



Quantified Self
self knowledge through numbers

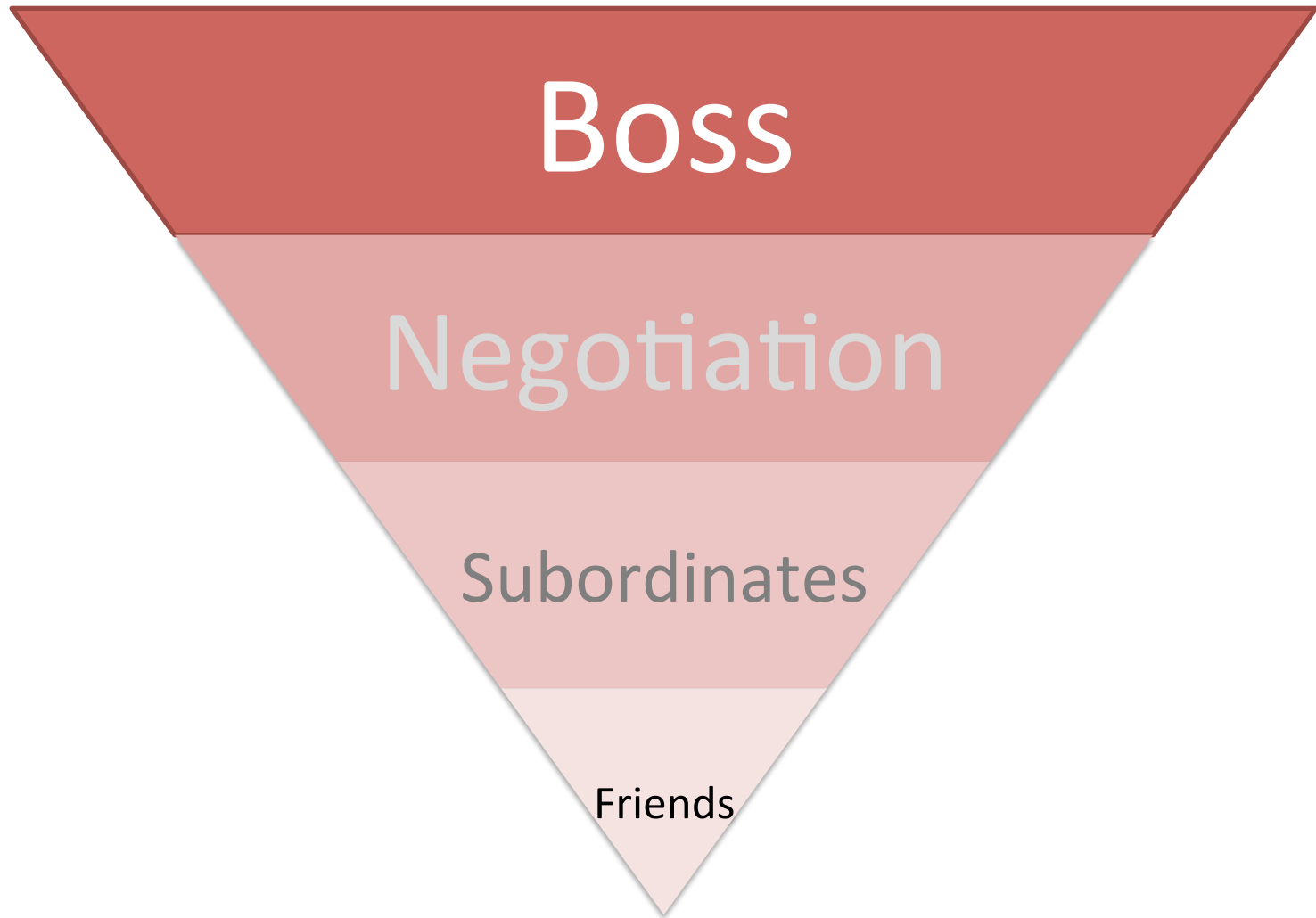
Using Heart Rate Variability to Analyze Stress in Conversation

Paul LaFontaine

Vapor Lock



Maybe Difficult Conversation?



