



Quick take

Add interests "golden grains" that you either spend time on now or would like to spend time on.

Track time on for your activities. Interests that get time, grow. Interests that don't get time, fall through the sifter.

A variety of additional optional tools add functionality.

Live preview of 1st draft prototype available at Appy Pie

<http://snappy.appypie.com/marketplace/app-market-place/id/44c21c5fb096>

Introducing...

sifter

A mobile app that helps you "sift" your interests, activities, and endeavors.

-by Jodi Robison

Origins

Productivity	Motivation
Time management	Primary interest identifier
Activity tracker	Organizing priorities
Goal achievement	
Establishing community around the interests	

Audience

Any one who wants to improve or change the way they spend their time. Age range 13-Adult

Educational Application

This app could be useful to students and teachers to help them reach achievement goals.

Basic Concept

This app will allow you to visualize how your time is being spent. Once you have a visual capture of time expenditure you will see why certain goals are not being reached.

Through a series of time tracking activities and prompts for action, the user will soon be able to intentionally, and intelligently choose to spend the time needed to keep their goals on track. This app will provide top-of-mind awareness of how you spend your time. It will also provide the many tools to help you improve your productivity.

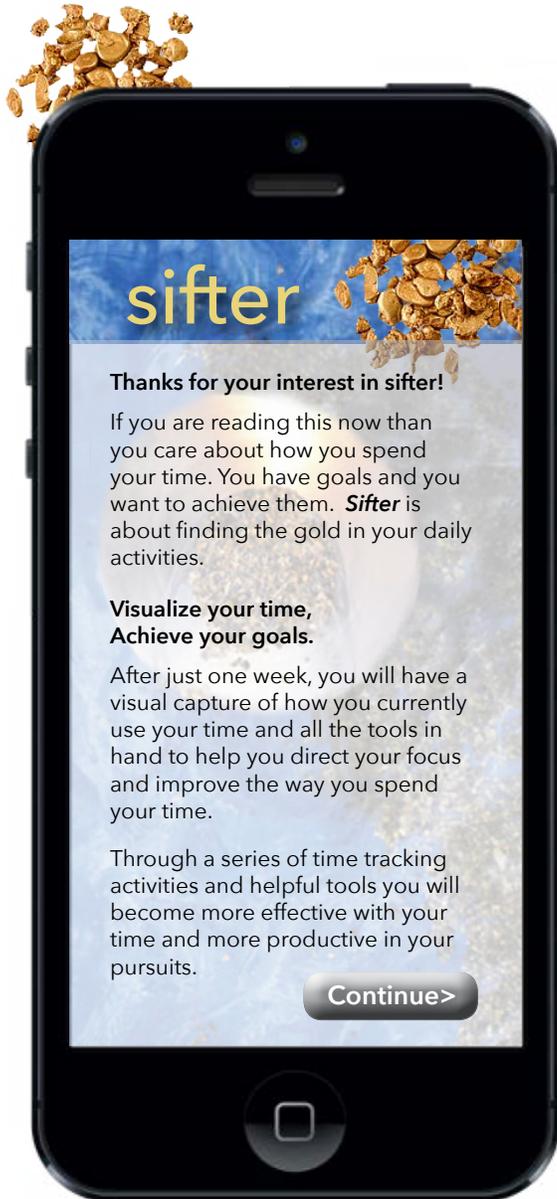
No more boring static to do lists, **sifter** offers a whole new way to organize your time. Why? Because.... **Time is gold.**

Additional considerations from Prototype research:

Throughout this design document, where applicable, I will provide considerations gleaned from the prototype research.

Notes to developer: A prototype design was created in Appy Pie app builder. (click live preview.) While there were significant limitations with this program, it provided useful insight the overall organization and design. In this "Notes to developer" section throughout my design document, I will aim to describe the discrepancies between this document, the prototype and what I envision as a final product.

Read more ↓



About sifter

A welcome paragraph describes the app and its purpose. This information will be accessible via an "about sifter" button on the tools page.

Additional considerations from Prototype research:

Break down text into more readable segments such as:

About

Sifter is a mobile app that helps you "sift" your interests, activities, and endeavors.

