



Now try the yellow hat (positive aspects). Since today's changing world calls for clear and creative thinking, this process helps you improve that thinking. To eliminate some of the confusion in resolving a problem or making a decision, it is helpful to focus your thinking on one aspect at a time, separating emotion from logic, existing knowledge from new ideas, etc.



Change to the black hat (negative aspects). The idea may be interesting, but how do you apply it when you are dealing with people who don't know what you are talking about? Not everyone has the time or desire to take a course on the subject.



Put on your green hat (creativity). What if you don't have to invest a lot of time to grasp the Six Hats concept? Maybe it could be presented in less than a day, or as part of another planned gathering. Some people might prefer to borrow the easy-to-read book, **Six Thinking Hats**, by

One department's experience

Mark Weatherley, chief internal auditor, was looking for another way to solve problems and fire-up creative thinking when he and his staff are dealing with our different companies and cultures. After consulting Jim Bergeron of human resources training, Mark, the department's auditors and one administrative assistant followed a two-day course last year on the Six Thinking Hats process, with the second day devoted to creative thinking.

"When we are working at our various business units, part of our job calls for suggesting ways to improve their financial processes. By applying the Six Hats concepts, we can look at all elements of a problem and help others do so too, so that they can make a more informed decision. The process helps defuse people's natural tendency to at first react negatively to change," says Mark.

Here is what some others who followed the course say:

- **Mario Cavaliere** (auditor): The process makes you stand back and analyse a situation better. Without realizing it, you become more aware of the different positions you can take on an issue and you can guide others to look at the different sides.
- **Carole Adam** (administrative assistant): I found the course very interesting. It gives you a whole new way of looking at things. I could see myself using the process on major decisions.
- **Nancy Pereira** (former auditor, now financial and accounting manager for DIFCO): It is difficult to say that I am consciously using the process, but I certainly have to think clearly and creatively in my new job. I always try to look at things from different perspectives. I also like to make sure that staff meetings are well-organized and running on time. Perhaps, I am using my "blue hat" then.

If you are interested in learning more about the Six Thinking Hats, you are welcome to contact Mark Weatherley or any of the internal auditors for information.

Edward de Bono, from Business Information Services at the corporate office, or from their local library. You could even invite someone who is familiar with the process to act as a facilitator at a key meeting, to help it run more smoothly.

Obviously this is a very abbreviated run-down of the approach.

Think about it. It could improve your thinking.

Interested head office staff and human resources personnel from our business units can contact Mike Timmons, director, human resources planning and development, about participating in or organizing a course on the subject. ■