

# THE CUTTING EDGE

## REGION IX NEWSLETTER



SUMMER NEWSLETTER ~ AUGUST 2008

### Greetings from the Region IX Director Heather Nymeyer

The first NSH Region IX Education Event held in the Maritimes can only be classified as a success with approximately 45 attendees and 13 vendors. This event was showcased by the beautiful scenery surrounding Moncton and a convention center that met all the needs for a successful event.

The list of topics included the "Use of Microwaves in Histotechnology"; the "Use of Immunohistochemistry to Expedite Cancer Drug Discovery"; "Decalcified and Undecalcified Bone – Histology Techniques"; "Thyroid Neoplasms" and "Quality Assurance in Histology Labs". I would like to extend my appreciation to the vendors that attended this meeting and to those that provided sponsorship for speakers, breaks and door prizes. Congratulations and thanks to the Education Committee for all their hard work

The 34<sup>th</sup> Annual NSH Symposium and Convention will be held this year in Pittsburgh, PA and remember to register early to avoid disappointment; many of the workshops fill up quickly and you don't want to be disappointed. If you are attending, think about becoming an ambassador during the meeting. The NSH office works extremely hard to ensure all ambassadors are well prepared and are there to support you all the way. The time you take to help during the NSH is rewarded by a small honorarium and lots of experience. Also, don't forget to attend the Region IX meeting and this will be held on the Saturday immediately after that day's workshops. It will be at this meeting the Region IX awards will be presented and any changes to the Region IX bylaws will be voted on.

The Region IX bylaws are posted on our website at ([www.nshregionix.org](http://www.nshregionix.org)) and according to the Region IX bylaws, any proposed changes must be circulated to the membership within 30 days of the S/C. If you would like to submit a change to our bylaws, please send them to me at [heather@nshregionix.org](mailto:heather@nshregionix.org) before the end of July.

We are encouraging all Region IX membership to sign just one new member this year and help promote the benefits of being a member. I would encourage all Histotechnologists to encourage your pathologists to also become members.

Have a great summer and I look forward to seeing everyone in Pittsburgh.

### 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium/Convention

Pittsburgh, PA  
Sept 12 – 18, 2008

### Connecting Great Ideas and Great People



Session & Scientific Exhibits  
David L. Lawrence Convention Center  
1000 Fort Duquesne Blvd

It is not too late to register and be  
part of this great experience.

Check [www.nsh.org](http://www.nsh.org) for complete  
symposium information

See you in Pittsburgh

~

## Education Update

Well, another Education Day has come and gone. The recent event in Moncton was a great success based on all of the feedback I received from attendees and vendors. The attendance was less than in previous years, but then the Maritimes are smaller population wise so I think the attendance was terrific-more than was expected. The talks were all very interesting and well received-a big thanks to all of the speakers for coming to speak to us. I would also like to thank all of the vendors who participated again this year-without their support these events would not be possible. Special thanks to Garry Davis of Davis Diagnostics for supplying the bags for all of the attendees. As well, the people at the Convention Centre were fantastic and made things very easy for us. It was as little strange however having an indoor carnival, with a roller coaster, right outside the doors.

Planning has already begun on our next Education Day to be held in Toronto in the spring of 2009. While in Toronto in May I got together with Michele Shackleton and June Shin to check out a potential location. Planning this one will be tricky because of the potentially large number of attendees. We are trying to decide whether to expand it to a full two days, or run concurrent sessions in order to accommodate everyone. Finding someplace large enough to hold it while keeping costs down is also tricky. Once we have things more finalized I will be sending out more information. If anyone is interested in helping out please let me know.

As Heather mentioned in her Greetings on the first page, the annual S/C is coming up quickly. The S/C is a great experience for all-it is a chance to hear terrific speakers on a wide range of histology related topics including some new cutting edge information (pardon the pun). It is also a chance for you to meet with the wide range of vendors that are present at the S/C. This is a great place to check out all of the equipment and supplies and see what the 'latest and greatest' items are. It is 'the place' to check things out as everything is in one place so comparison shopping is at its best. The S/C is also a chance for some great networking-you have people from all over the world all in one place willing to share their vast amount of knowledge. If you have never been to one you don't know what you are missing-just ask anyone who has been to one in the past. It is not too late to register-you can contact the NSH head office and I am sure they will be willing to tell you what workshops are still available. Some of the workshops fill up quite quickly.

I hope everyone enjoys what is left of the summer and hope to see many of you in Pittsburgh. If not, then start making plans to attend the next Region IX Education Day in Toronto. Watch this space for more details as they become available.

