Week One

Discussion point 1:

People study Information Technology for a number of reasons. As we are going to be working together in the tutorial as small groups, introduce yourself to the people around you. State your name, a little about your background and why you are doing this course.

Task 1:

Throughout your studies, you will need to be able to research technology related topics. The “web” is an excellent resource. A common way of searching through the resources on the web is to use search engines. One of the more popular engines is called Google:


Your task is to go to Google and use it to search for other search engines – see how many you can find and visit. Try searching for the phrase “computer science” on each site and record how many “hits” or number of entries were found.

Question: Do you think the number of hits indicates the quality of the search engine? Why or why not?

Task 2:

A problem with the web is that anyone can publish virtually anything. Therefore, the information quality can vary greatly. For serious research, you need to rely on authoritative sources and literature that has undergone peer review. The library has links to a number of electronic resources that the university has access to (these are effectively paid electronic subscriptions). The library website can be found at:

http://www.library.cqu.edu.au/

Your first task is to identify a list of databases that CQU can access that are relevant to Information Technology. Your second task is to locate the list of Journals that can be accessed electronically. Having done this, locate as many papers or resources as you can authored by Michael D. Myers in the area of Information Technology or Information systems. How many did you find? Which of the databases did you find the most useful?

Discussion point 2:

The text poses the question (2, page 13) “Is it acceptable to participate in today’s technical society without making an effort to understand the basics of that technology?” Consider this question for a moment, and then reconsider your answer in terms of the concept of abstraction and abstract tools. Does your answer change? Does it depend on the type of technology?
**Task 3:**

Find an example of a piece of technology that was developed after your birth date. Describe the reason for its development, its features and how widely used it has become.

**Discussion point 3:**

The text poses the question (10, page 14) “As our economy becomes more automated, it becomes easier for a government to monitor its citizens’ financial activities. Is this good or bad?”. Consider this question and develop an argument for your answer. Similarly, the advance in computer technology has led to a number of electronic services. What are they? What social changes and issues (good and bad) have they brought about?

**Task 4:**

Many financial institutions offer online banking. How many Australian financial institutions can you locate that offer this service? Can you find any that don’t?