Get Better at Avoiding Vapor Lock

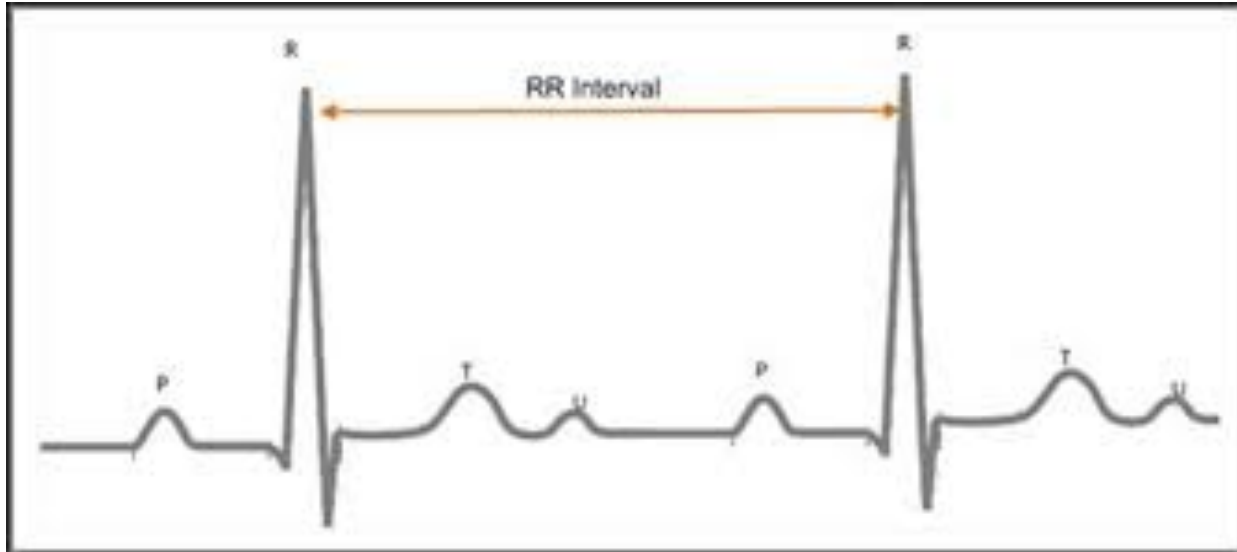




What did I do?

Measured my heart rate variability
when in conversations with work
colleagues

Heart Rate Variability (HRV)



Heart beat intervals vary

Difficult Subjects as Threats

No Threat
“RELAX..”

HIGH HRV

Brain Engaged



Threat
“RUN!”

Low HRV

Vapor Lock

LOW HRV VAPOR LOCK



With whom, and when?



How did I do it?

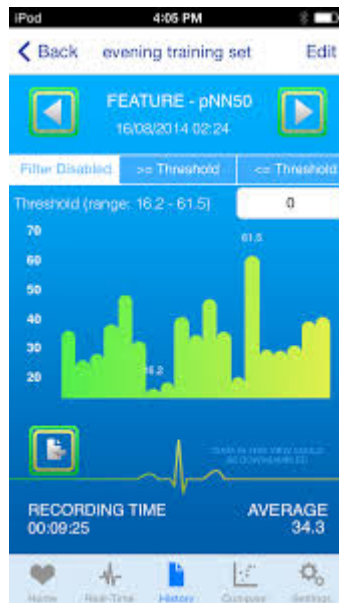
Wore off the shelf wearables, took
reading during meeting, export data
to excel

Measured



154 Conversations

- 27 reporting to Bosses
- 87 with Colleagues
- 4 as Interviewer
- 11 Public Speaking
- 25 Staff meetings

