

SAFe® Iteration Review

Facilitator's Guide

Purpose, Intent, and Outcomes

Purpose

The Iteration Review is a key event for the Agile Team to showcase their accomplishments, receive immediate, contextual feedback from stakeholders, and collaboratively determine the next steps as they close the iteration timebox.

Intent

The intent of the Iteration Review is to create a fast feedback loop between the Agile Team and its stakeholders to ensure the team is building the right solution, demonstrate progress against Iteration Goals, and objectively evaluate a working system.

Outcomes

A successful Iteration Review event delivers the following:

- Alignment between the Agile Team and stakeholders on changes made to the solution.
- Determination of whether Iteration Goals were achieved.
- Identification of new risks and impediments.
- Updated **Team Backlog** (adjusted based on feedback) and **Team Metrics** (to inform the Iteration Retrospective and future planning).

Agenda

The Iteration Review is timeboxed to a maximum of 90 minutes for a two-week iteration.

Step	Time	Description
Review Iteration Goals	Flexible	Discuss the status of each Iteration Goal committed to during Iteration Planning.
Demonstrate Completed Stories	Flexible	Walk through and demonstrate the significant new behavior and knowledge gained from all completed stories, spikes, refactors, and NFRs in a working, tested system.
Reflect on Incomplete Stories	Flexible	Discuss stories and goals not completed to identify the root causes (e.g., impediments, risks, estimation inaccuracies, over-commitment).
Identify Risks and Impediments	Flexible	Surface new risks or dependencies that might impact achieving the PI Objectives, often using the ROAM process.
Refine the Team Backlog	Flexible	Adjust the backlog sequence, estimates, and acceptance criteria based on feedback and discussions.

Preparation Checklist

Before the event begins, prepare the following:

- **Attendees, Location, and Inputs:** Confirm attendance of the Agile Team (Product Owner, Scrum Master/Team Coach, Team Members), as well as relevant stakeholders. Ensure a working system (deployed to a staging environment) is ready for demonstration. Publish the demo agenda.
- **Logistics:** Book a meeting space (physical or virtual) that supports sharing the working system. Ensure all necessary tools for collaborative backlog refinement are available.
- **Content:** Review the iteration goals and the status of all committed work. Identify which team members will demo specific completed stories.

Tips and Tricks

Remote Facilitation

If you're having an event online, remember these tips:

- Use a shared digital board (if necessary for refinement).
- Test the demo environment and screen-sharing technology beforehand to avoid delays.
- Ensure the demo is clearly visible and audibly presented to remote stakeholders.
- Use chat/Q&A features for immediate stakeholder feedback during the demo.

Overcoming Challenges

Potential Issue	Way to Overcome
The demo fails or is too slow.	Encourage the team to limit preparation to less than two hours and focus on testing the demo environment before the event. Have backup screenshots or a brief presentation for spikes/NFRs ready.
The discussion focuses too much on why a story wasn't done, becoming punitive.	Gently interrupt and reframe the discussion: "Let's focus on the systemic reason we couldn't finish, not who is at fault. This helps us prepare for the Retrospective."
Stakeholders give vague or contradictory feedback.	The PO or Scrum Master can take the lead in asking clarifying questions ("What specifically would you like to see changed?") and documenting feedback clearly for alignment as potential new stories or acceptance criteria to be refined further.
The team is presenting slides instead of demoing the working system.	Remind the team and stakeholders that the review is intended to garner feedback on a working, tested system component. Minimize the use of slides; the focus is on the integrated solution.
The team is trying to demo incomplete stories that aren't functional.	Verify that completed stories meet the Definition of Done (DoD). Only demo incomplete stories if enough functionality is available to garner meaningful feedback.

Post-Event Actions

Post-event actions ensure the outcomes of the review are integrated into the workflow:

- The Product Owner updates the Team Backlog immediately based on the stakeholder feedback and new learnings from the review.
- The Scrum Master/Team Coach facilitates the Iteration Retrospective (the next event), using the team metrics, risk identification, and reflection on incomplete stories as key inputs.
- Risks and impediments identified are tracked and addressed (e.g., using ROAM) and communicated to the ART via the Coach Sync if necessary.