

The Art of Work Estimation

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Why making work estimates suck?

#1 The Scope

#2 The Pressure

#3 The Numbers

#4 The Meaning

#5 The Inconsistency

#1

The Scope

The scope is always
incomplete.

**You are meant to
ask for more.**

Fuzzy scopes get fuzzy estimates.

**You are meant to
propose solutions.**

**Communicate your
solutions in writing.**

**What client asks +
What you propose
= Scope**



#2

The Pressure

**Estimation is
rooted in
experience.**

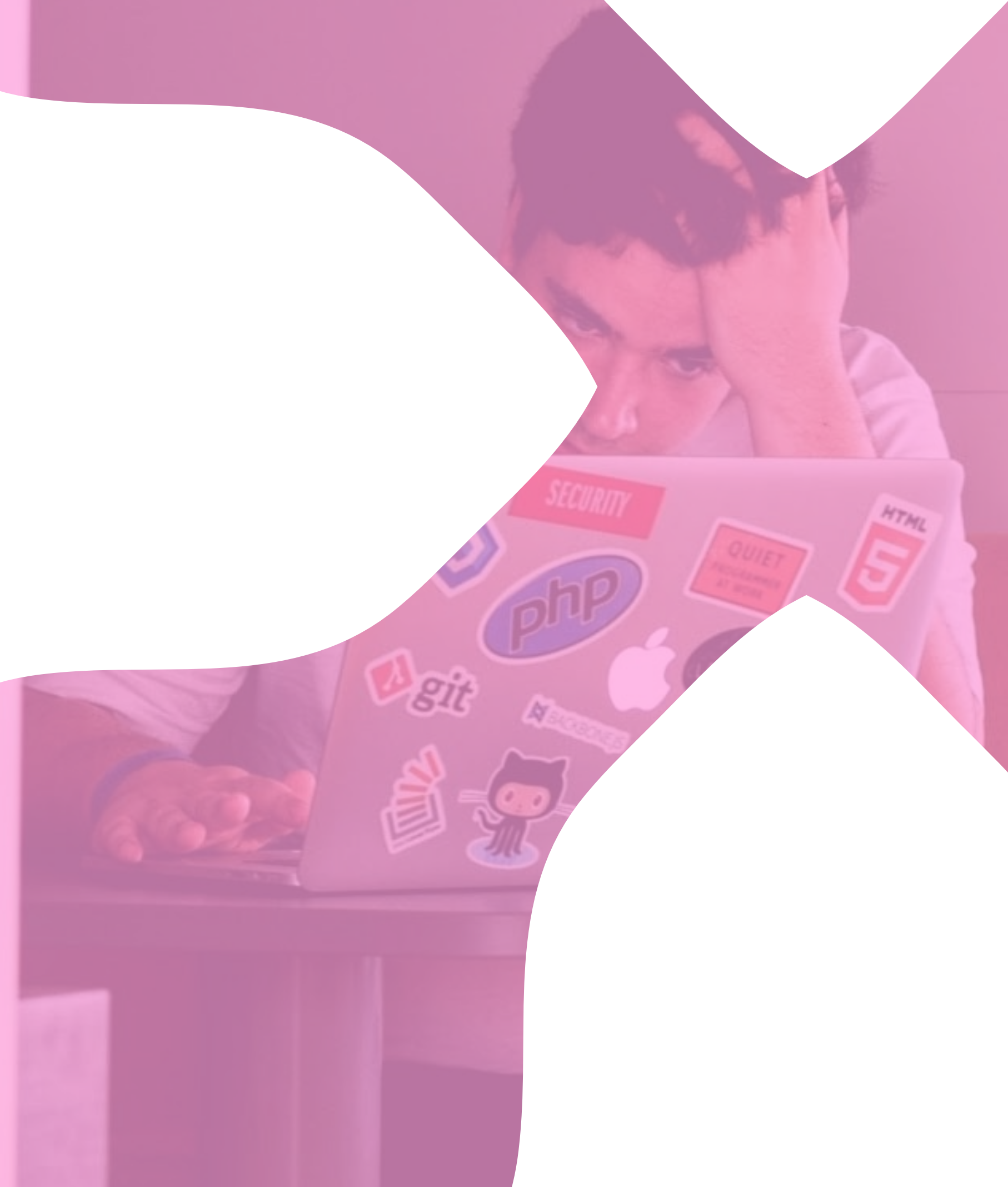
You can say no.

**Set aside things
that cannot be
estimated.**

What happens when the estimates are wrong?

Who is able to estimate what?

The risks should be discussed and managed.



#3

The Numbers

The right unit

~~1 hour~~

1 work day

1 sprint

Every agency
should have
the spreadsheet.

The buffer

Now with 20–50 %
more estimate!

Look back to completed work.

**The goal is
realistic numbers
– not the smallest.**

#4

The Meaning

Estimate is not a promise.

Estimate is not a schedule.

Estimate is not final.

Estimate and the price.

It's complicated.

**Estimates help
to decide how
to use limited
resources.**



#5

The Inconsistency

The estimate is
always too high
for somebody.

Work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion.

- Parkinson's law

**Comparing estimates
by different agencies
is problematic.**

**The best estimate
doesn't always win.**

**Sales is a game
where you lose
most of the time.**



Thank you!
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