

<http://github.com/reborg/talk-pomodoro/tree/agile2009>

# You Say Tomato, I Say Pomodoro



A Practical Pomodoro  
Technique Guide  
for Team and Individuals

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# POMO WHAT?!

Francesco Cirillo, late '80s

“Can you study, really study, for 10 mins?”

He used a pomodoro shaped kitchen timer

Technique refined over 20 years of coaching

[www.pomodoro4technique.com](http://www.pomodoro4technique.com)

# Basic Rules

25 mins + 5 mins

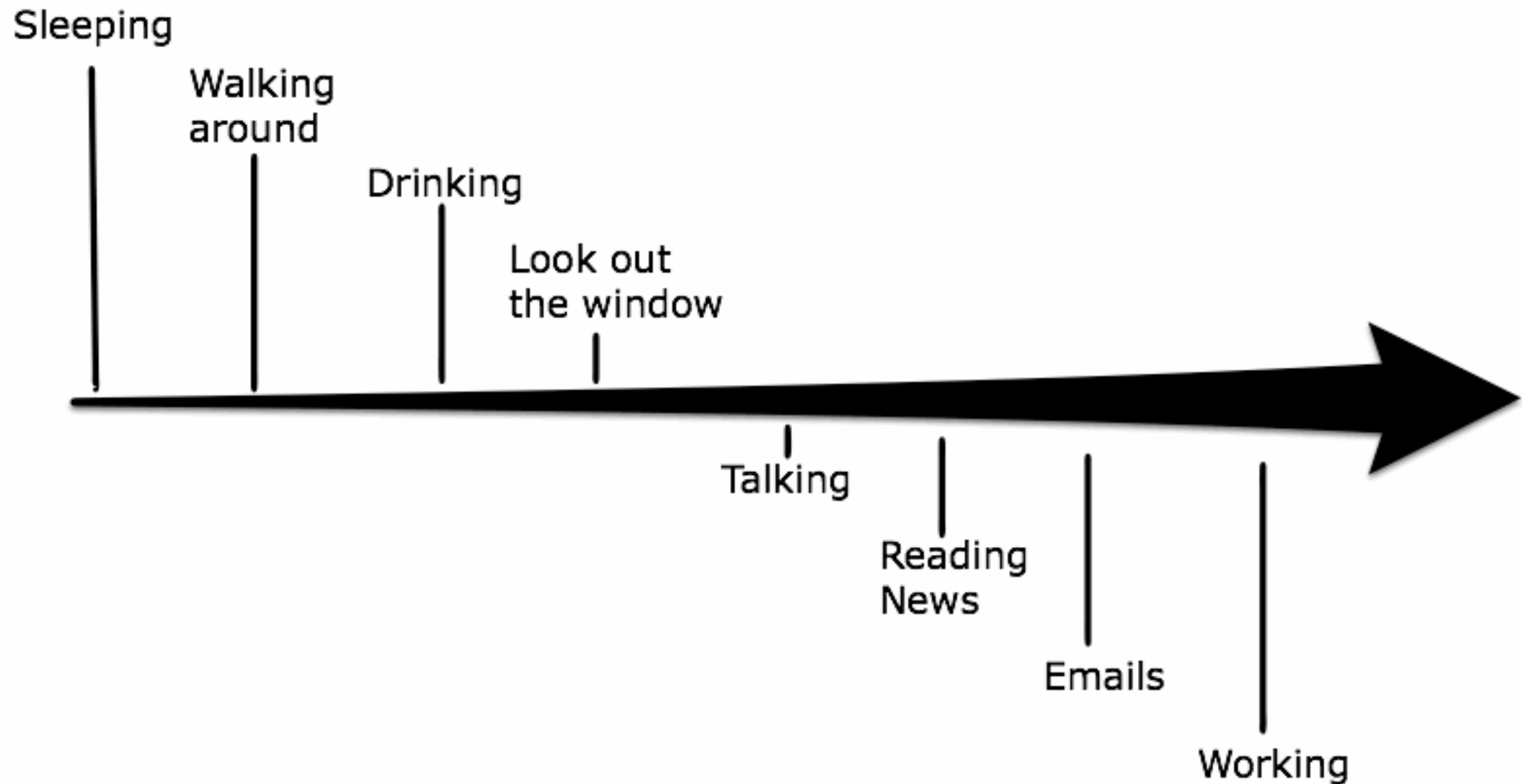
Longer Break Every 4 Pomodoros

If a Pomodoro Begins, It Has to Ring

The Pomodoro Is Indivisible

One Single Task Each Pomodoro

# Breaks ARE Breaks



# Practical Rules

Void the Pomodoro If Interrupted

Review Same Task If Done Before Ring

Protect the Pomodoro from Interruptions

Inform, Negotiate and Reschedule

# Estimation

A Task Should not be more than 5/7 P

A Task Should not be less than 1 P

Split big tasks if necessary

Aggregate multiple tasks if necessary

Pomodoro Capacity

Yesterday's Pomodoros

# Implementations

Paper Based

Plain Text Files

Spreadsheets

Suitable Software Tools

Ceremony  
Level



Automation

# Plain Text Files

No specific tools needed

Simple formatting rules

Easy to store

Easy to version under source control

Easily Scriptable



Our Example Project!

**User Registration**

**Create Proposal**

**Comment Proposal**

**Show Tweets**

**Signup Newsletter**

**Search The Site**

**Download Program PDF**

**Edit Content Of Site**

**Write a Blog Post**



### Create Proposal

- Create page with form and submit button
- Handle validation and errors
- Show proposal preview
- Confirmation page

### Show Tweets

- Download list of current Tweets
- Tweets sidebar on the page

### Edit Content of the Site

- Show edit link for editable pages
- Create form page with page body editing
- Include WYSIWYG editor
- Allow preview of edited page
- Save page as draft

### Signup Newsletter

- Create form page