This app is for anyone who wants to improve or change the way they spend their time. This app could also be useful to students and teachers to help them reach achievement goals. No more boring "to do" lists, sifter offers a whole new way to organize your time.

Founder Jodi Robison

Founded 2015

Mission

This app will allow you to visualize how your time is being spent. Once you have a visual capture of time expenditure you will see why certain goals are not being reached.

Vision

Through a series of time tracking activities and prompts for action, the user will soon be able to intentionally, and intelligently choose to spend the time needed to keep their goals on track. This app will provide top-of-mind awareness of how you spend your time. It will also provide the tool to help you improve your productivity.

Motto

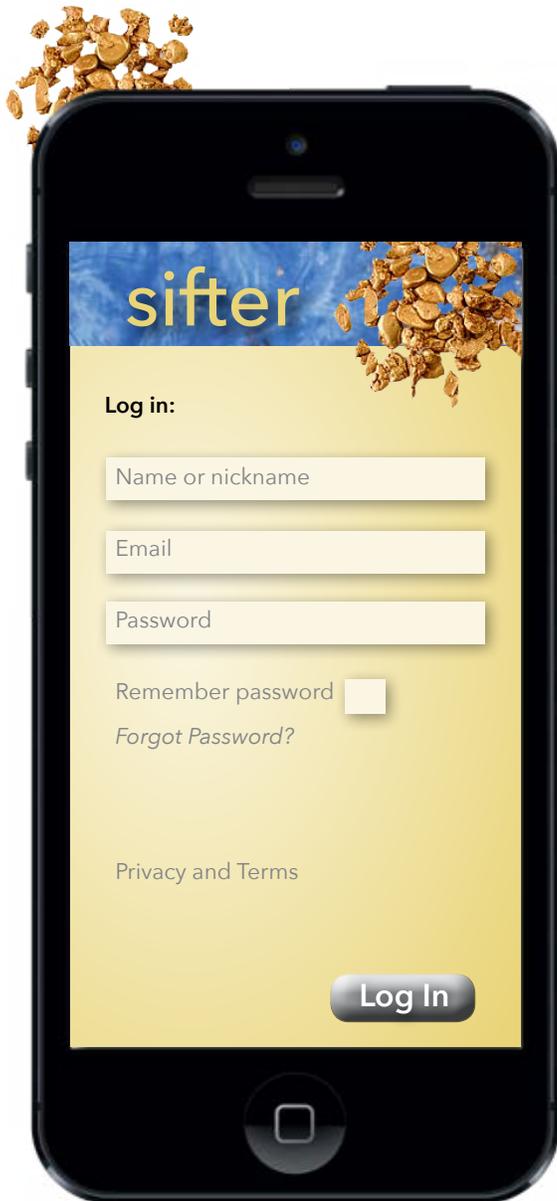
"Time is gold."

[Contact Sifter](#)

Notes to developer:

The background must be contrasted for highly readable pages. The image of water and sifting pan will be toned down to 30% with black text. Appy Pie did not hold my desired lightened background.

About sifter page will include a contact the app developer button that takes you to a standard contact form.



Profile Input and login

Standard input: Name, Email, Password and Login, with link to Privacy and Terms page

Sifter does not ask for extensive information for starting the app nor does it collect your information.

The information you enter into sifter is for your personal use only and to be shared at your discretion.

Full terms pending.

Notes to developer: Little will change here. Recommendations are welcome concerning appropriate layout, safety features, mandatory fields, and content of a typical login page.

Privacy and Terms page will not be seen in navigation but will be available from the login page. Developer advice requested.



Initial Activity Register

Here the user input their current activities- the things they spend time on outside of work and school hours. They can be work or school related in content. They can be daily or intermittent activities done through out the week.

The purpose of **sifter** is to help you sort your activities and ultimately align them with your goals.

The 6-9 activities that are listed here will be the first "batch" to be time tracked.

The user need not feel fixed to these 6 activities as there will be opportunities later to add, subtract, or change the activities.

