I have always maintained that teaching college students was the best “racket” possible. You stand in front of a group of extremely bright students and expound on the theory that $2 \times 2 = 4$ and a few other erudite complex examples. They remember these little items and later, upon graduation, they, with all their skills and tremendous enthusiasm, become highly successful in their profession. Then... they give you the credit for their success!!

Dr. Billy Koen is one of the best examples of this. In his widely acclaimed book, "Discussion of the Method: Conducting the Engineer’s Approach to Problem Solving", Dr. Koen presents his outstanding ideas in problem solving which clearly show why he has become one of the most outstanding professors of the engineering profession. I was so pleased, while perusing his outstanding book, that he gave credit to some of the methods I used in my classes. I could recall, so clearly, Billy Koen, sitting in the front row, always anxious (and successfully so) to solve the semi-complex problems which were to be solved, within 50 seconds, without pencils, paper, calculators.

The first minute of each class I presented a new problem. Other than the “ping pong ball”, and “distillation” problems he mentions in his book, we covered some complex problems which were to be solved in 50 seconds. A few examples:

1. A building contains 27 stories. What is the length of its shadow at 4:00pm?
2. An electric generating plant is at the base of a 100 ft lake. A 20 ft. diameter pipe conveys water from the bottom of the lake into the generators. What is the capacity of the generators?

Billy Koen was always among the first to hold up his hand with the correct "estimation" of an answer. I am so proud he used these ideas in his book. I had no idea he would collect heuristics that would later become a part of this highly successful book.