- Handle validation errors email
- Send email to registered users
- Confirmation page



# Inventory Sheet

Collection of fine grained tasks

Estimates in Pomodoros

Multiple User Stories

Repository for new and unexpected tasks

Order defines priority

Tasks categorized by @tags

# Inventory Sheet Structure

UPPERCASE HEADERS FOLLOWED BY A COLON:  
IT'S AN USER STORY NAME OR A SUBPROJECT:

- @multiple @tags starting with a dash 5
- @followed by a number are tasks 4

THE INBOX IS AT THE BOTTOM:

This is the "TaskPaper" format (VIM plugin available)

You can roll out your own

# How to Use the Inventory

Move lines around to set priorities

Try to use a single line each task

Append to INBOX all new tasks

Process the INBOX before the standup

# Inventory Workflow

## Process INBOX

Grab tasks from User Story repo

Split tasks, add spikes if necessary

Re-estimate Pomodoros

Prioritize, move up and down

Let's Practice  
with  
the Inventory



# Todo Today Sheet

Record relevant session facts

Create a new one each session (day)

Fill from inventory when empty

Mark done pomodoros

Mark total done and total planned

Record interruptions

# What's in the Todo Today

SCHEDULE: to calculate pomodoro capacity

PLANNED: todo list from inventory

DONE: move tasks here when done

NOT DONE: move here what was not done

STANDUP: yesterday, today, what did I learn

POMOSPECTIVE: how the PT is doing

INTERRUPTS: record interruptions

# Today Todo Workflow

Start the Pomodoro

Create new Todo Today Sheet

Session Standup

Pomospective

Compute available pomodoros

Compare total to yesterday's capacity

Bring-in not done tasks from last session

Bring-in tasks from Inventory

Reconsider priorities after each Pomodoro

# Session Stand-up

Different from the team stand-up

Main goals for the day

@today, @yesterday, @learned

Other project related tags

Re-establish focus and effort

# Pomosperspective

Any noticeable under/over estimate?

