Stakeholder Prioritization Session

<u>Audience:</u>

<u>Frequency:</u>
Once mid-sprint

After reading this procedure, the audience will be able to understand the procedure for conducting a Stakeholder Prioritization Session, which is an informal meeting with all stakeholders of the service delivery team to review user stories and solicit input from the constituents to craft a better product. It is attended by anyone who wants to have input into the backlog's icebox for a given team. The purpose of the session is to elicit feedback and foster collaboration with stakeholders.

The Stakeholder Prioritization session takes place at any point in the Sprint though the usual time frame is in the middle of the sprint.

- **Digital Service Teams:** Each sprint, the team is required to invite the input of their stakeholders. During this meeting, the Product Owner:

    o Reviews what the team is planning for the upcoming sprint, seeking input.

    o Reviews any story in the icebox requested by stakeholders in attendance, seeking input and addressing whether the work is planned soon or…..

    o Allows competing stakeholders to come to an agreement on priority if conflicts exist, but it is important for the stakeholders to understand that the final decision for priority rests with the Product Owner.

- **Non-Digital Service Teams:** Each sprint it is recommended to invite the input of stakeholders. During this meeting, the Product Owner:

    o Reviews the stories and their associated priority with the stakeholders, that are slated for the next sprint seeking input or commentary

    o Reviews the icebox with the stakeholders, seeking input

    o Reviews what the team is planning for the next items to be worked on, seeking input.

    o Allows competing stakeholders to come to an agreement on priority if conflicts exist, but it is important for the stakeholders to understand that the final decision for priority rests with the Product Owner.

The Stakeholder Prioritization meeting is valuable as it provides an opportunity for the team to show its planned work directly to stakeholders. It also enables the stakeholders to provide feedback into the backlog. The meeting contributes to team morale, keeping the team motivated to produce quality work, and to the overall transparency of the work.

The session is facilitated by the Product Owner. In addition to the stakeholders, the session is also attended by the team's Scrum Master/Project Manager, Performance Analyst, technical lead, lead tester and associated subject matter experts (SME's) related to the specific stories planned for the subsequent sprint.

If the team is regularly conducting Backlog Development and Refinement and if the Product Owner is regularly prioritizing the backlog, then preparation for a Stakeholder Prioritization meeting should not take more than a few minutes. Knowing the user stories and being ready to demonstrate knowledge of those stories' prepares you to confidently start the Stakeholder Prioritization session.

The session should not include a review of what was completed in the previous sprint. Attendees are expected to come prepared having seen or reviewed the last Sprint Review so that they do not slow the session down with repetitive questions that have already been answered. The focus of this session should be on the conversation, eliciting feedback and collaborating on next steps.

The actual session should be informal. It should not include a formal PowerPoint slide deck. The Product Owner should delve right into Pivotal Tracker to display the planned work/backlog for the next sprint, as well as into the Icebox if requested. The session should last no longer than 1 (one) hour for a two (2) week sprint and can last as little as 15 minutes.

The session is recorded and a link posted to a public forum for absentee stakeholders to review as their time permits.

Stakeholder Prioritization Session Workflow Steps

Step	Description
1.	Mid-sprint, a Stakeholder Prioritization session is scheduled, and an invite should be sent to key stakeholders invited by the Product Owner. There is no need for an agenda as there is only one focus on this session.
2.	The inputs to the Stakeholder Prioritization session are a backlog of two sprints, which have been prioritized by the Product Owner. However, the Product Owner should be prepared to discuss the backlog or review a story in the icebox upon request of a stakeholder.
3.	The session is facilitated by the Product Owner. The following items are addressed during the session: • Attendees are reminded that though new requests will be entertained, the Product Owner retains prioritization and scope authority. • What is planned for the next sprint? • Open the floor to questions from the stakeholders regarding any stories they have in the team's Icebox in Pivotal Tracker • Open the floor to questions from the stakeholders to entertain new stories or corrections/clarifications to planned stories.
4.	Any feedback that results in changes to be implemented is a new Product Backlog item (or an Icebox item) – add new features or enhancement requests to the backlog
5.	The entire group collaborates on what to do next, so that the session provides valuable input to subsequent Sprint Planning Meetings.

Step	Description
6.	The Backlog is revised with items for the next Sprint, but also may include new items identified to be added to the Backlog
	End of Stakeholder Prioritization Session Procedure