

The Joel Test: 12 Steps to Better Code  
*Joel Spolsky – August 09, 2000*

In this reading, the author, Joel Spolsky, gives twelve questions to check if you are developing software in a good environment. Here is the summary of his twelve practices that should be done while developing software. Source control is important because it can organize code in the team and acts as a back up database. Compiling and building a software should be automated into one step to make release and developing simpler. Programmers should build software daily so that others in the team can work on a working code at all time. Bug database is needed to keep track of what to fix, and it should be fixed before writing new code because fixing bugs gets harder the longer time passes. Programmers should keep up-to-date schedule because it is important for business people to make arrangement. Spec documentation is important because fixing some specs in the documents takes less time than fixing the actual code. Quiet environment is crucial since programmers get distracted easily and it is difficult to get back on track. Having the best tools will encourage programmers to work more and the productivity will increase. Testers should be employed because it can save time for programmers to find bugs. Let new candidates write code during interview to see their capability instead of asking them irrelevant questions. Test the software with random people before release to get feedback will help the release better.

This material is really relevant to our project. It gives a guideline to what we should put into practice while developing software as they are really great procedures that can improve our productivity.

I totally agree with the author especially on number 8<sup>th</sup>. It signifies state of my mind completely. I cannot get used to working in small chunks of time and juggling between multiple things at all. I love to work with one session, and probably take a break after possibly 5-8 hours of work. Switching mode every quarter of an hour totally destroys my productivity.