What went good/bad about the technique?

Am I respecting breaks?

Can interruptions be avoided?

Is rhythm established?

# Todo Today Folders

Folders by year, month

Actual file name: <day>\_<pair>.txt

Name	Date Modified
▼ 2009	Aug 13, 2009, 2:52 AM
▶ 04	Aug 21, 2009, 10:12 AM
▶ 05	Jun 1, 2009, 9:39 PM
▶ 06	Jul 1, 2009, 8:13 AM
▶ 07	Aug 3, 2009, 1:46 AM
▼ 08	Yesterday, 9:18 PM
03.pom	Aug 4, 2009, 2:00 AM
04.pom	Aug 5, 2009, 2:27 AM
05.pom	Aug 6, 2009, 2:55 AM
06.pom	Aug 7, 2009, 7:33 AM
07.pom	Aug 10, 2009, 4:55 AM
10.pom	Aug 11, 2009, 2:31 AM
11.pom	Aug 12, 2009, 1:43 AM
12.pom	Aug 13, 2009, 2:39 AM
13.pom	Aug 14, 2009, 7:27 AM

Let's Practice  
with  
Today Todos

# Execution Workflow

Start the Pomodoro

Check priorities, shuffle tasks if necessary

Execute task

Mark one Pomodoro done for task

Short Break, (long break after 4P)

Wash, Rinse, Repeat



Pomodoro time

# Pomodoro Workflows

Inventory Workflow

Session Workflow

Execution Workflow

New Task Workflow

Interruption Workflow

# What If?

## Unexpected Task

# New Task Workflow

Always close current task

Never jump to new task

Append new task to INBOX

Re-prioritize on next Pomodoro

# What If?

## Interruptions

# Interrupt Workflow

Protect the Pomodoro

Inform: current task and schedule

Negotiate: based on priorities

Reschedule: move the interruption later on

# Pomodoro for software projects

# The Pomodoro Domain

Inception to user stories

Story selection for current iteration

Developers volunteer for stories

pomodoro domain starts here

Developers fill out the Inventory Sheet

Developers start their first Pomodoro



# Process Independent

The Pomodoro influence is at the task execution level

It does not mandate programming techniques

It does not alter the software process

→ affects the focus/relax cycle

→ improves estimates precision

→ improves productivity

# Multiple Inventories

One each pair/developer OR each workstation

The story owner is responsible to maintain the inventory OR whoever sits at the workstation

It contains tasks from the current story

It contains tasks from QA stories

It contains other technical tasks

# Inventory: iteration One

## SIGNUP NEWSLETTER:

- @signup create form page 6
- @signup handle validation errors 4
- @signup form to create a new newsletter 6 (SPLIT)
- @signup async process to send emails at intervals 6 (SPLIT)
- @signup confirmation page 3

## SPIKES:

- @spikes how to create async process with framework X? 3

## INBOX:

# Inventory Iteration Two

## SHOW TWEETS:

- @tweet setup twitter account for product 1 (NEW)
- @tweet async process to download tweets locally 5 (SPLIT)
- @tweet create tweets sidebar on the page 4 (SPLIT)
- @tweet retrieve list of tweets from file 2 (SPLIT)

## SIGNUP NEWSLETTER:

- @signup more specific error messages 2 (QA)

[...]

# Today Todo 8.30am

## SCHEDULE:

8am => 12pm, 1pm => 5pm

## PLANNED 14

- @signup create form page 6
- @signup handle validation errors 4
- @signup form to create a new newsletter 6

notice the total here:

what's wrong?

## DONE:

- @planning 1 => 1

## NOT DONE:

## STANDUP:

- @today should be able to close form

## POMOSPECTIVE:

- @good think positive planning 14 solid pomodoros

## INTERRUPTS:

# Today Todo 1pm

## SCHEDULE:

8am => 12pm, 1pm => 5pm

## PLANNED 14:

- @signup handle validation errors 4 => 1
- @signup form to create a new newsletter 6

## DONE:

- @signup create form page 6 => 5

overestimated

NOT DONE: /  
STANDUP:

[.....]

