**Creative Thinking “Cheat Sheet” from** *Serious Creativity*
Edward DeBono

**Six Thinking Hats (Structured Brainstorming Strategy)**

Only allow one kind of thinking at any time to avoid excessive thinking of any kind. Facilitator may be chosen to exercise blue hat.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>collecting information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>logical positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>intuition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>generating new ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>caution and logical negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>control of thinking process itself</td>
</tr>
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**Lateral Thinking Techniques (Creativity Tactics)**

**Creative Pause.** Pause the current train of thought when you have been thinking on the same path for a while.

**Focus.** Focus on an interesting point, rather than quickly moving on.

**Creative Challenge.** Challenge established assumptions. “Why is it done this way?”

**Alternative.** Move from one idea or concept to a similar one; use when want more ideas like a current idea.

**Concept Fan/Pull-back.** Create alternatives by finding concept behind idea and generating list of ideas from concept, etc. “Fan” of concepts is generated from multiple pull-backs and idea/concept lists from initial idea.

**Provocation.** Cause a radical departure from current thinking. Types of provocation include:

- Escape/negation of things that are taken for granted. “*Building software is free.*”
- Reversal (reversal of relationships; like escape, but narrower). “*Servers call clients.*”
- Exaggeration (values become very large or small, etc.). “*Programs are a single line of code.*”
- Distortion of normal relationships (as in time order). “*The program is written before the requirements*”
- Wishful thinking (positive version of escape). “*Wouldn’t it be nice if programs wrote programs.*”

**Movement.** Move from a provocation to other ideas. Types of movement include:

- Expose the principle.
- Expose the difference between provocation and starting point.
- Moment-to-moment: Follow through with the consequences by simulation.
- Look for the positives.
- Look for the circumstances in which the provocation is useful.

**Random Input.** Juxtapose a problem noun with a random noun; useful when stuck. Try to relate random word to problem. “*Enhancement po oil.*”

**Stratals.** List five unconnected statements in problem area to sensitize to problem.

**Filaments.** List five general features or requirements of problem domain. For each, list specific characteristics or solutions. Randomly pick one solution from each item to generate a provocation.

**Mining of Ideas.** To use an idea in a creative way you can: shape it, tailor it, strengthen its strengths, reinforce its weaknesses, compare it with other ideas, find its faults and defects, examine its consequences, determine how it can be tested, evaluate it.

**Output.** Retrieve the focus, dominant concept, dominant idea, and value from the discussion.

**Harvest.** Specific ideas, for-instance ideas, seedling ideas, direct concepts, pull-back concepts, directions, needs, new focuses, changes of thinking, flavor.