Day - 6 (SLA)

✅ What is an SLA?

- **SLA** stands for **Service Level Agreement**.
- It's a **commitment between a service provider and a customer** that defines:
  - **How fast a task should be responded to**
  - **How quickly it should be resolved**
- In ServiceNow, SLAs help measure if support teams are meeting their goals.

✅ Why are SLAs Important?

- Helps track **performance** of teams.
- Makes sure that **high-priority issues** are handled faster.
- Ensures **accountability** and transparency.
- Helps in **escalations and reporting** when deadlines are missed.

🧩 Components of SLA in ServiceNow

Component	Description
SLA Definition	The blueprint for when SLAs start, pause, and stop.
Task SLA	The actual SLA instance applied to a task like an incident or request.
Schedule	Defines working hours (like 9-5 Mon-Fri) when SLA timing is counted.
SLA Workflow	Optional flow that runs on events like SLA breach or completion.
Retroactive Start	Allows SLA to start from a past event (e.g., assignment time).

⚙️ How Does SLA Work?

1. A task (e.g., Incident) is created.
2. SLA Definition checks if **start condition** is met (e.g., priority = 1).
3. Timer starts (according to **Schedule**).
4. If **stop condition** is met (e.g., state = Resolved), SLA ends.
5. If not completed in time → SLA **breaches**.

✅ SLA Conditions

Condition Type	Example
Start	Incident created or Priority set
Stop	Incident state = Resolved
Pause	Incident state = On Hold

These are set using **conditions builder** like in filters.

🕒 SLA Schedule

- SLA can be set to run only during **business hours** (like 9 AM – 6 PM).
- Set under: **Schedule field** inside SLA Definition.
- Common ones:
  - 24×7
  - 8–5 Weekdays
  - Custom holidays

📌 SLA Types in ServiceNow

Type	Description
SLA	For agreements between provider and customer (used most often)
OLA	Internal agreement between departments
UC	Agreement with a third-party vendor

👉 You configure all three using the **same SLA Definition module**, but based on who's involved, the type changes.

🔄 Retroactive Start

- Lets SLA **start from an earlier point** than when the SLA record was created.
- Example: If an incident was created at 9 AM but SLA was triggered at 10 AM, you can use Retroactive Start to count from 9 AM.

🔁 Task SLA Table

- Tracks real-time status of SLAs applied to tasks.
- Fields:
  - **SLA Name**
  - **Start time**
  - **End time**
  - **Percentage elapsed**
  - **Breach time**
  - **Stage (In Progress, Paused, Breached, etc.)**

📊 SLA Stages

Stage	Meaning
In Progress	SLA is actively running
Paused	SLA timer is paused
Completed	SLA condition is fulfilled
Breached	SLA goal time is exceeded
Cancelled	SLA was stopped due to task updates

🔎 SLA Definition Location in ServiceNow

> Application Navigator → Service Level Management > SLA Definitions

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📌 Interview Tip:

Be prepared to answer:

- What happens when SLA breaches?
- How to create SLA Definitions?
- What is Task SLA?
- Difference between SLA, OLA, and UC?
- Explain SLA lifecycle in a simple way.

Q1: Can you explain what an SLA is in ServiceNow?

Answer (Humanized):

Yes! So, SLA stands for Service Level Agreement. It's basically a rule that tells the system how quickly something should be resolved or responded to. Like, if a user raises a high-priority issue, the SLA might say it should be resolved within 1 hour. It helps in tracking if support teams are working on time or not.

Q2: What are the key components of an SLA in ServiceNow?

Answer:

From what I've learned, the main components are:

- **SLA Definition** – which defines when the SLA should start, stop, and pause.
- **Task SLA** – this is the actual SLA that gets attached to an incident or request.
- **Schedule** – to define working hours like 9–5 or 24×7.
- **Workflow** – to automate actions like alerts when an SLA is about to breach.

Q3: What conditions are used in SLA definitions?

Answer:

We usually define three main conditions:

- **Start condition**, like when an incident is created or assigned.
- **Stop condition**, like when the state becomes "Resolved".

- And sometimes a **Pause condition**, for example, when the incident goes “On Hold”.

Q4: What is a Task SLA in ServiceNow?

Answer:

A Task SLA is like a live timer record that’s attached to a task, such as an incident. It shows how much time has passed, whether it’s in progress, breached, or completed. It helps track whether the team is meeting their SLA goals or not.

Q5: What’s the difference between SLA, OLA, and UC?