# Today Todo 5pm

## SCHEDULE:

8am => 12pm, 1pm => 5pm

## PLANNED 14:

## DONE 12:

- @planning 1 => 1
- @signup create form page 6 => 5
- @signup handle validation errors 4 => 6

overall a productive day

## NOT DONE:

- @signup handle validation errors 4 => 6
- @signup form to create a new newsletter 6

underestimate and still WIP

## INTERRUPTS:

- @external unexpected call from customer, voided

# Today Todo Next Day

## SCHEDULE:

10 am => 12pm, 1pm => 5pm

company gathering day

## PLANNED 10:

- @signup handle validation errors 2 re-estimate from yesterday
- @signup form to create a new newsletter 6 not done yesterday
- @signup confirmation page 3 new from inventory

## DONE:

## NOT DONE:

## STANDUP:

- @yesterday done form for submission
- @today completing form related stuff like validation

## POMOSPECTIVE:

- @good productivity yesterday
- @bad underestimated the task



# Multiple Pomodoros

One Pomodoro each pair

OR one Pomodoro per workstation

Start/stop negotiation

Flexibility

# Coach - ScrumMaster

Intermittent Shield

Protects Pomodoros for the whole team

Effective if team is co-located

Again inform, negotiate, reschedule

# Team Standup

Use Pomospective and Session Standup

More effective team standup

Ready for Session Workflow

# Ping Pong Pair Pomo

## First Pomodoro:

first developer writes tests, second  
developer writes code

## Next Pomodoro:

Invert roles

# Collective Breaks

Decide target time (i.e. lunch)

