

SIX ACTION SHOES

A brilliant new way to take control of any business or life situation

EDWARD DE BONO

Main Idea

Six action shoes are a practical and useful framework for making decisions about the best course of action in any situation. Each shoe type and colour represents a different style of action.

Most situations in life and business are ambiguous and confusing. Confusion is the enemy of action. The six action shoes framework gives anyone the chance to identify the situations and the best course of action for every situation.

By mastering all six action modes, anyone can learn how to tailor action to the situation at hand.

Navy Formal Shoes

Navy - colour used for uniforms.

Formal shoes - non-casual wear.

Navy shoe action mode suggests following the established procedures and routines.

It means doing it by the book.

Orange Gumboots

Orange - out of the ordinary colour - danger!

Gumboots - worn by firemen or emergency workers.

Orange gumboot action mode is emergency action where there are obvious, clear-cut dangers.

Safety and minimising the danger are the only objectives in this action mode.

Grey Sneakers

Grey - unobtrusive colour that blends in.

Sneakers - active shoes.

Grey sneaker action mode is about exploration, investigation and getting the background facts.

Collecting information for later decisions is the focus of grey sneaker action mode.

Pink Slippers

Pink - a warm, feminine colour.

Slippers - casual, go softly type of footwear.

Pink slipper action mode suggests care, compassion and attention to feelings and sensitivities.

This action mode focuses on the feelings.

Brown Brogues

Brown - muddy, messy and down to earth.

Brogues - practical, hardwearing everyday shoes.

Brown brogue action mode is about practicality and pragmatism. It means using initiative to do what is sensible and what is practical.

Purple Riding Boots

Purple - unusual colour suggesting authority.

Riding boots - privileged class.

Purple riding boot action mode is acting in an official role or capacity.

This action mode requires a person to put their official capacity ahead of personal feelings.

1. Introduction

1. Six Thinking Hats

In 1983, the book *Six Thinking Hats* introduced a framework for creative thinking. The method involves visualising six imaginary hats each representing a distinctive way of thinking or mental role playing. The hats are;

White hat - a neutral colour representing information. A person wearing a white hat is taking an objective look at the information available before acting.

Red hat - a warm, passionate colour representing feelings. When wearing the red hat, feelings, emotions or intuition are in control.

Black hat - a logical, negative colour associated with law and justice. Wearing a black hat means taking a logical, stern and no nonsense approach.

Yellow hat - associated with sunshine and optimism. Wearing a yellow hat means you look positively at the benefits in a good frame of mind.

Green hat - as in new growth. Wearing the green hat suggests creativity and new, untried ideas. New ideas spring up in this thinking mode.

Blue hat - as in sky blue. A cool, detached look at the thought process is in action when the blue hat is being worn. That is, control over the thinking process.

There are numerous benefits to the six hat framework for creative thinking. For example, by separating these modes, people can avoid muddled thinking involving a mix of differing modes. It also allows the ego to be separated from performance. Overall, the six hats encourage constructive thinking and collaborative thinking by groups of people.

The hats are most effective when they are used one at a time to examine a subject from a number of different perspectives. The benefit of the framework comes when people swap the hats. The six pairs of action shoes follow on from the six hats for creative thinking.

2. Six Pairs of Action Shoes

Main Idea

Six action shoes are a practical, useful framework for making decisions about the appropriate course of action in any situation. Each shoe has a distinct colour and shoe type, which are consistent with the requirements of that action style. This is not a framework for analysis but for action.

Supporting Ideas

Usually, thinking is only half the equation - the other half is action. Therefore, the shoes metaphor is used to imply action. The different types and colours of shoes describe differing styles of action to be taken. Actions should be dictated by the circumstances. Differing situations can require up to six distinct and unique types of actions.

The focus on six different action styles allows a two step approach to actions;

1. Ask, "What type of action is required in this situation?"
2. Mentally put on the appropriate style of action shoes and act that way.

In any situation, the critical factor is the feel. In other words, the flavour or outlook of all factors involved. This is usually developed only through experience and perception. The mind generally sees only what it is prepared to see, and notices only what it is expecting to see. Experience tends to prepare the mind to see events according to familiar patterns. The six shoe action system enables people to recognise situations and act effectively.

The fact that shoes come in a pair enables mixing of the action types. A large number of combinations that can be tailor made to the situation can be put together to increase the flexibility of the framework. In addition to the colours, each shoe comes in a distinctive shape - another indicator of the nature of the action involved.

The six style of action shoes are;

1. Navy formal shoes.
2. Grey Sneakers
3. Brown Brogues
4. Orange Gumboots
5. Pink Slippers
6. Purple Riding Boots

As for the six hats of thinking, each of these different types of shoes represents a distinctive style of action that should be taken.

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