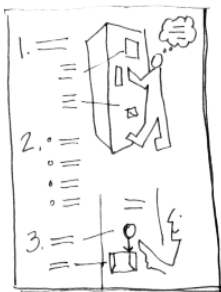# P1 Human Error

What happens when things don't work?

As Yogi Berra said, "You can observe a lot by watching." In this project you will practice observing people and their interaction with objects or machines, with an eye to understanding what happens when things don't work as intended. Find a situation where you can observe a human "error" and pay attention to what really happens. Consider an error to be any noticeable mismatch between what the person desired or intended and what actually resulted in the interaction.

The goals of this project are to
- Observe human-machine or human-computer interaction in detail
- Analyze the interaction to understand the situation and the factors that contribute to the "error"
- Explore alternative design solutions that mitigate or eliminate the error.
- Make a strong start in your Idea Log.

Error Sketches: Look around you for potential situations of human error – just watch your own behavior and that of people you are familiar with. Consider situations or machines where "human errors" might happen (vending machines, copiers, *etc.*). These could be low tech (like a door handle) or high-tech (like a PC interface).

Posters: make a closer observation of the situation you have selected, analyze what's going on, and describe your design solutions. Prepare a two-page (11" × 17") poster illustrating the human error that you observed. The poster should include:

1 A sketch (or annotated photo) of the **situation** indicating the **person** and the **interaction**.
2 A description of their **motivation** and **task goals.**
3 A description and analysis of **what the error is** and a list of the **contributing factors** (and people) to the error.
4 One or more **design ideas** about how to avoid or survive the error.

Come to class prepared to display and discuss your poster. Use **simple sketches** and **bold lettering** on your poster so it can be easily read from 4 to 6 feet away.

More on the Idea Log
As you collect your observations and prepare your poster presentation for this project, begin making your Idea Log the center of your conceptual workspace for the course. Use your log as a place to:

- Compile a list of errors or mistakes you have personally experienced
- Brainstorm a list of places you might go to watch for people and errors
- Record your observations, in sketch and annotation, paying attention to the details of setting, actors, task goals and motivation, actions, and outcomes
- Record your reflection and analysis of contributing factors for several errors you observe
- Sketch and describe a number of ideas about how to avoid or neutralize the errors you see
- Draw sketches of your poster presentation to plan its layout before preparing the full-sized (11x17) version you bring to class.

Grading
60%   Rigor of analysis of your chosen error
20%   Clarity of exposition (writing)
20%   Craft and use of different media (sketches, photographs,…) in poster design