Customization of activity selection makes each user's profile completely unique. Drop down menus or administrative controls could be used to gear toward younger users or to guide selection of productive activities.

Rationale for leaving out school or work as an actual activity is the presumption that those hours represent time that is already "managed" by supervisors or teachers.

Notes to developer: Activity fields entered here (A 1-6) will populate the sifter view screen (B). Which begins with all activities equal until Time Tracker data modifies the size and positioning of each activity grain. More detail later on page 7.

User may add up to a maximum of 9 Activities at any given time. The + button adds fields.



(B)

FEATURE ON HOLD

Goals and Activities Register

Here the user inputs three medium or long-term goals. Under each goal the user inputs an activity that they think will help them achieve that goal.

There may be overlap with the activities from the Current 6 from the last screen. That is OK, the app knows what to do.

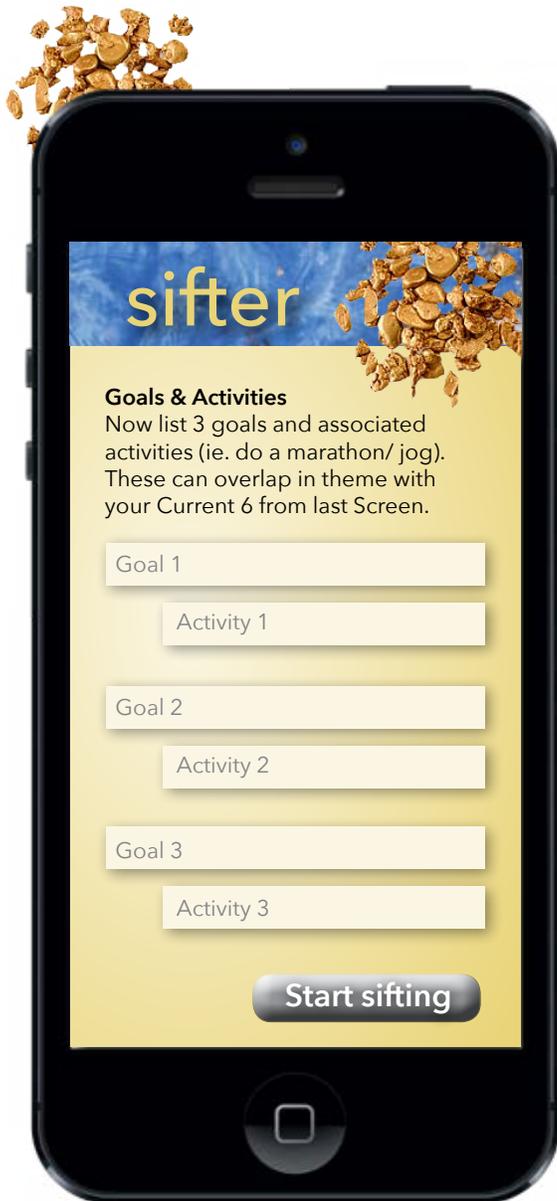
In the case of students using this app. Their entries might look something like the following

Goal 1: Get an A in Math
Activity 1: Study Math

Goal 2: Beat personal best time in 500 meter dash
Activity 2: Running

Goal 3: Learn to Speak French
Activity3: Practice French

It is fine to have specific or open ended activities. The selections can be changed or refined later on.



Additional considerations from Prototype research:

This concept of separating regular activities from goal oriented activities was temporarily abandoned in an effort to simplify the entire design and user experience. It could be reconsidered at a later date for upgrades or extended editions.

Notes to developer: This information should be filed for future reference.



Presift View

The app now populates the screen with the first 6-9 activities that have been input by the user. The activity "grains" are all equally weighted until time tracking begins.

