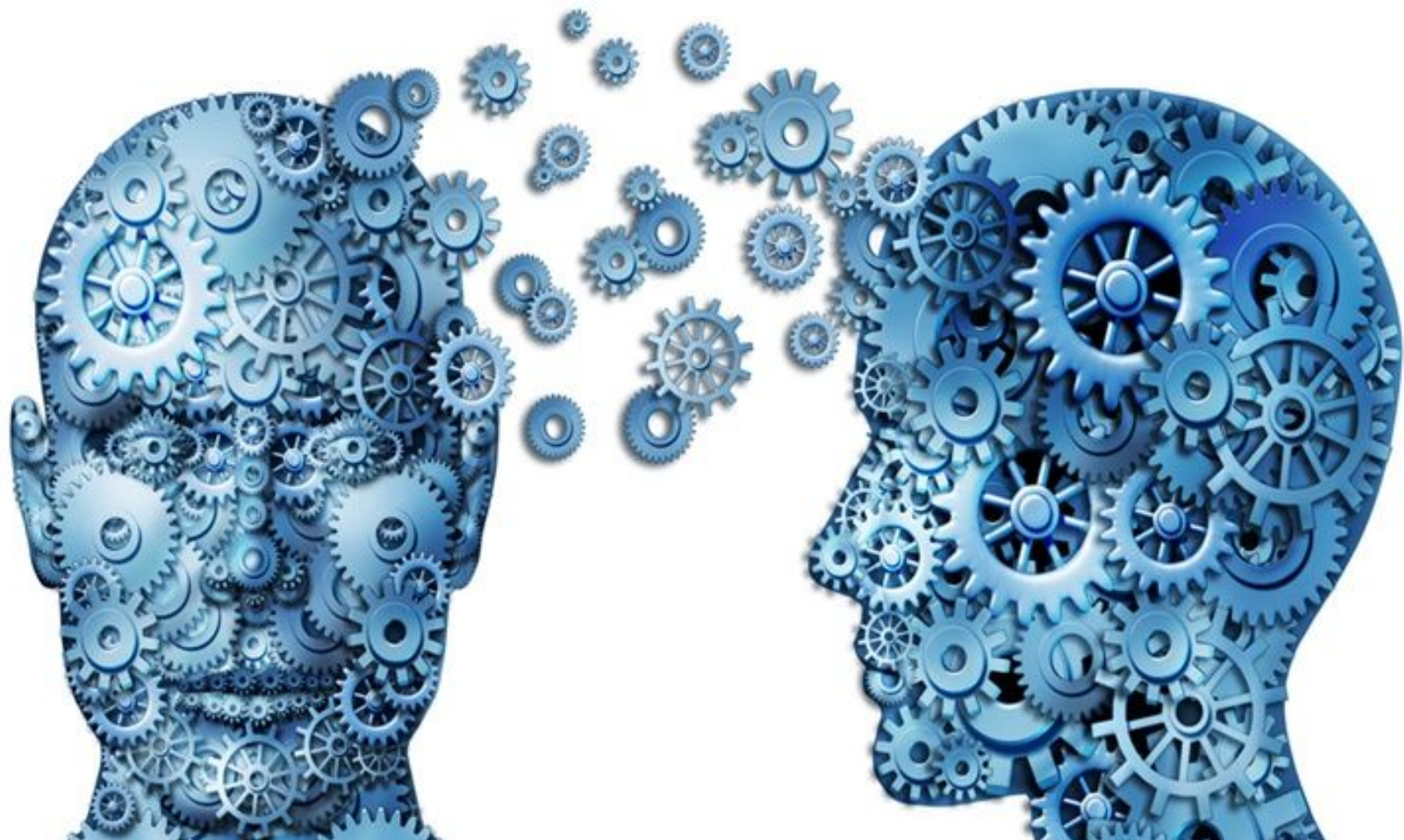


Just Say No!

Why Saying No is Difficult for a
Product Owner and How to Make it
Easier

Goals of Today's Workshop

- Why is it difficult to say no?
- Why do Product Owners, in particular, find it difficult to say no?
- Learn some tips that will make it easier to say no



Why Is It Difficult to Say No

- We want others to like us
- We don't want to disappoint others
- We are afraid of or shy away from conflict
- We want to respect authority
- We lack the courage to say no

**WE NEED TO LEARN
THE SLOW 'YES' AND
THE QUICK 'NO'.**

- TOM FRIEL

Product Owner Responsibilities

- Define the vision
- Maintain & prioritize the Product Backlog
- Anticipate customer needs
- Communicate with stakeholders & customers

