

Enhanced Teamwork and Collaboration

Using Six Thinking Hats™ at Boeing to put differences aside and focus on resolving the real issues



Motivated by a strong desire to reach a positive outcome, a Boeing committee of union and management representatives recently turned to Six Thinking Hats™. Using the methodology, the committee was able to break down the traditional barriers that exist between management and unions to reach a win-win solution.

They had been wrestling with the issue of placing physically-restricted employees returning to work after disability leave into "light-duty jobs". Not only was entitlement to these jobs strictly governed by union guidelines, the number of light-duty jobs in the plant was shrinking. Through a number of brainstorming sessions, the committee was able to generate a list of 24 possible solutions, but they didn't know how to proceed. President Steve Fisher of Boeing encouraged them to analyze the list using Six Thinking Hats™.

Using Six Hats™, committee members were able to move away from their partisan stances and collectively focus on resolving the issue in a collaborative, results-focused manner.

Through these new-found synergies, not only did they devise a number of solutions, they were able to achieve an accommodation from the union which enabled them to effectively implement these solutions.

Senior Manager of Compensation & Benefits, Christene Elias commented, "Using this method it took everything threatening off the table and enabled us to work towards a solution in a compassionate, collaborative way. It represented a significant move away from the traditional stance and as a committee, we reached consensus. Six Hats™ helped us put our personal agendas aside and work collaboratively toward a solution in which everyone felt good about the outcome."

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