The user will now use sifter to track the approximate time spent on the preselected activities. By selecting an activity and then clicking the "begin tracking" button, sifter will open the Time Tracker (see page 8)

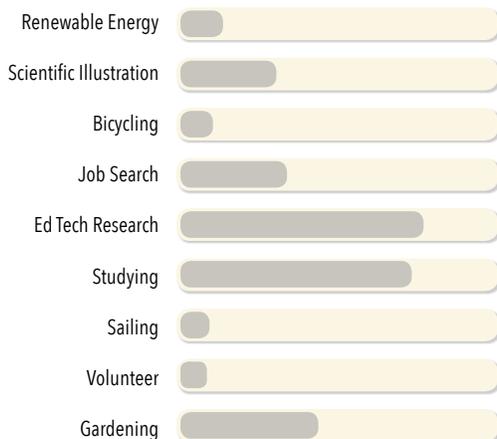
There are a variety of factors to consider in how best to have the user monitor their time. Similar to the way a calorie counting app may have the user enter food items instead of specific calories, the **sifter** must be designed so it is very easy to approximate time spent on any given activity.

At the end of each day or week depending on preference settings, the user will:

Engage a series of sliders to estimate time spent on the given activities. (see diagram A/ update on page 8) This mode of time tracking was chosen to lend more data to the app. The quantitative measure will allow for a comparison between activities.

*The length of monitoring time is gaged by the user. Once the information is gleaned. The user can at any time reset all to equilibrium or completely change their activity grains. Note: History will be kept in the background for user access only. See page 8.

A) Slider concept: from original design

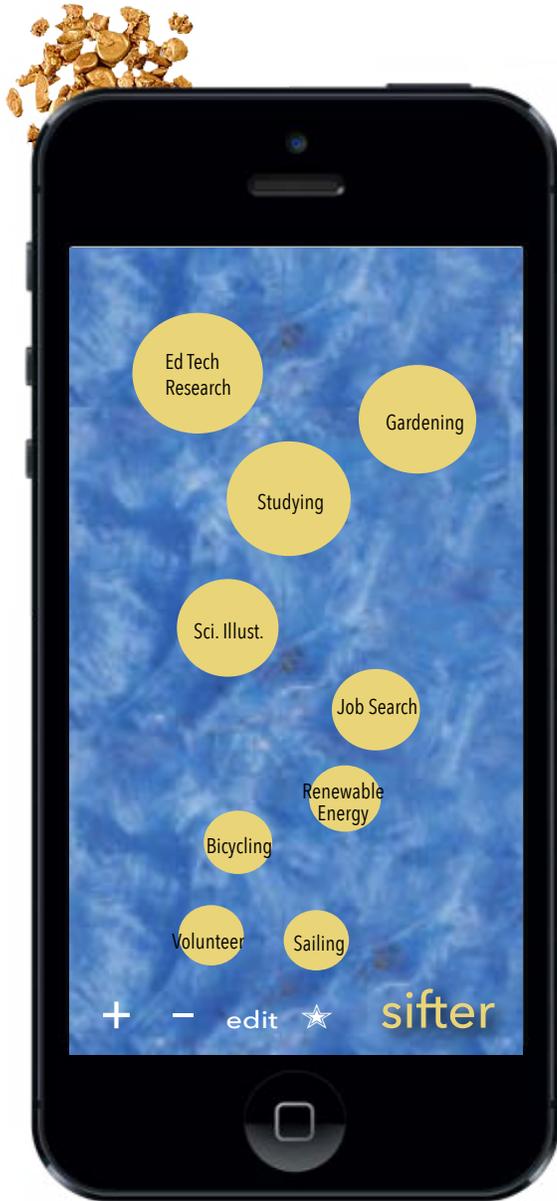


Additional considerations from Prototype research:

The initial design indicated several ways to track time. Ultimately this model was chosen for its ease of use.

Notes to developer: To appeal to different user styles, time tracking option should be built in for a daily or weekly accounting. The Time Tracker will be its own page and will have time values across top. See pages 7 and 8

**SEE FEATURE
UPDATE ON PG 8**



Display of activities will change as daily monitoring continues. Display above shows average of slider values at right.

Notes to developer: Additional global tools are available through the *sifter* home page/tools and support accessible by clicking on the Sifter logo in the right hand corner. See page 11 for more information.

Sub list/ To Do list features are available are available for each activity by pressing and holding until Activity glows and engages the sublist view.

Sifting begins in sifter view.