**Mark Elliott** [mark@nshregionix.org](mailto:mark@nshregionix.org)

Region IX Education Committee, Chair

## NSH Teleconference Schedule

[www.nsh.org](http://www.nsh.org)

- **Bacterial Staining Methods**  
Date: August 27, 2008  
Time: 1:00pm EST  
Presented by Denise Long Woodward,  
Providence, RI
- **Carbohydrate Stains**  
Date: Oct 22, 2008  
Presented by Cardad Cutierrez  
Miami Dade College, Miami FLI
- **Use of Radiofrequency Energy in Surgery and its effects on staining.**  
Date: Nov 19, 2008  
Presented by Janet Maass,  
Covidien, Boulder, CO
- **Special Stains for the Kidney Biopsy**  
Date: Dec 17, 2008  
Presented by Maryam A. Farinola, MD  
William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, MI

**Watch the NSH website for the 2009 teleconferences schedule.**

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## Future Dates NSH S/C Dates

**34th Annual Symposium/Convention**  
September 12-18, 2008 in Pittsburgh, PA

**35th Annual Symposium/Convention**  
October 3-8, 2009 in Birmingham, AL

**36th Annual Symposium/Convention**  
2010 ~ Seattle, WA

**37th Annual Symposium/Convention**  
2011 ~ Cincinnati, OH

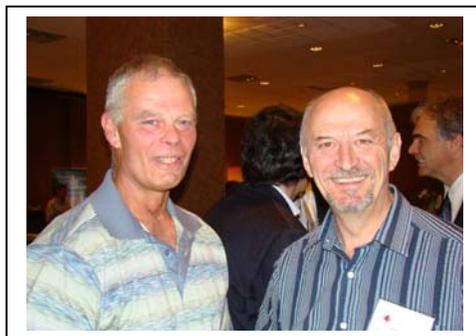
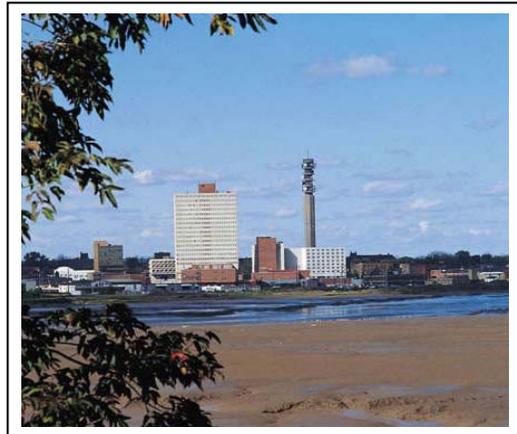
**38th Annual Symposium/Convention**  
2012 ~ Vancouver, BC Canada

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## NSH Region IX Education Day June 6 & 7 2008, Moncton, NB



### Great Door Prizes



13 vendors



## Region IX's 2008 Education Session List of Participating Vendors

ACP Chemicals, Inc

ChapteC Inc

Dako Canada Inc

Davis Diagnostics Ltd

ESBE Scientific Industries

Fisher Scientific

Inter Medico

Leica Microsystems, Biosystems Division

Mercedes Medical

Somagen Diagnostics Inc

Surgipath Canada

Triangle Biomedical Sciences

Vector Laboratories

Ventana Medical Systems, Inc



The Region IX  
Education Committee would like to extend a  
Special Thanks to the following vendors for  
sponsoring the breaks

Wine & Cheese – Region IX and Leica Microsystems,  
Biosystems Division

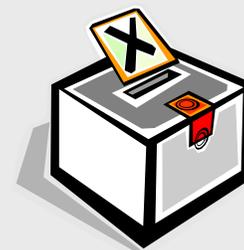
Breakfast - Dako Canada Inc

Coffee Breaks – Ventana Medical Systems

Lunch - Somagen Diagnostics Inc

## Your 2008 HOD Delegates

Ann Lynde  
Mark Elliott  
Charles Ho  
Rich Loewen  
David Hilchie  
Heather Nymeyer



## 2008 Election Ballots

If you did not receive your 2008 Ballot or if you did not receive this ballot in time to have it returned to the NSH office before the required deadline, the NSH Nominations and Election Committee wants to hear from you. Please contact Cindy Higginson (NSH Nominations and Election Chair) at [chigginson@yahoo.com](mailto:chigginson@yahoo.com)

## 2009 NSH Region IX

Education Session

Toronto, Ontario

Dates to be announced

## Dear Region IX members,

It was a pleasure to participate in the Region IX Education day, at the Ramada Plaza Crystal Palace Hotel in Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada on June 6-7, 2008.

