

## Project 2: Interface Evaluation (due in class Thursday, April 23)

We operate technology via interfaces. The steering wheel of your car, the way one selects music on an iPod, and the navigation controls of a browser are typical examples. Interfaces range from the handle of your front door to the mechanisms to control a nuclear power plant.

For this exercise we would like you to focus on a simple aspect of an interface that has caused you difficulty. In a 3 page paper discuss a difficulty with the interface and propose how the difficulty might be removed or minimized.

1. Briefly describe the interface (images and figures may be useful; not counted in 3 pages), the users of the interface, the tasks that are involved, the context in which it is typically used, and give an example of the difficulty you have chosen to focus on.
2. Suggest a way to potentially improve the interface by removing or minimizing the difficulty.
3. Use ideas from the text and lectures (e.g., Vicente's Human-Tech Ladder and Norman's Stages of Activity, interface metaphors, interfaces as languages, semantic and articulatory distance) to discuss the interface and the difficulty.

### Focus on Human-Tech Issues

For example: Learning, Visibility of system status, Match between system and tasks, Using existing knowledge, Knowing state and what can be done, Consistency with other interfaces and standards, Error prevention, Errors: Recognize, diagnose, and recover, Recognition/recall, Flexibility and efficiency of use, Aesthetic design.

Use the Human-Tech Ladder and other concepts from text and lecture.

Examples of interfaces you might choose include:

- Computer applications and web sites (be careful of complexity)
- Device interfaces (clocks, microwave and other home appliances, controls in general)
- Information kiosks (e.g. airport)
- Maps and other information displays
- ATMs
- Starbucks cups
- Car radio
- ...