



# Art of the Possible

## Newsletter

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AIR FORCE  
SUSTAINMENT CENTER

The AoP Newsletter is a monthly bulletin to communicate the latest enterprise AoP activities to the AFSC workforce. More detailed information is available on the AFSC AoP SharePoint site at <https://cs4.eis.afmc.af.mil/sites/1508/AoP/default.aspx>. If you have a question or would like to submit content for a future AoP Newsletter, please contact the POCs listed below.

### AoP Cycle

Art of the Possible (AoP) is built upon six core tenets: the Leadership Model, the Radiator Chart, and four tenets known as the AoP cycle. This cycle summarizes AoP in its simplest form. Its four tenets are: establish flow, identify Work in Progress (WIP), identify constraint, and resolve constraint. The first two are used in implementing AoP in a new area and establishing a process machine. Establishing flow is necessary to understand the movement of work at an operational level through a process. This flow becomes the basis for gates in a process machine. WIP is defined as the unfinished work in the process machine. The process transforms it into the product or service which the customer wants. Recognizing the location of WIP within the gated process can help to identify problem issues/constraints affecting machine output. The final two tenets of the AoP cycle constitute the iterative problem solving methodology. They are the identification and resolution of constraints. Identifying the constraint is the data driven process that isolates the constraint impacting the entire process machine. It is identified as the gate with the lowest throughput rate. This is frequently the gate that accumulates the most WIP or the gate with WIP in queue before it. Once the constraint is identified Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) is applied to resolve the constraint. Then the cycle continues with the identification of the new constraint.



### Process Flow

Within AoP, there is a defined "science" for designing and operating a process machine which works to ensure consistent execution philosophies and long term success. This science is based on: Little's Law, Theory of Constraints, and Drum Buffer Rope (DBR) philosophies. These are basic principles for creating flow in order to enable throughput. AoP starts with the foundation of creating flow for any process. Flow can be broken into three basic steps: 1) receive input; 2) create value; and 3) provide output. All processes have an input. That input might be an aircraft, an engine, a request for a part, a request for data or a request for resolution to a problem. Once the input is received into the process, the process "doers" take steps to create value for the input. The value may consist of performing depot maintenance on an aircraft or an engine; ordering and/or retrieving a part; researching and compiling information into a report; or providing a recommendation based on research and analysis. The output of the process would be the completed depot repair of an aircraft or an engine; handing the requested part to the requestor; handing a completed report to a requestor; or providing the written resolution request. The concept that all processes are based upon basic flow principles is what allows the AoP methodology to be universally applied throughout AFSC.

### NEWSLETTER POCs

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### Upcoming Events:

Advanced Level Workshop  
26-27 Sep 17, Kirtland AFB

Advanced Level Workshop  
7-8 Nov 17, Robins AFB  
AoP Performance Review  
22 Nov 17, VTC

### AoP Facts and Common Misconceptions:

#### What is the Maturity Matrix?

The Maturity Matrix provides a common yardstick for units to self-assess their growth in AoP after full implementation. Per AFSCI 60-101, commanders/directors are to conduct a self-assessment using the Maturity Matrix semi-annually. The AoP SME approved version is available on the AoP SharePoint site in the Tools folder. That version has improved language that utilizes common terminology so the matrix can be used by both production and administrative organizations.

### AoP SharePoint URL

<https://cs4.eis.afmc.af.mil/sites/1508/AoP/default.aspx>