

CS 321 Human-Computer Interaction

Small Group Discussion

Notes to Instructor:

1. I repeat the group process here just to emphasize the approach to the students. This approach mirrors the group process approach they are expected to take in their project design teams.
2. I like to do a section on creativity to help kick start their imaginations as they go into the design phase of their project. The material I draw on comes from a small paper back book : “A Whack on the Side of the Head: How you can be more creative”, R. von Oech, U.S. Games Systems, Inc., 1990
3. Teaching computer science students to be creative can be challenging. Many of them have been taught an engineering process which focuses early in the process on technical aspects of “what” can be implemented. Thinking creatively is to explore a wider range of possible designs first, then focus or become more practical later.
4. Many of these students exhibit some of the classic mental locks noted in the handout. Getting the students to recognize these is a step to overcoming them.
5. The card exercise (#6) relates to the deck of creative thinking cards that comes with the book. These provide students some cues as to thinking about their projects in a different way.
6. Questions #1-3 are to get the students to recognize that thinking creatively requires looking at a situation in different ways, to recognize when the context of their education can hinder their perspective, and that there are multiple answers to the same problem.