Answer:

Yes, so:

- **SLA** is between the service provider and the customer.
- **OLA (Operational Level Agreement)** is internal – between two teams within the company.
- **UC (Underpinning Contract)** is an agreement with a vendor or third party.

Q6: Can an SLA be paused or restarted?

Answer:

Yes, we can use **Pause Conditions** to stop the SLA timer temporarily, like when an incident is waiting on a customer. And with **Retroactive Start**, the SLA can be set to start from a past time — which is useful when we want to track from assignment time, not creation time.

Q7: What happens if an SLA breaches?

Answer:

When an SLA breaches, its **stage becomes 'Breached'**. We can also trigger workflows like **sending alerts or escalating the task**. It helps the team respond faster next time.

Q8: How do you create an SLA in ServiceNow?

Answer:

The steps I followed were:

1. Go to **Service Level Management > SLA Definitions**.
2. Click on **New**, fill in the **name**, **table**, **conditions**, **goal time**, and **schedule**.
3. Then test it by creating a task (like an incident) and checking the **Task SLA** record.

Q9: Where can you see if an SLA is applied to a task?

Answer:

In the task record, there's a **related list** called **Task SLA**. It shows all the SLA records linked to that task, including their progress and breach time.

Q10: What is the use of an SLA schedule?

Answer:

The SLA schedule controls **when the SLA time is counted**. Like, if we use a 9–5 schedule, time won't count after office hours. This helps in tracking SLAs only during business hours.

🎓 Scenario-Based SLA Interview Questions (Fresher-Friendly)

🟡Q1. Scenario: An incident was created at 9 AM, but the SLA was triggered at 10 AM. The SLA should have started from 9 AM. What should you do?

Answer:

In this case, we can use the **Retroactive Start** option in the SLA definition. It allows the SLA to **start from an earlier time**, like the creation time of the incident. We can set a condition or field like `Created` or `Assignment time` as the retroactive start field, so the SLA counts time correctly from 9 AM.

🟡Q2. Scenario: You want the SLA to stop when an incident is resolved and pause when it's on hold. How do you configure that?

Answer:

In the SLA Definition, under the **"Start/Stop Conditions"** section, I'll:

- Set the **Start condition** to when the incident is created or assigned.
- Set the **Stop condition** to when the incident's state becomes **Resolved**.
- Set the **Pause condition** to when the state is **On Hold**.

That way, SLA timing stops and resumes based on the incident's progress.

🟡Q3. Scenario: You need to ensure that P1 incidents are resolved within 1 hour only during working hours (Mon-Fri, 9 AM – 6 PM). What would you do?

Answer:

Here's what I would do:

1. First, make sure a **business schedule** is created for Mon–Fri, 9–6.
2. Then, in the **SLA Definition**, I'll:
    - Set a **condition** where Priority = 1.
    - Set **Duration = 1 hour**.
    - Set the **Schedule field** to the Mon–Fri 9–6 schedule.

This ensures the SLA only runs during working hours and checks for high-priority issues.

🟡Q4. Scenario: The SLA is not getting applied to incidents. What could be the reasons?

Answer:

As a fresher, I would check:

- If the **conditions in the SLA definition** are correctly matching the incident data.
- Whether the **table** selected in the SLA definition is correct (like Incident).
- If the **SLA plugin is active**.

- If the **SLA workflow** or business rules are not blocked or misconfigured.

These are common issues why an SLA may not get attached.

🟡Q5. Scenario: Your manager asks for a report of all breached SLAs this week. How would you do it?

Answer:

I'll go to the **Task SLA table**, create a new report with:

- **Condition**: Stage = Breached AND Created this week.
- Then group it by **SLA Name** or **Assigned To** for analysis.

  This gives a clear picture of which SLAs are frequently breached.

🟡Q6. Scenario: A task has more than one SLA attached. How does the system know which SLA to apply?

Answer:

If multiple SLAs match the same task, the system uses the **"Order" field** in the SLA definition. The SLA with the **lowest order value** (like 100, 200...) gets applied first. It helps prioritize which SLA should be triggered if more than one is valid.

🟡Q7. Scenario: You want to alert the manager if an SLA is about to breach in 5 minutes. How can you do that?

Answer:

We can use **SLA Workflow** or **Flow Designer** with **SLA events** like `SLA: Breach Warning`.

I'll create a **notification** or **flow** that sends an email or Slack alert to the manager when only 5 minutes are left before breach.