

# SIX THINKING HATS – PROMPT CARD SET

Designed for individual and team use

## WHITE HAT – FACTS & EVIDENCE

**Mindset:** Neutral, objective, analytical.

Focus on *what you know*, *what you don't know*, and *what you need to find out*.

**Guiding Questions:**

- What do we know for certain?
- What data, facts, or evidence supports this?
- What do we *not yet know* – and how could we find out?
- What assumptions are being presented as facts?

**Tip:**

In teams, agree to share only verified information first – no opinions.

Alone, make two lists: “Knowns” and “Unknowns.” This immediately clarifies your next action.



## RED HAT – FEELINGS & INTUITION

**Mindset:** Emotional, instinctive, honest.

Focus on *how you feel* and *your gut sense* without needing to justify it.

**Guiding Questions:**

- What's my immediate reaction or intuition about this?
- How does this situation make me feel – excited, anxious, confident, uneasy?
- How might others be feeling about it?
- What emotions or instincts might be influencing our judgement?

**Tip:**

**Say what you feel** – not what you *think* you should feel.

**In groups**, take turns giving a short, honest gut reaction (no debate).

## BLACK HAT – RISKS & CAUTION

**Mindset:** Critical, careful, practical.

Focus on *risks*, *weaknesses*, and *what could go wrong*.

**Guiding Questions:**

- What are the potential downsides or unintended consequences?
- What assumptions might be wrong?
- Where might this plan fail – and why?
- What evidence contradicts our optimism?

**Tip:**

**Avoid negativity for its own sake** – aim for *constructive caution*.

**In teams**, this hat keeps ideas realistic; alone, use it to pressure-test optimism.



## YELLOW HAT – OPTIMISM & OPPORTUNITY

**Mindset:** Positive, hopeful, constructive.

Focus on *benefits, possibilities, and potential value*.

### Guiding Questions:

- What's good about this idea?
- What opportunities might this create?
- What strengths or resources could we leverage?
- What could success look like if this worked?

### Tip:

**Balance your Black Hat thinking with the Yellow Hat.**

**In groups**, this hat boosts morale and widens creative energy.

## GREEN HAT – CREATIVITY & ALTERNATIVES

**Mindset:** Playful, imaginative, experimental.

Focus on *new ideas, options, and possibilities* – without judging them.

### Guiding Questions:

- What other ideas might work?
- How could we approach this differently?
- What would we try if there were no limits or rules?
- What's the wildest, most unexpected idea here?

### Tip:

**Suspend judgement** – quantity matters more than quality at first.

**In teams**, use “Yes, and...” to build on others’ ideas instead of shutting them down.

**Links directly to Chapter 6:** *Be (More) Imaginative, Be a Creative.*



## BLUE HAT – Process & Overview

**Mindset:** Organised, reflective, structured.

Focus on *managing the thinking process itself*.

### Guiding Questions:

- What's our goal or key question?
- Which hats should we use next, and in what order?
- What insights have we gathered so far?
- What decisions or next steps will we take?

### Tip:

- Always start and finish with the Blue Hat to keep discussions focused.
- As a facilitator, use this hat to time-manage and summarise insights.

## HOW TO USE THE CARDS

### In Person:

- Print each card in its colour (A6/A5 size).
- Lay them out on a table or pin to a wall.
- Assign one hat per person, or rotate every few minutes.
- Use coloured sticky notes or props (e.g. coloured hats, cards, or post-its).

### Online / Virtual:

- Upload each card to a shared workspace (Miro, Mural, Jamboard).
- Create six coloured sections and invite participants to add ideas to the relevant hat.
- Use the Blue Hat to set objectives and keep time.

### Facilitator's Tip:

- Keep the session playful — energy drives creativity.
- Remind everyone: *No single hat is better than another.*
- Rotate hats often to ensure every perspective is heard.
- Pair this exercise with the **Problem Statement** or **Assumption Testing** guide for deeper, structured discussion.



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## REMEMBER:

*Critical thinking opens your eyes; creative thinking opens new doors.*

*The Six Thinking Hats method gives you both — clarity, structure, and permission to think differently.*

