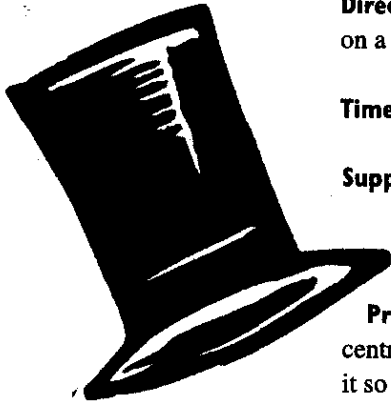


Six Hats



Directions to the facilitator: This activity is especially helpful to groups that want to reflect on a future event or proposed change.

Time: 50 minutes.

Supplies: To dramatize the different role that each person has in this activity, consider buying inexpensive plastic hats in six different colors or creating simple home-made hats from colored construction paper.

Preparation: The facilitator should ensure that participants in this process understand the central question, preferably by writing the question on a large sheet of poster paper and posting it so that it is visible to all participants. Select a recorder who will take notes of ideas that are recommended by the various "hats."

Directions

Adults do not

learn from

experience, they

learn from

processing

experience.

— *Judi Arin-Krupp*

1. Assign one color hat to six different individuals or sub-groups of the larger group. If the group is large enough that sub-groups are necessary, each sub-group should work independently and select one person to report their findings to the larger group. *Time: 5 minutes.*
2. Each color hat will focus on looking at the question through the lens of their particular hat. *Time: 10 minutes.*
 - **WHITE HAT = DATA.** What does research say? How effective has this activity been in and under what specific circumstances? How much would it cost to implement?
 - **YELLOW HAT = SUNSHINE.** What are the positive aspects of this idea? What good will come out of it? Who will benefit as a result of this?
 - **BLACK HAT = CAUTION.** What are the downsides to this idea? Who will be hurt as a result of implementing this?
 - **RED HAT = EMOTION.** How will people react to this idea? Who will be upset by this?
 - **GREEN HAT = GROWTH.** What will we learn as a result of this? What are some of the new ways of thinking that we might learn? How will we change and grow as a staff as a result of this?
 - **BLUE HAT = PROCESS.** What information will the staff, the board, and the community need in order to understand this? Who could put the process together? How will we introduce this idea to the staff and other stakeholders?
3. After each individual or group has had time to reflect upon the questions, each "hat" should report their findings to the entire group. The recorder should make notes of the findings. *Time: 30 minutes.*

Adapted from Reflective practice to improve schools by Jennifer York-Barr, William Sommers, Gail S. Ghere, and Jo Montie (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin Press, 2001). See Page 7 for ordering information. Note: This idea was originally proposed in Lateral Thinking by Edward deBono (New York: Harper & Row, 1970).