After several days of time monitoring input the app now begins to **"sift"** the activities. Those given the most time given them grow and move toward the top. Those given little time shrink and sink.

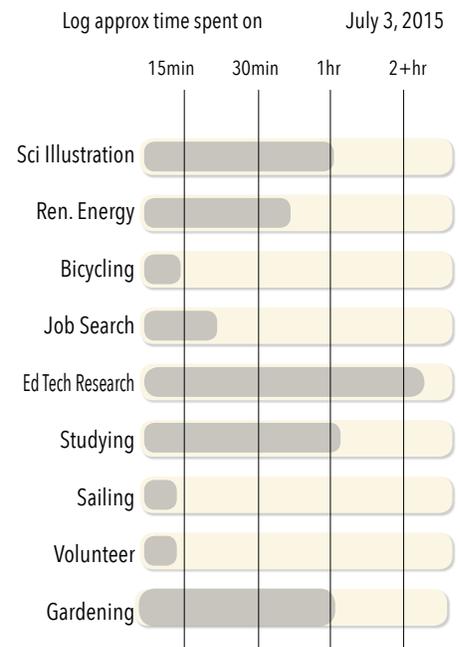
Addendum: A fun sifting sound could be added as well as a shake the mobile device to reveal the newly sized grains. Design wise an actual sifting pan could be incorporated to further the theme. "grains" would visually stay above or fall through the screen.

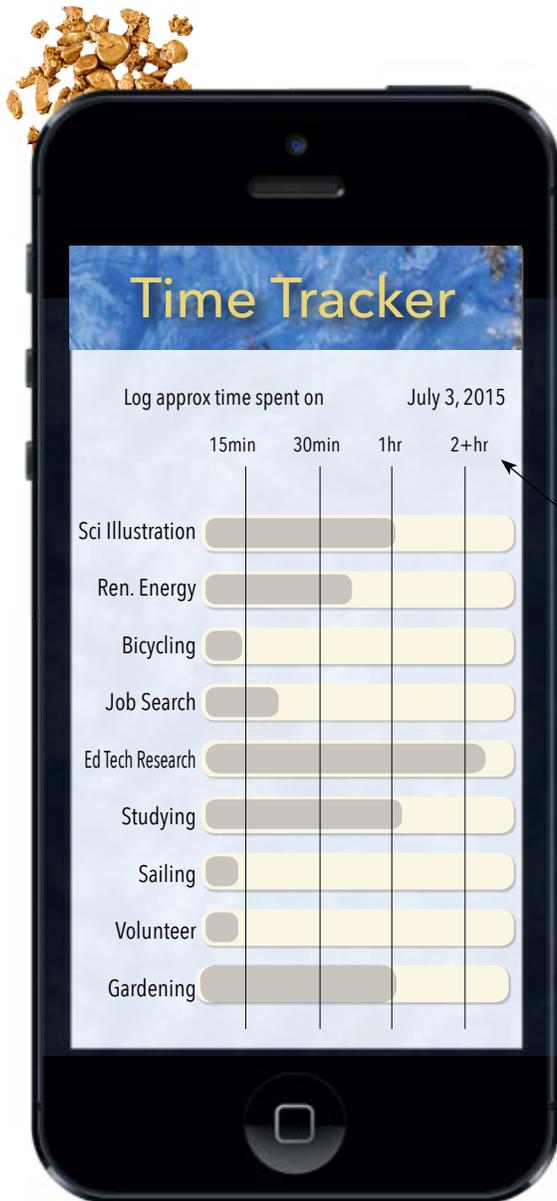
What does this mean for the user?

The user now has a visual capture of the activities in his/her life that are consuming most of their time. They can **see** the effect that spending too little time on any given activity will have over time. The neglected activity shrinks to non-existence, while the activities that are given quality time grow and rise. It also makes the user realize that a series of small time commitments adds up to significant time value.

While the time tracking phase is underway the user may at any time add (+) or subtract (-) or edit activities. This feature is available because Sifter recognizes that life can change dramatically in an instant and the activities that seemed important one day, may be insignificant the next. The star (★) allows you to indicate favorite or necessary activities that you are working to spend more time on.