Thanks to Mark Elliott, Education Chair, and to Heather Nymeyer, Director Region IX, for all their hard work to make this a successful meeting.

There were thirteen exhibitors, and the program ranged from the "Use of Microwaves in the Histology Laboratory"—Donna Willis to "Quality Assurance"—Avi Ostry MD. The program provided something for all attendees.

Your warm hospitality was appreciated. It is wonderful to meet such a strong group of dedicated professionals committed to promoting our profession. Having the opportunity to advance the Hard Tissue Committee and to give a talk on *Decalcified and Undecalcified Bone: Histology Techniques*, was a nice opportunity to promote my specialty of musculoskeletal research in a veterinary school setting, and to share materials, provides opportunities for education, new contacts and friends, as well as a professional challenge. **Thank you.**



I hope to extend the same hospitality when you are in Wisconsin – professionally or visiting.

Sincerely,

Vicki Kalscheur  
School of Veterinary Medicine  
Madison, WI



Wisconsin  
The Badger State

NSH Region IX would like to thank Surgipath Canada for their continued sponsorship of **The Cutting Edge Newsletter**.



## NSH S/C Special Events

- **First Time Attendee Welcome Reception**  
Friday, September 12, 2008  
6:45 – 8:00 pm
- **Continental Breakfast**  
Offered each morning Sept 13 - Sept 17<sup>th</sup>  
7:00 - 8:00 am
- **National Society For Histotechnology Annual Awards Banquet**  
Sunday, Sept 14, 2009  
7 :00 pm to Midnight
- **NSH Resouce Group Meetintg**  
Monday, Sept 15, 2008. See Schedule for Times & Dates Committee meetings are open to all convention attendees. We invite you to become involved in the operation of the society and attend the meeting of your choice
- **Poster Sessions**  
Posters will be viewed Sunday through Tuesday (Oct 28-30)  
Colourado Convention Center Hall
- **Annual T-Shirt Contest**  
Tuesday, Sept 16, 2008  
11:45 am  
Exhibit Hall
- **Committee Meetings**  
Tuesday, Sept 16, 2008  
6:00 – 7:00 pm  
See Schedule for room
- **Guess the Member Count**  
Drawing Tuesday, Sept 16, 2008
- **House of Delgates**  
Wednesday, Sept 17, 2008

*Please join Somagen Diagnostics  
for an evening of dinner and socializing  
with Canadian colleagues and friends at  
Six Penn Kitchen for a time-honored NSH tradition*

**SIX PENN  
KITCHEN**

**Monday September 15, 2008**  
6:00 PM

Six Penn Kitchen  
146 Sixth Street  
Pittsburgh, PA

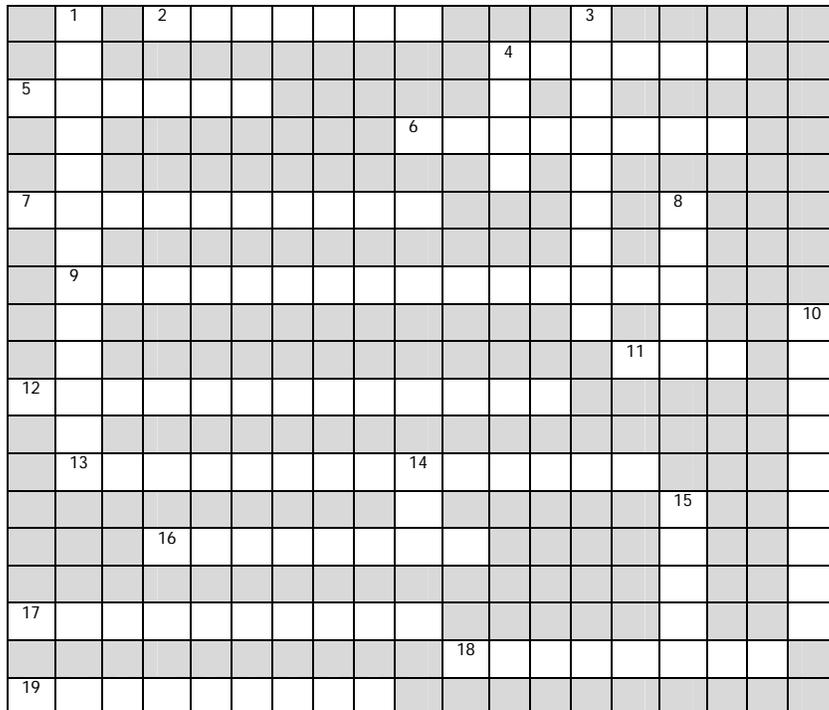
Please RSVP by September 1st  
nsh.dinner@somagen.com

