we going to get the information?

**White Hat: Information and Facts**

# Red Hat Thinking



## EMOTIONAL ASPECTS

- How do you feel about this project?
- What is your gut telling you?
- What does your hunch, intuition or sense tell you?

**Red Hat: Feelings, Intuition, Emotions**

# Green Hat Thinking



3 Mins

## CREATIVE ASPECTS

- What new ideas do we have?
- Are there alternatives?
- Could we do this in a different way?
- Could there be another explanation?

*(no rationale needed, wild ideas ok)*

**Green Hat: Ideas, Possibilities, Alternatives**



# Black Hat Thinking



## NEGATIVE ASPECTS

- What are the risks, faults, problems of the idea?
- What are weaknesses?
- Why can we not do that?
- What does not fit the facts?
- Why will it not work

*(Reasons must be based on logic, experience, data)*

**Black Hat: Logical, Negative, Caution**

# Yellow Hat Thinking



## **POSITIVE ASPECTS**

- What are the benefits?
- What are positive things?
- What is the value in the idea?

*(Reasons must be based on logic,  
experience, data)*

**Yellow Hat: Logical, Positive, Benefits**

# Creative Problem Solving Strategies

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Debrief

# What did you learn?

- ✓ What insights did you get from this exercise?
- ✓ What might be the benefits of using this method within your own organization?
- ✓ Where might you use it?

# Tips from the Trade

There are two main ways to use the Six Thinking Hats:

A. Just in Time Ad-hoc Single Hat

B. Defined Six Hat Sequence

- Any order that works for you, repetition ok
- Start and Stop with the Blue Hat
- Use Red Hat early if strong emotions exist
- Consider Yellow Hat before White or Black to get things going

# Why use Six Thinking Hats

- Many successful people think from a very rational, positive viewpoint. This is part of the reason that they are successful.
- Often, though, they may fail to look at a problem from an emotional, intuitive, creative or negative viewpoint.
- This can mean that they underestimate resistance to plans, fail to make creative leaps and do not make essential contingency plans.
- Similarly, pessimists may be excessively defensive, and more emotional people may fail to look at decisions calmly and rationally.

The Benefits: What others say...

# Why use Six Thinking Hats

- Explores change concepts and ideas more thoroughly
- Shortens meetings and increases participation
- Critique and strengthen ideas for change
- Facilitates agreement for change
- Supports constructive and creative thinking
- Enables best use of information and team
- Harness big egos



# Summary

De Bono Six Thinking Hats

**White hat**  
**Information & Data**  
Neutral & Objective  
Checked & Believed Facts  
Missing Information &  
Where To Source It

**Yellow Hat**  
**Why It May Work**  
Values & Benefits  
(Both Known & Potential)  
The Good In It  
Logical Reasons  
Must Be Given

**Blue Hat**  
**Managing The Thinking**  
Setting The Focus  
Making Summaries  
Overviews · Conclusions  
Action Plans

**Black Hat**  
**Why It May Not Work**  
Cautions · Dangers  
Problems · Faults  
Logical Reasons  
Must Be Given

**Red Hat**  
**Feelings & Intuition**  
Emotions Or Hunches  
"At This Point"  
No Reasons or Justification  
Keep It Short

**Green Hat**  
**Creative Thinking**  
Possibilities · Alternatives  
New Ideas · New Concepts  
Overcome Black Hat Problems &  
Reinforce Yellow Hat Values



**FOCUS**



# Creativity is a skill!

We challenge you to apply this skill in the next breakout, while you're problem solving with other communities.

Try to find opportunities to use each of the hats!

# Feedback

Session: “Breakout-Creative Problem-Solving Strategies”

Survey Link:

<http://bit.ly/bfzrapid>

