Today’s Lecture

- Some useful materials on searching
- A look at the tute/lab exercises
- More unit objectives

Developing a search strategy

One good place to start is the Monash Virtual Librarian site:

Developing a search strategy

‘Planning how you will look for information’ can:

• save time
• broaden possible information sources
• help find relevant material

Developing a search strategy

• Find the focus
• Identify key concepts
  • “You can combine the concepts using Boolean operators”
• Define key concepts
• Find alternative terms

Boolean operators

Again, the Monash Virtual Librarian is a good starting point:

Boolean operators

Developed by George Boole (1815-1864).

Key terms include:

- **OR**
- **AND**
- **NOT**

Boolean operators - **OR**

Finds all documents containing either search term

Boolean operators - **AND**

Finds all documents containing both search terms
Boolean operators - **NOT**

Finds all documents containing first search term, except those containing both terms

Blair’s document/data distinction

David Blair (1984) has argued that searching for documents commonly requires a different approach to searching for data

‘Important and fundamental differences’ include:
- ‘the way queries are answered’
- ‘the relation between the formal system request and user satisfaction’
- ‘the criterion for successful retrieval’
- ‘the factors that influence retrieval speed’

(Blair 1984: 369)
Exercises for Lab 3

- Conduct some searches for information/documents using Boolean operators
  Let’s do one now.
- What are our key concepts?
- Are there alternative terms?
- Which Boolean operators to use?

Exercises for Tute 3

- Evaluate some documents in terms of:
  - being ‘storage vehicles’
  - being ‘workers’
  - their action/structure
  - their authorship/audience
  - their role as evidence

Unit objectives

- At the completion of this unit the students will:
  - have knowledge of:
  - have an understanding of:
  - have the skills to:
  - have developed attitudes which enable them to:
have the skills to:

- evaluate information and its sources critically
- identify particular information needs
- evaluate ICTs and IM tools in terms of meeting user needs
- use basic ICT and IM tools to create, represent, store, access, retrieve and use information

A scholarly article can be identified using the following criteria:

- It provides footnotes or a bibliography.
- It is likely to be written by a researcher or expert in the field.
- The author is often affiliated with a college or university.
- It reports on ‘original research or experimentation’.
- It may be published by a scholarly ‘professional association or university press’.
- It has ‘few glossy pictures’.
- It may have graphs and charts as illustrations.

(Queens University nd)

have the skills to:

A popular article can be identified using the following criteria:

- ‘rarely provides footnotes and/or a bibliography’.
- Is written ‘to entertain’, is usually short and in simple language.
- Is ‘written by a staff or free lance writer’, (possibly a scholar?)
- May not state the qualifications of the author.
- Is usually published by commercial enterprises.
- Includes pictures or photographs, and is ‘slick’ in appearance.
- Reports on information second or third hand?

(Queens University nd)
have developed attitudes which enable them to:

- be aware of the role and responsibilities of information professionals
- be aware of the role of ICTs and IM in human activity

Survey of IS managers in 96 US small and medium businesses:

- Ethically acceptable to copy commercial software for purpose other than backup or archive?
  - 29% said Yes
- IS ethics means a lot more than software piracy and data confidentiality?
  - 13.8% said Yes

(Phukan & Dhillon 2000: 242)

Further reading