*“They’re breaking new ground at Six Penn Kitchen. And all of it has to be carted in and hauled up to the roof for Downtown Pittsburgh’s first ever restaurant roof garden. Executive Chef Chris Jackson has a bee in his toque (red ballcap) about growing his own vegetables and herbs. When he saw that his building has a rubbery roof with drains, water and electric connections, the idea was, you might say, firmly planted. Besides that, the most open and available part of that roof is bathed in sun throughout the mornings into early afternoons, ideal for growing.”*

*Sponsored by Somagen Diagnostics—proud supporters  
of the National Society for Histotechnology*

  
S O M A G E N

## Histology Crossword Puzzle



**THE CUTTING EDGE** is the official newsletter of Region IX of the National Society for Histotechnology. It is distributed quarterly to 350 members in Canada.



### The Objectives of THE CUTTING EDGE are to:

- Reflect both Canadian and North American articles pertinent to the practice of Histotechnology
- Publish articles that are beneficial to our discipline.
- Promote communication between Region IX members and members of the other NSH Regions
- Provide a medium for exchange of information among members.

*Contributions are welcome.*  
Please send your articles to:

**Heather Nymeyer, RT, CEBT**  
[heather@nshregionix.org](mailto:heather@nshregionix.org)  
Royal Inland Hospital  
311 Columbia St.  
Kamloops, BC V2C 3B9  
Tel: 250-314-2664  
Fax: 250-314-2350

**W. Mark Elliott Ph.D.**  
[mark@nshregionix.org](mailto:mark@nshregionix.org)  
St. Paul's Hospital  
1081 Burrard St. Rm.166  
Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 1Y6  
Tel: 604.806.8346  
Fax: 604.806.9274

*Production of The Cutting Edge is sponsored by Surgipath Canada Inc.*

[www.nshregionix.org](http://www.nshregionix.org)

### ACROSS

- cell division
- high or low profiles
- 1 micrometer
- where M=? in the formula for weight
- produced by B lymphocytes
- antibodies
- brain and spinal cord
- final product produced is not a dye
- $((CH_2)_3 CHO.CHO)$
- a type of muscle
- Yellow WHMIS symbol
- 3- 8 degrees
- spindle formation in cell division

### DOWN

- haematein (2words)
- phagocytic cells within the CNS
- 1000 gms (slang)
- RI = 1.53 to 1.54
- "self destruction"
- chromosomes
- founder of the SI system

Answers on page 8

**Newsletter Submissions**  
If you would like to publish an article, create a puzzle or announce a meeting event send your submissions to Heather or Mark.



[www.nsh.org](http://www.nsh.org)

**NSH**

### MISSION STATEMENT

*The National Society for Histotechnology is a non-profit organization, committed to the advancement of Histotechnology, its practitioners and quality standards of practice through leadership, education and advocacy.*

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## Region IX Bylaws Article VIII Amendments

The bylaws may be amended at the annual business meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present or voting by absentee ballot, providing the proposed amendments have been submitted to executive, and subsequently mailed to members at least two weeks prior to annual meeting.

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### Histology Crossword Solution

	Q		M	I	T	O	S	I	S				M						
	U												K	N	I	V	E	S	
M	I	C	R	O	N							I		C					
	N									M	O	L	A	R	I	T	Y		
	O									O		O							
A	N	T	I	B	O	D	I	E	S				G		R				
	O												L		E				
	I	M	M	U	N	O	G	L	O	B	U	L	I	N	S				
	D												A		I				A
	R													C	N	S			U
H	I	S	T	O	C	H	E	M	I	C	A	L							T
	N																		O
	G	L	U	T	A	R	A	L	D	E	H	Y	D	E					L
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															R				I
R	E	A	C	T	I	V	I	T	Y					O					S
										C	L	E	A	R	A	N	C	E	
C	E	N	T	R	I	O	L	E											