As the activities continue to get sifted, there are a variety of tools inside sifter to help you manage your time, learn more about time management, and connect with friends and others who share your interests.





The New Time Tracker with time reference

As the sifter design evolves new features require additional input. User customization of the time units may be feasible.

Additional considerations from Prototype research:

Time Tracker is where the user estimates time spent on activities. Once it was determined that activity time relevance to each other would actually take more time to estimate than units of time, a time register was added across the top of the tracker.

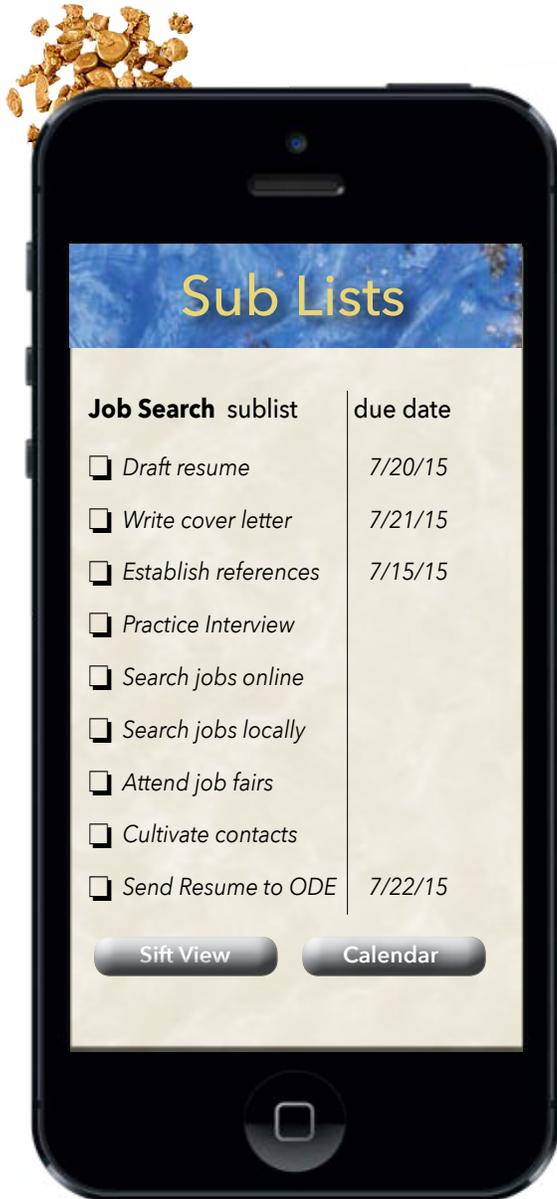
Since the user will have the choice to track time daily or weekly. The time units will be different for each option.

Once tested with user feedback the design may need to revert to the daily tracking option only, as it may be difficult or ineffective to offer both.

Notes to developer: As noted previously, each time the user indicates time spent on an activity it will make the corresponding activity grain in sifter view grow in size and move toward the top of the screen, while neglected activities shrink and sink toward the bottom of the screen. If an activity does not earn any time for 6 weeks it disappears from the sifter view.

Over time Activities will come and go but there will be a history feature to access them for future reference. They will be archived in the order of their original start dates. If an activity is reentered the new start date will be archived as well. This feature of archiving goes on in the background but is accessible at anytime for the user to reflect on (for instance) the year's activities.

Total time spent on activities also will be collected to extend the usefulness of the history feature.



Advanced "Sub lists" - Now with dates

Every activity we engage in typically has a list of sub activities. So at any time the user can press and hold on one of the activity grains (see detail C) to reveal an advanced to do list for that specific activity.

For instance, Job Search may have several important subtasks that when detailed out benefit the user.

Sifter will suggest task lists for many activities or the user can completely customize their own list.

The task lists are stored and available for future access.

The user can even share task lists through the social media access options available inside the app.

