



IMGD 1001: Brainstorming Your Game

by

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Outline

- Motivation
- Intro to brain storming
- Exercises

Motivation

- Building a game (or doing *anything* interesting) is tough!
 - That's why you are here? ;-)
- Need to wrap your mind around the problem
 - Divide and conquer: split the problem into manageable parts
- Iterate multiple times
- Build team ownership
 - Ownership = commitment
- This process is done at multiple levels, usually with different people involved

High-Level Process: Brainstorming

- Start with a vague notion, and go from there
- Move towards concreteness
- Don't throw away ANYTHING!
 - There are no bad ideas
- Write down every idea (on **Post-it** notes, a flip-chart, whiteboard, etc.)
- Don't make judgments on quality at this time
- MAIN IDEA:
 - Everyone should feel free to contribute

High-Level Process: Prune the Tree



- Now the group should have all ideas out there on **Post-its**, a whiteboard, etc.
- First, remove anything obviously irrelevant, but be CAREFUL!
- Now remove or combine redundant things

High-Level Process: Draw Relationships



- Now draw charts for each of the remaining things
- There are many solutions, so you will need to iterate

High-Level Process: Validate the Design



- ❑ Go through each object *in detail*, and verify that it meets all the requirements

Gamestorming Process



- ❑ Come up with a one-sentence description of your game
 - This is tougher than you think!
- ❑ Use free association to generate ideas
 - No culling!
 - Use **Post-It** notes
- ❑ Group related ideas together, consolidate
 - Move the **Post-Its** around
 - Set aside unused ideas (might revisit them)
- ❑ Drill down through iteration

Gamestorming Drill Down

- Perform this process at a high level, then
- Same for...
 - ...the STORY in your game
 - ...the STRUCTURE of your game
 - ...the ART in your game
 - Visuals/sound/"look and feel"
 - ...the INPUT CONTROLS of your game
- Generate a timeline for when each thing will get done
 - Assign a team member to the task

Exercise 1: Do Now!

- 15 min: Intro/Style/Story
- 15 min: Art/Sound/Tech
- 10 min: Discussion



Exercise 2

- Mario Super Smash Bros Brawl*
 - List 6 favorite characters
 - Group yourselves by favorite characters
- Now, you want (or need) to add an additional character!
 - But consider a 2-d version (like would be made in Game Maker)
- Brainstorm
 - Phase 1: Think of all possible characters, features, characteristics, needed tasks (5 minutes)
 - Phase 2: Group/Prune/Tree (5 minutes)
 - Phase 3: Discuss as a class (5 minutes)



Do you have...

- A feeling of how complex this is?
- Goals?
- Main mode of interaction?
 - Button-masher, platformer, etc?
- Motivation for the player?
- Humor?
- Violence?

What Next?

- Go home and do the same thing in much more detail for your assignment
- This should be fairly formal
 - Read through the examples
 - Don't write like you speak
 - Include appropriate visual support
 - Be thorough, ITERATE!