### Region IX Executive Committee

**Heather Nymeyer**  
[Heather@nshregionix.org](mailto:Heather@nshregionix.org)  
Director

**Rose Clarke**  
[Rose@nshregionix.org](mailto:Rose@nshregionix.org)  
Past Region IX Director

**Michele Shackleton**  
[Michele@nshregionix.org](mailto:Michele@nshregionix.org)  
Treasurer

**Ann Lynde**  
[ann@nshregionix.org](mailto:ann@nshregionix.org)  
Secretary

**Michael Ho**  
[Michael@nshregionix.org](mailto:Michael@nshregionix.org)  
Member at Large

#### Sub Committees

**Rose Clarke**  
[Rose@nshregionix.org](mailto:Rose@nshregionix.org)  
Awards Committee, Chair

**Teresa Estioko-Timuri**  
[Teresa@nshregionix.org](mailto:Teresa@nshregionix.org)  
Award Committee, Co-Chair

**Mark Elliott**  
[mark@nshregionix.org](mailto:mark@nshregionix.org)  
Education Committee, Chair

**Tom Wells**  
[tom@nshregionix.org](mailto:tom@nshregionix.org)  
Membership, Chair

**Region IX Committee Members  
Serving on Other NSH Committees**

**Janet Tunncliffe**  
[janet@nshregionix.org](mailto:janet@nshregionix.org)  
NSH Vice President

**Nominations and Elections, Chair**  
**Kevin Gibbon**  
[Kevin@nshregionix.org](mailto:Kevin@nshregionix.org)

**Bylaws Committee**  
**Mark Elliott**  
[mark@nshregionix.org](mailto:mark@nshregionix.org)

**Region IX Website:**  
[www.nshregionix.org](http://www.nshregionix.org)



# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

## 2007-2008 Membership Year

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR HISTOTECHNOLOGY  
4201 Northview Drive Suite 502 Bowie Maryland 20716  
301.262.6221 FAX: 301.262.9188 WEB: [www.nsh.org](http://www.nsh.org)

Source: OnlinePDF

### TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP:

RENEWAL \_\_\_\_\_  NEW MEMBER : \_\_\_\_\_ PROFESSIONAL \_\_\_\_\_ STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_ RETIRED \_\_\_\_\_ INTERNATIONAL \_\_\_\_\_

Program Director/Supervisor Name*(required for Student Status Only)*: \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ WORK ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ COMPANY: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ DEPARTMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

PROVINCE/STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP/POSTAL CODE: \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTRY: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ PROVINCE/STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP/POSTAL CODE: \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTRY: \_\_\_\_\_

PERSONAL EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

WORK EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL PREFERENCE**  
**Please Note:** All NSH Correspondance will be sent to this address. In addition this address is published in our online membership directory.  
 HOME ADDRESS  WORK ADDRESS

Referred by NSH Member: \_\_\_\_\_

State Histology License Number (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

### MEMBER DEMOGRAPHICS:

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Gender:  Female  Male

Year entered Profession: \_\_\_\_\_ I am a Manager/Supervisor:  Yes  No

#### CHECK ALL APPLICABLE BOXES:

HT (ASCP)  HTL (ASCP)  MT (ASCP)  CT (ASCP)  SLS (ASCP)  QIHC (ASCP)  
 RT (CSMLS)  ART (CSMLS)  MLT (CSMLS)  NOT CERTIFIED  OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

#### HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION:

AA  BA/BS  MA/MS  PHD  MD  DVM  OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

#### I PRACTICE HISTOLOGY IN(CHOOSE ONE):

\_\_\_University \_\_\_Hospital \_\_\_Private Lab \_\_\_Veterinary \_\_\_Marine \_\_\_Botany \_\_\_EM \_\_\_Research \_\_\_Industrial

**PAYMENT:** Remit fee with completed application in US funds to the NSH national office: 4201 Northview Drive, Suite 502, Bowie, MD 20716.

Circle Membership Dues: \$60.00 (Professional/Intl) \$30.00 (Student/Retired)

Circle Membership Pin (\$30.00): Gold Gold/Blue No Thanks

Optional ADA Fund Contribution \$\_\_\_\_\_ (Your donation to the ADA will aid in furthering the education of the physically challenged.)

Total Due \$ \_\_\_\_\_

A check for the total amount due payable to "NSH" is included with this application.

Please charge my Visa, MasterCard or American Express for the Total Due listed above.

Card Holder's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Card Holder's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Feature Article by Ann Lynde



## Six Thinking Hats

Western thinking is concerned with 'what is', which is determined by analysis, judgment and argument. That is fine and useful system, but there is another whole aspect of thinking that is concerned with 'what can be done', which involves constructive thinking, creative thinking, and 'designing a way forward'.