Allow 15 mins synchronization

Do not start new Pomodoro if

$\text{now} = (\text{target-time} - 15 \text{ mins})$

# Break Room

Don't bug the team if you're on a break

Use another room or the kitchen

A couch is great for micro-naps

# Metrics

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Pomodoro effort over time

Pomodoro estimate accuracy

Pomodoro scattering

Pomodoro by tag

# Collecting the data

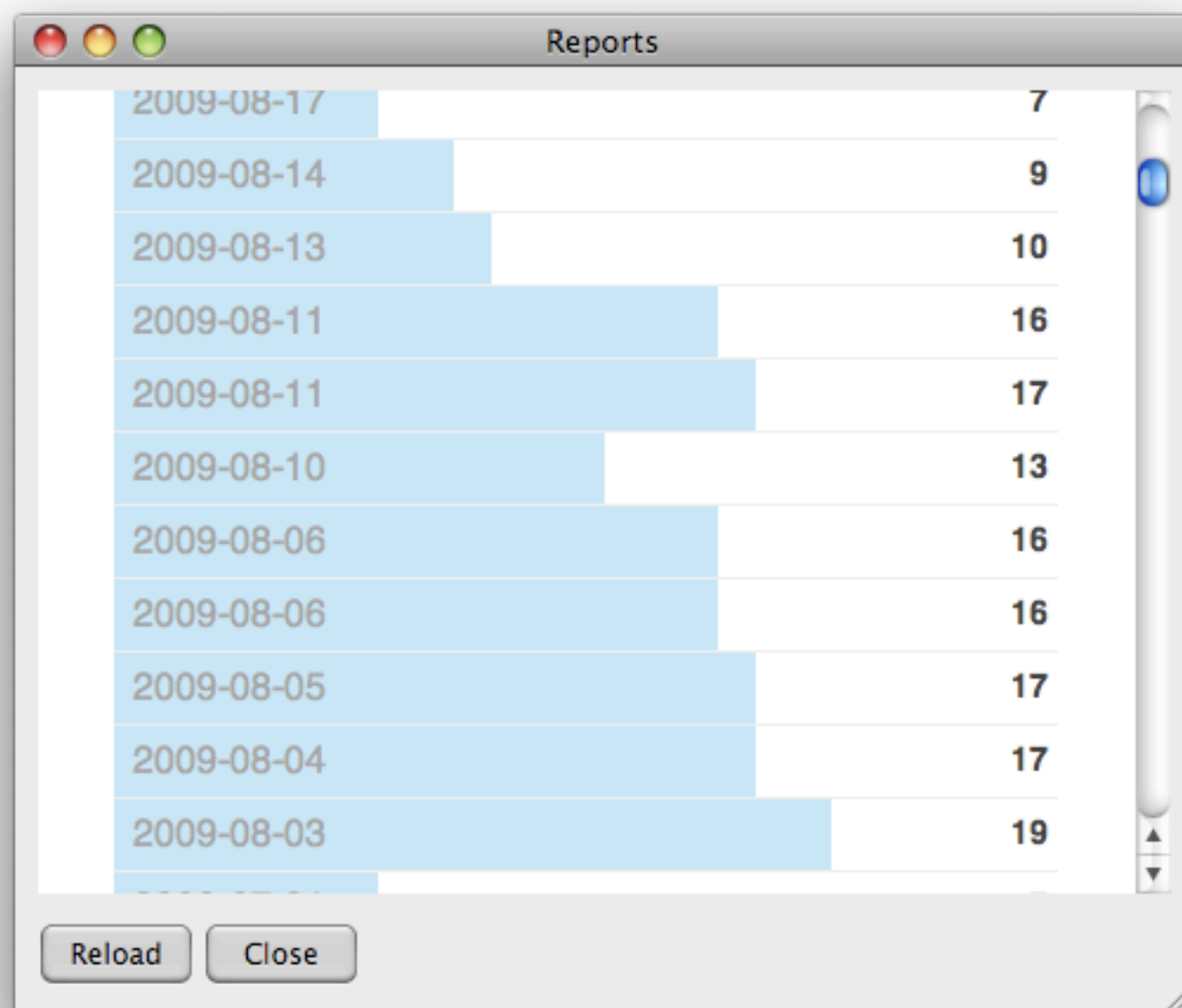
Manual insert from paper or file to Excel

