Characteristics of Great Product Owners

The following are characteristics regarding characteristics and skills of Product Owners. For each statement, indicate how strongly you agree with that statement.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
Section I: Industry Knowledge						
1.1 Our POs have direct experience in their industry.						
1.2 Our POs would consider themselves as having "expert" knowledge about their industry.						
1.3 Our POs are aware of our competitor(s) and their product offering(s); our POs know how our products compare/contrast with our competitor's product(s).						
1.4 Our POs are aware of the trends in our industry; our POs have a clear understanding of what is desired now as well as "what's" next for their industry.						
1.5 There is a product vision for our product that provides a clear direction (i.e. a "North Star"), is inspirational, and future-looking.						
1.6 Our POs play an active role in reviewing and revising our product vision as needed, especially if the overall business, industry, or market/environment has a significant enough shift.						
Section II: Customer/Stakeholder Collaboration (Note: "Customers" is in respect to who consumers/uses your product, whether an internal customer/another department or external						
2.1 Our POs have a great collaborative relationship with their customers/stakeholders; the POs and customers/stakeholders are open, transparent, respectful, and work together well.						
2.2 Our POs have a strong understanding of "what is value" for their customers.						
2.3 Our POs meet on a reasonably frequent enough basis with their customers/stakeholders.						
2.4 When appropriate, our POs are comfortable saying "no" in a diplomatic/respectful way to customer/stakeholder requests that are out of alignment with the Product Vision and/or Product Roadmap.						
2.5 Our POs communicate with customers/stakehoders using words that the customers/stakeholders understand (not too much jargon, shows empathy/understanding of the customer/stakeholder point of view, etc.).						
2.6 Our customers/stakeholders have a high degree of trust in our POs.						
Section III: Product Development Team Collaboration						
3.1 Our POs have a great collaborative relationship with their product development team; the POs and product development team are open, transparent, respectful, and work together well.						
3.2 Our POs and product development teams spend enough time together when creating products for their customers.						
3.3 Our POs have a high degree of trust in their product development teams.						
3.4 Our product development teams have a high degree of trust in their POs.						
3.5 Our POs communicate with the product development teams using words that they understand (not too much jargon, shows empathy/understanding of the product development team's point of view, etc.).						
3.6 Our POs adjust the Product Backlog and/or Product Roadmaps using guidance/input from the product development team as applicable.						
3.7 (For Scrum) Our POs come fully prepared and are appropriately engaged in all the Scrum events, including Sprint Planning, Daily Scrum (as applicable), Sprint Review, and Sprint Retro.						
3.8 (For Scrum) Our POs are comfortable with and help support/coach product development team members in presenting their own work during Sprint Reviews.						
Section IV: Product Backlogs (Note: See the "Product Backlog" specific self-assessment for further criteria to consider)						
4.1 Our POs have enough reasonable time to create and refine items in the product backlogs.						
4.2 Our POs collaborate with other persons to write items within the product backlogs; the POs do not feel that they have to write all the product backlog items themselves.						
4.3 Our POs ensure items in the product backlogs include: (1) the description for the work requested/desired by their customers/stakeholders, (2) the corresponding value of that work requested, and (3) uses commonly understood words/terms/language.						
4.4 Our POs have clear criteria set for how items in the product backlog are to be ordered (i.e. prioritized in a specific order).						
4.5 Our POs stick to the ordering (prioritization) criteria in a diplomatic/respectful way, even when there is excessive pressure for other items to be done out of order.						
4.6 Our POs feel comfortable with changes to the Product Backlog, even if late in the process.						
4.7 Our POs emphasize interaction and collaboration to get increments of working products completed over writing/signing-off the "perfect" product backlog item documentation.						
Section V: General Product Ownership Mindset & Capabilities						
5.1 Our POs feel like they are empowered to make decisions; those decisions are not regularly overturned by senior leadership/management.						
5.2 Our POs can see both "the forest" (i.e. the high level vision and roadmaps) and "the trees" (i.e. the details in each product backlog item) at the same time; they can seamlessly operate at both the high and low levels simultaneously and effortlessly.						
5.3 Our POs are experts in working iteratively through increments (creation/adjustment of small "chunks" of working product) towards a release (which may be a set of increments combined together) for their customers.						
5.4 Our POs appropriately adjust their communication style (messaging, urgency, how they act, etc.) based upon who they are working with; the POs understand the "what's in it for me?" from executives to team members.						
5.5 When making decisions, our POs balance confidence with open-mindedness.						
5.6 Our POs are able to collect and critically analyze a high volume of information from multiple sources (from market research to feedback) and form focused decisions/next actions in a logical way.						
5.7 Our POs are passionate about what they do; they possess and outwardly convey positivity and optimism about their products.						

While the above is not an all-inclusive list, great Product Owners tend to have the characteristics and skills above. Review your answers. See if there are any patterns to your responses. Are there any opportunities for improvement you see?