Even when we agree with much of what is said, we feel a compulsion to focus on those small parts with which we do not agree. We use the phrase "Yes, but—" a great deal to show our disagreement with some part of what is being proposed. Dr. Edward de Bono points out that when we are thinking in the normal way, we are trying to do too much at once. We may be looking at information, forming ideas and judging someone else's ideas all the same time.

### What is Parallel Thinking?

The Six Hats method allows individuals and teams to unbundle thinking so that instead of trying to do everything at once, they separate the different aspects of thinking. Then they can pay full attention to each aspect in turn. This is not unlike full-colour printing, where the basic colour separations are made, and then each colour is printed separately onto the same sheet to give full-colour printing. In the same way, we separate the modes of thinking and then apply each mode to the same subject in order to end up with full-colour thinking on the subject.

With the traditional argument or adversarial thinking each side takes a different position and then seeks to attack the other side. *Each side seeks to prove that the other side is wrong.* This is the type of thinking established by the Greek Gang of Three (Socrates, Plato and Aristotle) over two thousands years ago.

Adversarial thinking completely lacks a constructive, creative or design element. It was intended only to discover the 'truth' not to build anything.

With 'parallel thinking' both sides (or all parties) are thinking in parallel in the same direction. There is co-operative and coordinated thinking. The direction itself can be changed in order to give a full scan of the situation. But at every moment each thinker is thinking in parallel with all the other thinkers. There does not have to be agreement. Statements or thoughts, which are indeed contradictory, are not argued out but laid down in parallel. In the final stage the way forward is 'designed' from the parallel thoughts that have been laid out.

There is a large and beautiful house. One person is standing in front, one person is standing behind the house, and two others are standing on each side of the house. All four have a different view of the house. All four are arguing that the view each of them is seeing is the correct view of the house.

Using parallel thinking they all walk around the house and look at the front, then all walk around to the side, then the back, and finally the remaining side. So at each moment each person is looking in parallel from the same point of view. This is almost the exact opposite of argument, and confrontational thinking where each person deliberately takes an opposite view. Each person eventually looks at all sides of the building, the subject is explored fully. Parallel thinking means that at any moment everyone is looking in the same direction. What are the different directions in which thinkers can be invited to look?

This is where the hats come in....

The value of a hat as a symbol is that it indicates a role, and that a hat can be put on or taken off with ease. A hat is also visible to everyone around, for those reasons the six coloured hats correspond to the six directions, because it speeds up thinking and also because it is so much more constructive than traditional argument thinking.

It is very important to note that the hats are directions and not descriptions of what has happened. It is not a matter of everyone saying what they like and then the hats being used to describe what has been said. It is a matter of setting out to think in the parallel direction.

## **The Basics of the Six Hats**

Think of hats as thinking hats. There are six different imaginary hats that you can put on or take off. Each hat is a different colour and represents a different type, or mode, of thinking. Members in the group all wear the same hat (do the same thinking) at the same time. When members change their hats they change their way of thinking.

## **The White Hat**

The information-seeking hat. What are the facts? What information is available? What is relevant? When wearing the white hat we are neutral in our thinking. Imagine a computer that gives the facts and figures for which it is asked. The computer is neutral and objective. It does not offer interpretations or opinions. When wearing the White Thinking Hat, the thinker should imitate the computer. The person requesting the information should use focusing questions in order to obtain information or to fill in information gaps.

In practice there is a two-tier system of information, the first tier contains the checked and proven facts - first class facts. The second tier contains the facts that are believed to be true but have not yet been fully checked - second-class facts. There is a spectrum of likelihood ranging from 'always true' to 'never true'. In between there are usable levels such as 'by and large', 'sometimes', and 'occasionally'. Information of this sort can be put out under the white hat, provided the appropriate 'frame' is used to indicate the likelihood. When wearing the white hat ask these questions: "What information do we need to make a decision?" "What information do we have?" "How will we get the information we need, but do not have?"

White hat thinking is a discipline and a direction. The thinker strives to be more neutral and more objective in the presentation of information. You can be asked to put on the White Thinking Hat or you can ask someone else to put it on.

The white (absence of colour) indicates neutrality.

## **The Red Hat**

What do you feel about the suggestion? What are your gut reactions? What intuitions do you have? Don't think too long or too hard. Wearing the Red Hat allows the thinker to say: "this is how I feel about the matter"

"I believe that ....."

