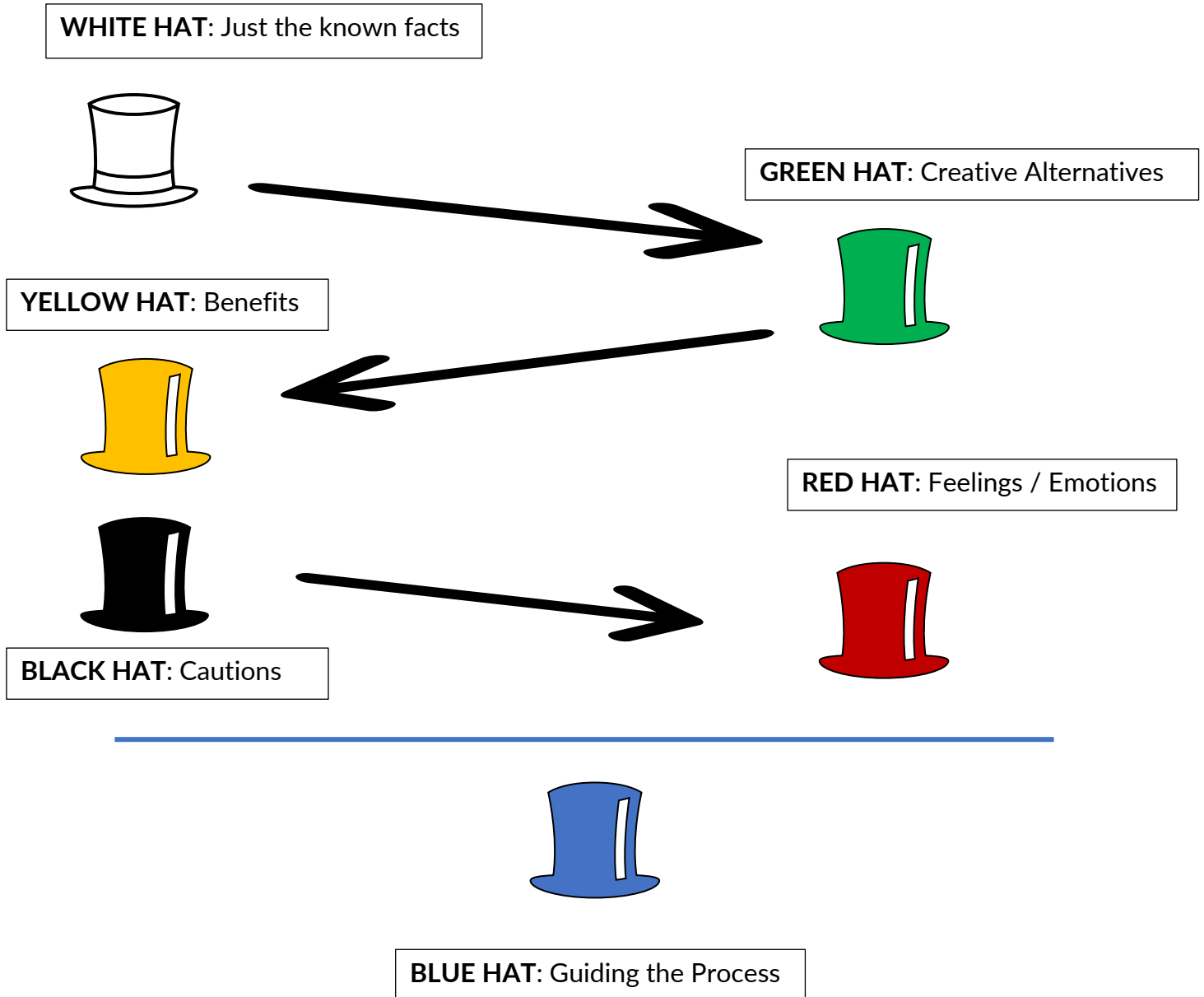




The Six-Hats Decision Making Model



de Bono, Edward. (1999). *Six Thinking Hats*. Little, Brown and Company. Boston, MA.



Using the Model

This model is highly effective in evaluating alternative decisions; as when used properly it ensures you step through the key aspects of decision-making. Too often we skip certain steps that may be uncomfortable for us.

1. **The White Hat – the facts:** You begin with the known facts. Please understand that these are what are known to be true – this is not the place for opinions, theories, etc. People who have a concrete thinking style tend to do best in this area.
2. **The Green Hat – creative alternatives:** This is where you discuss possible alternatives for the decision. A key point - this is not where you critique a decision (that comes later), but it is a free-flowing approach to developing ideas. People who are highly intuitive in their thinking style tend to do well in this area.
3. **The Yellow Hat – benefits:** This is the place where you discuss ONLY the benefits (positives) of each alternative. It will be difficult to avoid the negatives, but you must do so – focus on the benefits of each alternative.
4. **The Black Hat - cautions:** Now is the time to discuss ONLY cautions and concerns about each of the alternatives. What are the possible negatives to each approach?
5. **The Red Hat – emotions:** Every decision we make comes laden with emotional impact. This area is where you consider the emotional impact on the people affected by each alternative and weigh that into your decision-making process. While it may be the last consideration – it is an important one.
6. **The Blue Hat – the process:** This is a person who has been designated “the Blue Hat” and their role is to keep the group on process. For instance, if you are at the Green Hat stage discussing alternatives and someone wants to jump to the Black Hat stage and start discussing concerns, the “Blue Hat” will remind the group of the stage and ask to hold the concerns until the group moves to that stage.