Design Studio 1: Shaping Interactions and Experiences

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THE CMU IMPROV THEATRE

In-Class Activity

"Yes, and" is a common activity used in improvisational theatre (improv) to warm up participants to thinking on their feet, build off the ideas of others, be spontaneous, interact one-on-one, be on stage, and come up with wild, funny, entertaining things. At its heart is the fostering of an environment that is fundamentally creative. Unlike the analytical brain whose job it is to edit (convergent thinking), here, you have no choice but to agree and go further (divergent thinking).

After learning about your design space from stakeholders, competitive analysis, literature reviews, and observational research, you'll need to shift gears towards idea generation. That is, the creation of something new. Ideation as a group, usually around a whiteboard or table full of supplies, must be free form, open, and without criticism. Editing can come later.

In teams of two, set a 2 minute timer. Person 1: use the starting point. Person 2: keep it going. Go back-and-forth, elaborate on the story, go in new directions, throw your partner for a loop. There are no mistakes, no wrong ways of doing this, take chances, be free. **Always start with, "Yes, and;" never say "no, actually..."** And don't just say, "yeah!" Keep building; go further.

We should have a costume party! …

So the last time I went to the mall…

I have this class that's just crazy…

I can't believe the weather outside…

The funniest party I ever went to…

I driving the other day and you wouldn't believe this…

I was in class the other day and you wouldn't believe what the teacher said…

The other night my friends came over and it got out of control…

I went to the grocery store the other day…

In the library yesterday the weirdest thing happened…

I swear my computer blew up when I turned it on this morning…

I saw a guy wearing this funny hat the other day…

I was at the airport once and you wouldn't believe what happened…

I went to the student center yesterday and saw the craziest looking person…

We should have a class party! …

We should do a movie night! …

I was eating lunch the other day and all of a sudden fell from the sky…

I had a dream the other night where aliens…

I had a dream the other night where my friends went to the…

When I was a kid I used to think that aliens were going to…

I had a dream the other night that I traveled to Moscow…