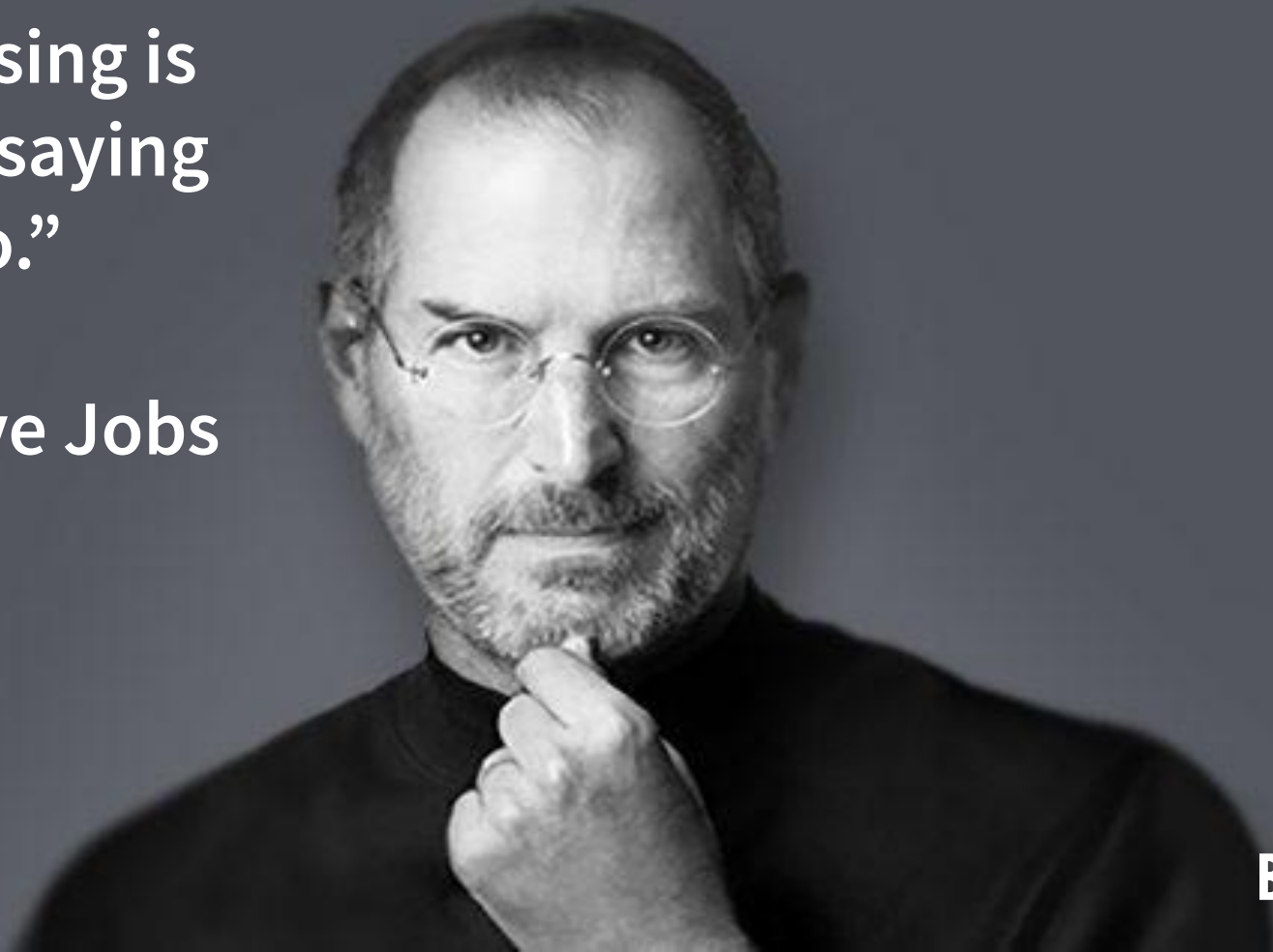
Who do Product Owners have
to say no to?

Why do you think it's difficult
for Product Owners to say no?

What is the impact when your
Product Owner isn't able to say
no?

**“Focusing is
about saying
no.”**

- Steve Jobs



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6 Tips to Help Make Saying No Easier

1. Be Clear on What No Really Means

- Not right now vs. never
- If possible, offer an alternative
- If the answer is no, be direct

2. Be Clear on What the Trade Offs Are

- What is the associated cost
- What value will be lost

3. Be Empathetic

Empathy = the ability to understand and share the feeling of another

- Express gratitude
- Show consideration
- Put yourself in their shoes

Thank you for your suggestion....

I can see why this feature is important for you to be able to.....

Your request makes total sense....

It means a lot to me that you took the time to provide feedback on how the product could be better...

I feel your pain and can see why it is frustrating for....

4. Be Prepared

- Know your product
- Know how your customer uses your product
- Bring data!
- Bring a subject matter expert
- Have the correct people in the room

5. Don't Give a List of Reasons

- Be concise
- Practice rebuttals

6. Say No Without Saying No

- Let them know that they are heard and appreciated
- Don't make a commitment

Thank you for your feedback, we really appreciate you taking the time to let us know how we can improve our product. Right now, our roadmap is pretty well defined but I will be sure to add your suggestion to [community, forum, etc].”

- Put responsibility back on the requester

Thank you for your feedback, we really appreciate you taking the time to let us know how we can improve our product. Right now, our roadmap is pretty well defined but if you remind in [x time], I will be sure to review your request again.

Let's Practice!

1. Be clear on what no really means
2. Be clear on the trade offs
3. Be empathetic
4. Be prepared
5. Don't give a list of reasons
6. Say no without saying no

1. Each table has a set of scenarios.
2. Assign a number from 1-4 to every person at the table (it's OK if more than one person has the same number).
3. The number assigned relates to the role on the scenario.
4. Use one or more of the tips provided to role play the scenarios.
5. Afterwards, let's discuss your thoughts!

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Questions?