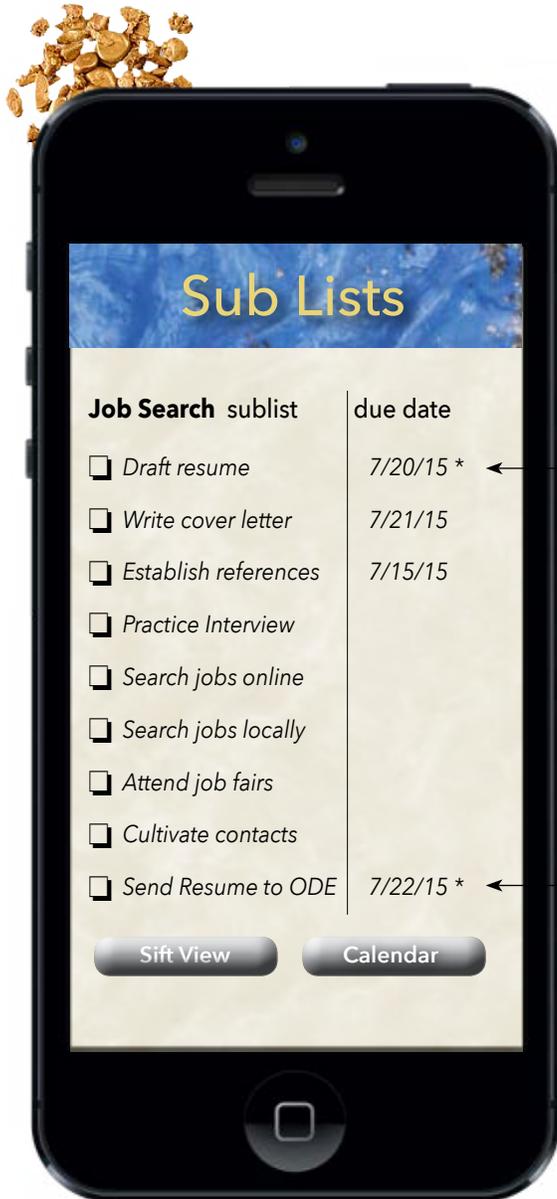
Additional considerations from Prototype research:

Clear and consistent titling must be established for the zones of engagement. For example: Sifter view vs home, Time Tracker vs Keeper, Activity Register vs List, Task list vs Sub list or To Do list. Time needs devoted to optimize, simplify and clarify wording selections for ease of navigation.



Detail C: Access Sub lists for each activity.

Notes to developer: Sifter will have a background library that is not directly accessible to the user. This library will hold suggested sub lists/to do lists for hundreds of common activities. Optional suggestions can be summoned from this list as the user engages in building a sublist. The Sub list now feature due dates. See page 10 for details.



An asterisk next to the date entry adds date with description to your notification list.

Sub lists - Now with dates and "Aging" To Do features.

Because our lives can get very busy, we sometimes need and want reminders. The piece of paper where you took a note or an important date gets lost. Taking time to add dates to your sub lists in sifter will always keep you on task and ready for the next project. The concept of an "aging" To Do list was suggested by Dr. Albert Ingram from Kent State University.

"One of my favorite ToDo list (features) "ages" the ToDo list. For example, if I submit a proposal to a conference and have it accepted, then obviously I will need to have things like Outline the presentation, Create the Powerpoint, or whatever on my ToDo list. The thing is that I might get accepted in June when the conference is in October. Clearly, it shouldn't be a top priority in July but the closer the conference comes, the higher the priority should be, until the program (is) screaming at me two days before to finish preparing the presentation."

-Dr. Albert Ingram

Sifter liked this idea. So now a variety of notification options are available for any date(s) added to the sub-pages. Seamless communication will also be available through popular calendar programs such as google calendar and ios and android calendars, featuring notification via email, voice mail, text message, calendar alert or sifter alert.