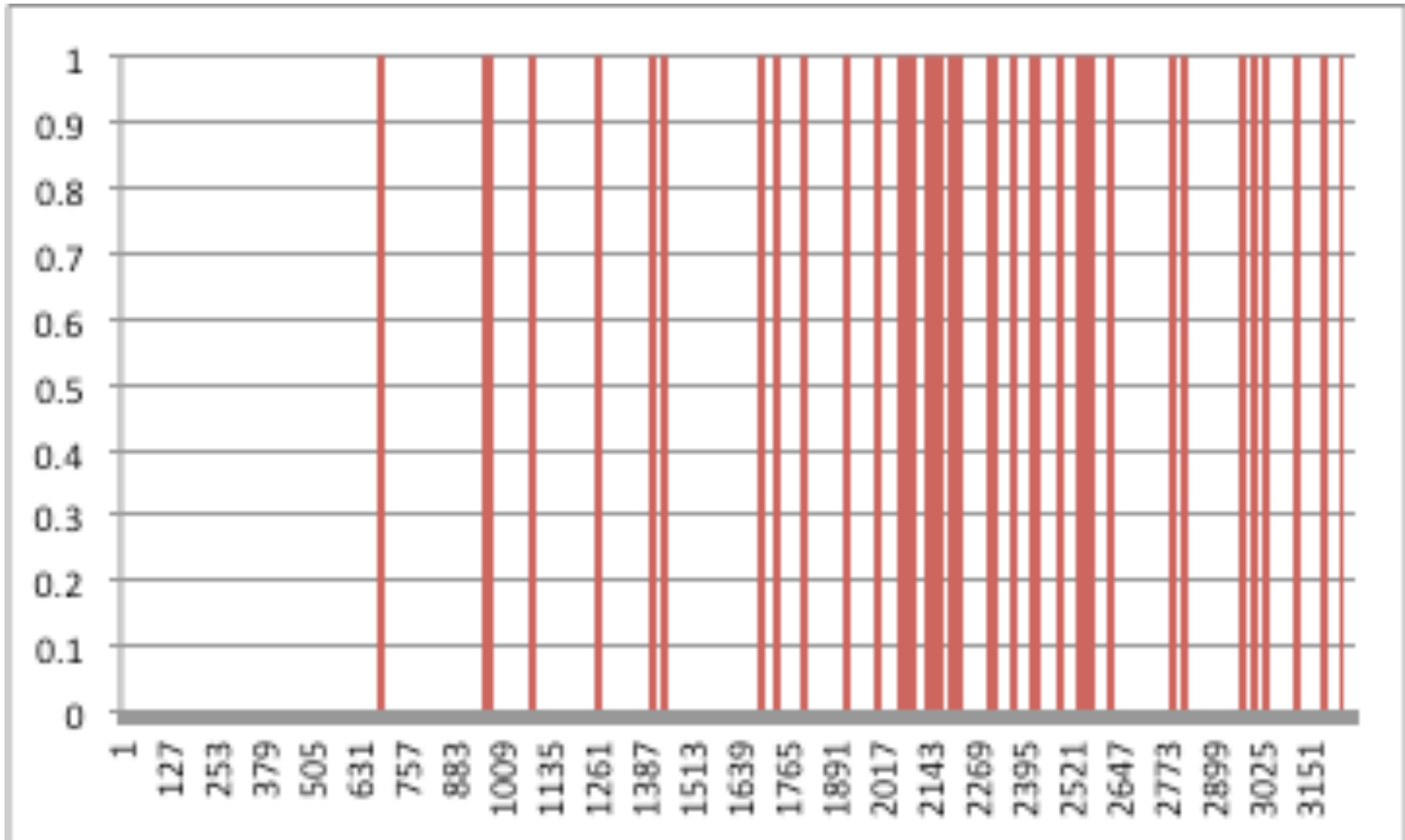


Conditions For Vapor Lock

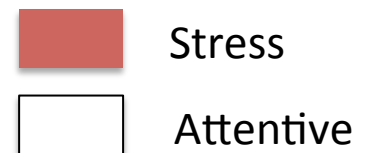


- For more than 9 consecutive heart beats,
- Interval between successive beats is under 17 ms