"I just have this feeling that"

The red hat legitimizes emotions and feelings as an important part of thinking. The red hat makes feelings visible so that they can become part of the thinking map and also part of the value system that chooses the route on the map. The red hat provides a convenient method for a thinker to switch in and out of the feeling mode in a way that is not possible without such a device. The red hat allows a thinker to explore the feelings of others by asking for a red hat view. When a thinker is using the red hat, there should never be any attempt to justify the feelings or to provide a logical basis for them.

The red hat covers two broad types of feelings. First, there are ordinary emotions as we know them, ranging from strong emotions such as fear and dislike to the more subtle ones such as suspicion. Second, there are the complex judgments that go into such types of feelings as hunch, intuition, sense, taste, and other not so visibly justified types of feelings. Where an opinion has a large measure of this type of feeling, it can also fit under the red hat.

## **The Yellow Hat**

The sunshine hat. It is positive and constructive. It is about effectiveness and getting the job done. What are the benefits, the advantages?

Yellow hat thinking is positive and constructive. The yellow colour symbolizes sunshine, brightness and optimism. Yellow hat thinking is concerned with positive assessment just as black hat thinking is concerned with negative assessment. Yellow hat thinking covers a positive spectrum ranging from the logical and practical at one end to dreams, visions and hopes at the other end. Yellow hat thinking probes and explores for value and benefit. Yellow hat thinking then strives to find logical support for this value and benefit. Yellow hat thinking seeks to put forward soundly based optimism but is not restricted to this - provided other types of optimism are appropriately labeled.

Yellow hat thinking is constructive and generative, from yellow hat thinking come concrete proposals and suggestions. Yellow hat thinking is concerned with making things happen. Effectiveness is the aim of the yellow hat constructive thinking. Yellow hat thinking can be speculative and opportunity seeking. Yellow hat thinking also permits visions and dreams.

## **The Black Hat**

The caution hat. In black hat thinking the thinker points out errors or pit-falls - what are the risks or dangers involved? Identifies difficulties and problems.

Black hat thinking is concerned with caution. At some stage we need to consider risks, dangers, obstacles, and potential problems, and the downside of suggestions. It would be extremely foolish to proceed with any suggestion unless full consideration has been given to the caution aspect. The black hat is about being careful. The black hat seeks to avoid dangers and difficulties. The black hat points out matters that need attention because they may be weak or harmful. The black hat draws us to matters that need our attention. The black hat can be used as part of assessment: should we proceed with this suggestion? The black is used in the design process: what are the weaknesses that we need to overcome? The black hat seeks to lay out the risks and potential problems in the future: What may go wrong if we implement this suggestion? The black hat is very much about "fit". Does this suggestion fit our past experiences? Does the suggestion fit our policy and strategy? Does this suggestion fit our ethics and values?

Does this suggestion fit our resources? Does this suggestion fit the unknown facts and the experience of others?

Under the black hat we focus directly on the 'caution' aspects. This is the basis of survival, of success, and of civilization. Black hat thinking may point out procedural errors in the thinking itself. But black hat thinking is not argument and must not be allowed to degenerate into argument. The purpose of black hat thinking is to put the caution points on the map.

Black hat thinking can be abused and overused if it is the only mode of thinking. This abuse in no way diminishes the value of the black hat, just as the dangerous and reckless driving of a car does not mean that cars are dangerous.

### **The Green Hat**

This is the creative mode of thinking. Green represents growth and movement. In green hat we look to new ideas and solutions. Lateral thinking wears a green hat.

The Green hat is for creative thinking. The person who puts on the green hat is going to use the idioms of creative thinking. Those around are required to treat the output as a creative output. Ideally, both the thinker and listener should be wearing the green hat. The green colour symbolizes fertility, growth and the value of seeds. The search for alternatives is a fundamental aspect of green hat thinking. There is a need to go beyond the known and the obvious and the satisfactory. The green hat thinker uses the creative pause to consider, at any point, whether there might be alternative ideas. There is no reason to this pause.

In green hat thinking the idiom of movement replaces that of judgment. The thinker seeks to move forward from an idea in order to reach a new idea. Green hat thinking is used to generate new concepts and perceptions.

Questions you might hear if a group is doing Green Hat thinking:

"How can we adapt..?"

"Suppose we ....." "

"Are there any ideas we want to list just because someday they maybe useful?"

### **The Blue Hat**

The control hat, organizing thinking itself. Sets the focus, calls for the use of other hats. Monitors and reflects on the thinking processes used. Blue is for planning.

The blue hat is the control hat. The blue hat thinker organizes the thinking itself. Blue hat thinking is thinking about the thinking needed to explore the subject.