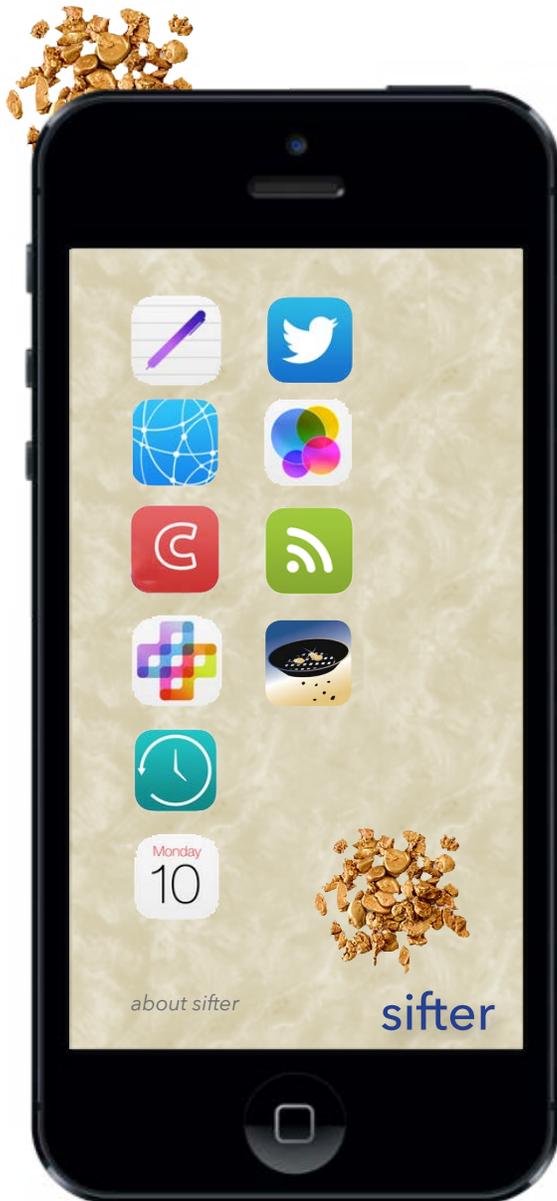
Additional considerations from Prototype research:

While you may want to add dates to various sub lists, you may not want notifications on all of those dates. Here, an asterisk next to the date entry will add it to your notification list. Dates without asterisks do not engage notifications.

Notes to developer: Notification controls will need built into the app. Possibly a global control for all notifications or a choice of notification style available at the point of date entry. Please advise.

Sifter Home Page/ Tools & Support

A variety of tools are in development and will be made available through the Sifter home page accessible from anywhere by clicking on the Sifter logo in the right hand corner.



"about sifter" takes you back to the introductory paragraph, mission statement, and history of the app.

Additional considerations from Prototype research:

After reviewing several different options for a quality RSS feed I decided on Time Management Ninja. Ideally a future offering of sifter would include content written exclusively for and by sifter. See prototype at Appy Pie for RSS example.



Notes- with prompts for keep recording thoughts you have about the activities you are currently involved in. Note pages can be tagged and stored with specific activities.



Connect - with friends and others who share your interests. Here you'll have an opportunity to post a screen capture of your Sifter view and browse pages posted by other users that you choose to connect with. You will be able to filter for those with similar activity lists.



Chums- Build a community around your interests. Similar to an exercise buddy, sifter encourages the user to have "chums". These are the people you connect and work together with for peer support or mentorship.



Capture your progress by storing an image of your sifter screen to store in your journal or share in social media.



Timer- built in timer, with direct link to activity monitor



Calendar- Goal setting module for setting aside more time for your favorite or most necessary activities. Calendar also works in conjunction with the new aging to do list feature. compatible with common Calendar apps.



Tweet your successes or other sifter experiences.



Motivation- A posting site for motivation, testimonials, quotes, and success stories.



RSS- Read sifter's recommended RSS feed for ideas and research related to time management. <http://feeds.feedburner.com/TimeManagementNinja>



sifter view - A direct link to sifter view where you can time track, add or edit content, and manage your activities through sub lists/to do lists.

Notes to developer: Many options on the sifter home/ tools and support page are under development and need market testing and user feedback. Ultimately each button here would open up a global or activity specific window. So the user could look at all Activities at once or focus on them individually. At all times during the use of this app there should be an option for "add" or "other" activity, since new activities can happen at any time and some activities are by nature, not prone to categorization.



Thank you for taking time to review
sifter.

If you have any questions or suggestions please contact:

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