

Purpose and Agenda

Purpose

The PO Sync is a regularly scheduled event for POs and product management (PMs) with several important purposes. One is to provide visibility into how well the ART (Agile release train) is progressing towards its PI objectives. The second purpose is to assess any scope changes to work. The third purpose is to surface any opportunities or problems with feature development.

The PO sync and coach sync meetings may be combined into a single ART sync event.

Agenda

SAFe recommends holding a PO sync once a week, or more often if needed, for a 30-60 minute timebox. The release train engineer (RTE) or a PM may facilitate this sync.

[30–60 minutes] Potential topics include:

- **Discussing features teams are working on and highlighting dependencies, blockers, or risks.**
- **Asking if any PMs/POs need to suggest scope adjustments to features.**
- **Having POs share progress towards teams meeting PI objectives.**
- **Reading out of any PI objective or feature work that is at risk or blocked.**
- **Working sessions to refine the ART or solution backlog.**
- **Engaging PO sync attendees in Weighted Shortest Job First (WSJF) prioritization ahead of the next PI planning**

After the agreed-upon timebox for the PO Sync with the whole group, time should be reserved for meet-afters on any topic that requires deeper discussion or problems that need to be addressed.

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Facilitator preparation

- ☐ **Establish** a regular cadence for the PO sync. Make sure POs, PMs, and important stakeholders know when these syncs will be held and the purpose for these syncs.
- ☐ **Decide** who will facilitate the PO sync. Although facilitation may rotate, make sure that whomever is facilitating the next PO sync knows they are facilitating in advance.
- ☐ **Pick and communicate** the meeting topic or topics to the attendees ahead of the next sync.
- ☐ **Announce** what the topic(s) are and alert attendees to any preparation they need to accomplish or bring with them to the next sync.
- ☐ **Create** an adjustable but re-usable PO sync agenda template, and make sure you update it before the upcoming PO sync to facilitate an organized flow of discussion.

Attendee preparation

- ☐ **Come prepared** with any requested information (e.g. identified risks, blocks, suggested changes).
- ☐ **Share** briefly and plan to stay after the timebox in case you are involved in any meet-afters identified during the sync.
- ☐ **Take** any outputs back to your team (e.g. adjustments to work, priority, or scope).

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Put the PO sync update in an ongoing shared document ahead of the meeting. This helps attendees in remote and in-person settings reference shared information.

Employ key focal points to drive the meeting—the ART or solution backlog, features in the Agile lifecycle management (ALM) tool or on the ART planning board or PI objectives. In a remote setting you may want to share a screen with these on them and refer to it often.

If POs and PMs need to bring information prepared to share, create a shared location for that or a template guiding them on what to share/how much to share.

Host a PO sync dedicated to each team sharing where they are with their own PI objectives and ask: Is any feature or PI objective at risk? Are there any teams in danger of not delivering on their objectives? Are there teams struggling with capacity? This supports discussion on where work can be shifted or re-scoped.

Ask everyone to mute themselves when not speaking. Ensure that you can mute participants joining remotely so that others aren't hearing background noise while trying to engage.

Create a remote or distributed friendly way for attendees to ask questions or share reactions (e.g. some platforms have a raise-hand button).

Agree on a signal or word that can help move a lengthy conversation into a meet-after.

Using the Meeting Creatively

- **Rotate** the facilitator so regular attendees all get a chance to facilitate.
- **Create** a theme for each PO sync and publish the schedule ahead of time—Feature check-ins, mid-PI scope adjustment conversations, PI objective discussion, WSJF prioritization.
- **Use fun** meeting openers and icebreakers—e.g. ask everyone to tell a joke, give a visual (emoji or meme) that represents how they are feeling about the meeting topic, have everyone share a success.
- **Seek out** creative ways to support engagement and feedback. Many remote meeting platforms allow participants to type chat items, offer polls, reaction buttons, and even support quizzes or games as means of building engagement and collecting feedback.

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Let's face it; not everything goes perfectly all the time. In a fast-paced business environment, change is the only constant. It can be difficult to move your team forward when disagreements or conflicts occur. Below are some common areas where scrum masters or team coaches can succeed in the face of adversity.

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POTENTIAL ISSUES

No one attends to share details of enabler work

Ways to overcome:

Invite System Architect to discuss current and upcoming enabler work and its importance in enabling sustainable value delivery.

PO sync attendees seem unengaged or have stopped attending regularly

Ways to overcome:

Share a purpose for the meeting so attendees can better understand their contribution. Create a specific agenda for each meeting so attendees know what will be discussed and come ready to participate. Work to add fun and engaging formats and activities to this event so that the facilitation leads to more interest. Consider holding a retro or creating other ways to gauge feedback and needs to inspect and adapt the PO sync over time.

The meeting is too long, and individual updates are lengthy or many need significant meet-afters

Ways to overcome:

This can be an indicator that PO sync could be held more often. Consider adding an additional PO sync to the regular cadence of ART events. This can also be addressed with tighter facilitation.