Percent of Time in Vapor Lock



13.3% in Vapor Lock

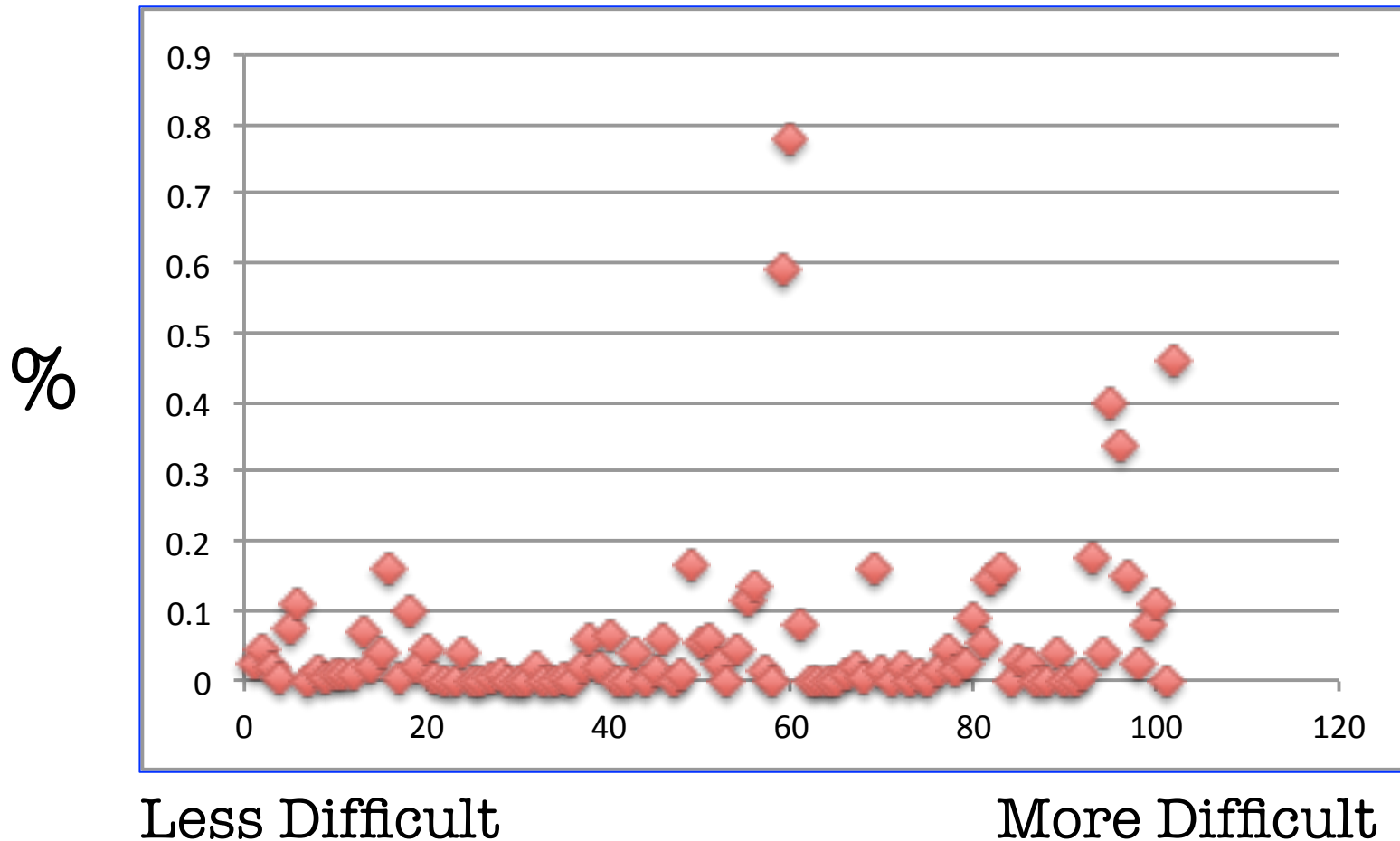




What did I learn?

Difficult conversations are not
consistent creators of Vapor Lock.

Not Correlated with Difficulty



$R = .17$ No Relationship

Number of People in the Room



Vapor Lock



Brain Engaged

Number of People – The Data

# People	Avg % Stress
1	3%
2	11%
3	16%
8	46%
18	59%
85	78%

$R = .73$ Very Strong Relationship

New Ninja Strategy...



Stick to a
few points



OK for difficult
subjects

Conclusions

- Cannot avoid Vapor Lock when there are a large number of people
- Controversial or thoughtful topics are best in 1 on 1 conversations
- Next study: How does the time of day impact the ability to cope with difficult conversations



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