Software Development Processes

Introduction

This week in lectures, we looked at a commonly-used agile development technique called Kanban, as well as its associated business management methodology (lean). In this session, you will plan how you might adopt a Kanban board in the case study scenario.

Task 1: Creating a Kanban Board

Development teams that use Kanban track the status of various jobs on a Kanban board visible to all team members. The board can either be physical (e.g. a whiteboard or office wall) or virtual (e.g. hosted on Trello). Which do you think would be more appropriate to the scenario in the case study? Why?

The first consideration when setting up a Kanban board lies in what stages (columns) to include. In lectures, you saw quite a comprehensive example with seven columns, but a development team is free to choose any number of stages to represent their workflow. Sketch out a chart with the columns that you think would be appropriate for the scenario in the case study. Show your chart to those around you, and compare the categories you each chose.

Task 2: Creating Kanban Cards

Kanban isn't tied to any particular software development methodology. Thus, cards can be user stories, requirements, features, or any other representation of a job that needs doing. Look back over either the user stories you created last week or the requirements you created in Week 2, and sketch some onto the Kanban board you created for task 1 for illustration.

Many development teams choose to colour code their Kanban cards, to indicate the type of work being completed (e.g. bugfix, new feature or front-end, back-end). If you were to use card colour to differentiate between tasks in the case study scenario, what categories would you use? Why? Discuss your thoughts with those around you.

Task 3: A Good Fit?

In the lecture we looked at the features of a project that make a Kanban board suitable. Do you think that the case study scenario meets these criteria? Would you recommend that the team uses one? Why?

Task 4: Class Discussion

Your lab tutor will gather everyone together with time before the end of the lab session to go through your Kanban implementation. Did people generally agree on what the stages on the board should be? Did people come up with similar colour coding schemes? Was your opinion on whether Kanban is a good fit for the scenario similar to that of others?