

CIS 440 – Systems Design and Electronic Commerce

Midway Retrospective Instructions/Checklist

Set the Stage:

- Read these instructions. Each team may want to pick a facilitator to keep them on track.
- The goal for today's retrospective is ultimately to come up with one or two decisions about what to do to improve your process. Don't jump to this decision right away! First we'll Gather Data, then Generate Insights, with some facilitated activities.
- Get together with your team, if you haven't already. Let's do a quick check to see where we're at. Each team member should try to describe the capstone project in one or two words.

Gather Data:

- Do a timeline exercise. Draw a horizontal line on the whiteboard (or put tape on the wall) representing the project from August 26 (when we picked teams) to today. It's been 6½ weeks. Now, team members write all the events that they can remember, on sticky notes, and put them on the timeline. You can put the "high points" above the line and the "low points" below it. Everyone read and review it.
- Now get another stretch of whiteboard, or a piece of paper, and write two lists: all of the things you have succeeded in doing so far, and all of the things you absolutely must get done in order to deliver this project by Dec 2 (another 7½ weeks).

Generate Insights:

- Have a discussion about some of the issues you've seen in the data you just gathered. Here are some questions you might consider:
 - What has worked well, and we don't want to forget it?
 - What could we improve about the way that we work?
 - Why do we see this pattern in the timeline?
 - How can we get more done by doing less work?
 - Does it look like we're on track to finish? If not, why not?
 - What strengths and weaknesses have we discovered about our way of working?
- Make notes about things that come up in discussion. If there are a lot of issues, try "dot voting" to pick one or two to focus on. In a retrospective like this, we can't try to tackle everything at once.

Decide What to Do:

- Come up with one experiment or improvement you will try in the upcoming iterations.
 - Identify specific tasks that will be done.
 - Decide who will carry out needed actions. Don't leave it up to "the team".
 - Talk about how you'll evaluate whether the experiment worked.

Close:

- When the professor calls on you, share (briefly) your improvement idea with the class, and the reasoning behind it.