The blue hat thinker is like the conductor of the orchestra. The blue hat thinker calls for the use of the other hats. The blue hat thinker defines the subjects toward which the thinking is to be directed. Blue hat thinking sets the focus. Blue hat thinking defines the problems and shapes the questions. Blue hat thinking determines the thinking tasks that are to be carried out. Blue hat thinking is responsible for summaries, overviews and conclusions. These can take place from time to time in the course of the thinking and also at the end.

Blue hat thinking monitors the thinking and ensures that the rules of the game are observed. Blue hat thinking

stops argument and insists on the map type of thinking. Blue hat thinking enforces the discipline. Blue hat thinking may be used with occasional interjections which request a hat. Blue hat thinking may also be used to set up a step-by-step sequence of thinking operations, which are to be followed just as the dance follows with the choreography. Even when the specific blue hat thinking role is assigned to one person, it is still open to anyone to offer blue hat comments and suggestions.

## Sample Process

One way to use the Six Hats process that works for many groups is like this:

Blue hat to organize the process, establish the rules, set time limits for different parts of the problem solving process.

White hat to focus on what information the group has, what information is needed, gather the resources that group members bring with them.

Green Hat to list as many different ideas as possible to work with.

Yellow Hat to make the most of the basic ideas generated, possibly to extend some, make others more positive, develop ideas.

Black Hat to find the problems, ideas, provide necessary caution, possibly revise them.

Red Hat to determine how the group members feel about the different ideas, which ones have enough support to continue to work on.

The Blue Hat must determine the final group report, what are the conclusions, and what is the group going to share with others.

The directors of a property company are looking at whether they should construct a new office building. The economy is doing well, and the amount of vacant office space is reducing sharply. As part of their decision they decide to use the Six Thinking Hats technique during a planning meeting. Looking at the problem with the White Hat, they analyze the data they have. They examine the trend in vacant office space, which shows a sharp reduction. They anticipate that by the time the office block would be complete, that there will be a severe shortage of office space. Current government projections show steady economic growth for at least the construction period. With Red Hat thinking, some of the directors think the proposed building looks quite ugly. While it would be highly cost-effective, they worry that people would not like to work in it. When they think with the Black Hat, they worry that government projections may be wrong. The economy may be about to enter a 'periodical downturn', in which case the office building may be empty for a long time.

If the building is not attractive, then companies will choose to work in another better looking building at the same rent. With the Yellow Hat, however, if the economy holds up and their projections are correct, the company stands to make a great deal of money. If they are lucky, maybe they could sell the building before the next downturn, or rent to tenants on long-term leases that will last through any recession.

With Green Hat thinking they consider whether they should change the design to make the building more pleasant. Perhaps they could build prestige offices that people would want to rent in any economic climate. Or maybe they should invest the money in the short term to buy up property at low cost when a recession comes. The Blue Hat has been used by the meeting's chairperson to move between the different thinking styles. He or she may have needed to keep others of the team from switching styles, or from criticizing people's point of view.

It is not really surprising that with the Six Hats method the decision seems to make itself. After all, when we make decisions on our own, we go through more or less the same process, (pros, cons, feelings and facts). The Six Hats method does all that very thoroughly. So what was at one time carried out in an individual's mind is now done systematically and in the open.

With using the six hats in parallel thinking you can lead shorter and more productive meetings. Develop more robust solutions. Improve the quality of decisions. Generate more and better practical ideas. Improve and energize teams. Increase mutual respect. Organize and clarify thinking.

There is a huge temptation to use the six hats to describe and categorize people, such as "She is such a black hat" or "he is a green hat person". The temptation must be resisted; the hats are not descriptions of people but modes of behavior.

It is true that some people may be permanently cautious and inclined to look for dangers. It is true that some people might be always be bubbling with ideas and others might be better at focusing on facts. Nevertheless, the hats are not categories of people.

For those reasons the use of hats as labels destroys the whole point of the system, which is that everyone can look in every direction.

Best wishes in using this method to become an increasingly effective and balanced problem solver. Problems are an inherent part of life, so becoming a fluent, flexible problem solver is one of the most important skills you can develop in your lifetime.

It is well worth reading Edward De Bono's book *Six Thinking Hats* for more information on this technique.

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## **Survival Guide to the 2008 NSH S/C in Pittsburgh**

- **Comfortable shoes**
- **Pre-made mailing labels (Have all the literature and catalogues mailed to you)**
- **An extra suitcase for all those freebies**
- **Bubble wrap for those souvenirs**
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- **Workshop confirmation notification**
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