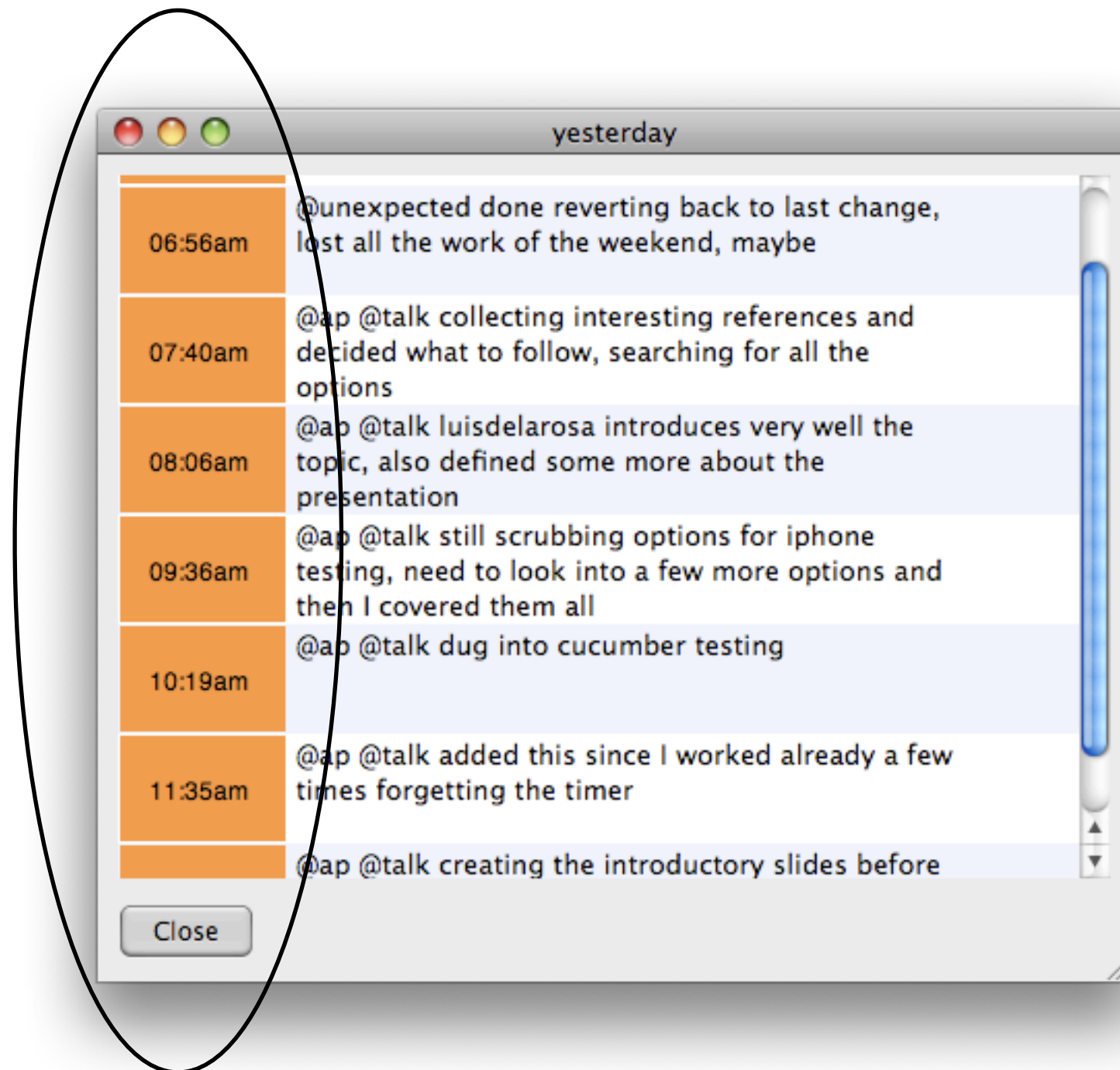
Mash-up of scripts and tools

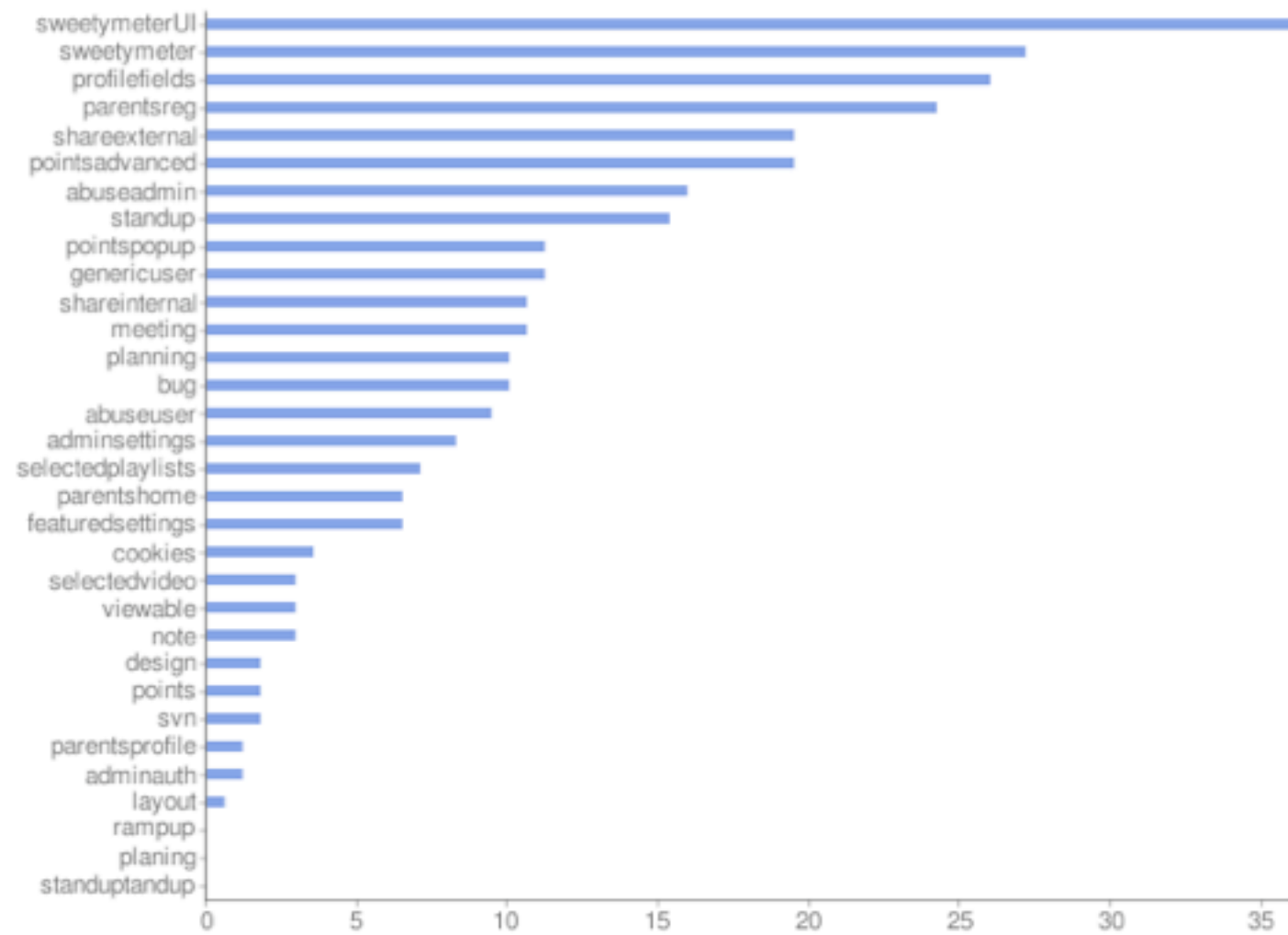
Dedicated software still missing

A few examples









# Conclusions

# A measure for quality

$$\underline{8 \text{ hours} \neq 16P}$$

Measuring in Pomodoros is like  
measuring the quality work

$$\underline{12P \sim 8-10 \text{ hours}}^{\text{maybe more}}$$

Include quality when exporting  
from Pomodoros to Hours

# Breaks First Class Citizens

A commitment to your brain  
Breaks are planned as well as work

## Establish Rhythm

Steady and sustainable pace  
Confidence

Big project connected to short term cycle

# Mikrokosmos

A Pomodoro is a 30 mins project

Frequent changes, tracking, estimation, focus, interaction, scope, negotiation etc.

Rule the Pomodoro to rule them all!

User Stories, Tasks, Iterations, Projects, Everything!

# Results

Task execution under control

Learn how to improve

High quality and consistent work

Better estimates

Feeling of accomplishment

Consistent level of energy



# Resources

The Pomodoro Technique: <http://www.pomodoro-technique.com>

The Pomodoro Book: [www.pomodoro-book.com](http://www.pomodoro-book.com)

The original paper: <http://www.pomodoro-technique.com>

Keep tempo: [www.keep-tempo.com](http://www.keep-tempo.com)

Pomodori, my timer: <http://reborg.github.com/pomodori>

Pomodoro, another good timer: <http://pomodoro.ugolandini.com/>

Special thanks to Ana Calliari for her wonderful Callani font  
<http://www.anacalliari.com/>

Thank you