Sprint Review and Retrospective

To start this project would not have been completed if not for each individual role working effectively together. Luckily in this instance each role was filled by yours truly, and I work super well when I’m working alone. However, this has shown me the value of teamwork and how important it is going to be in my future. I don’t always wish to work for some fortune 500 company or even in a large team every step of the way, however I do now understand that some of my freelance solo ideas, may need one or two more people on board simply to fill the various roles needed. For example, to start a project, someone must communicate with the customer on their needs for the product the rest of the team is going to work on producing, in this case that was the Product Owner. As the Product Owner, I was responsible for making sure that I understood the specifics of all of the customers’ needs and made sure to effectively communicate those ideas to what would typically be the rest of the team. I was also responsible for creating the User Stories. This really forced me to think about how a software was going to be used across the board and sort of fill in the gaps I previously felt were missing in my personal knowledge. The sandwich analogy works well here as I really needed to break the whole problem apart and think about how each portion of the product would be used individually and as a whole. From there it became much easier to develop quality User Stories. In making the User Stories themselves, I utilized some agile practices. Basically, I started with a rough draft of what needed to be done and sort of interwove and fleshed out the User Stories one by one and then added necessary components as I went on to each of them. Specifically, my three User Stories were a Travel Package Search Filter, a Travel Profile, and Top 5 Destinations List Functionality. Now these three User Stories all feed into each other via the Travel Profile, as it has information that the other two User Stories require to function properly. Using agile practices was important here as multiple iterations and flexibility in thinking was needed to ensure that all three pieces would function together properly.

As a Scrum Master it was my job to ensure that the team was staying on track, keeping scheduling, and ensuring that all ideas were communicated effectively. I feel like normally the real magic of the Scrum Master happens when you’re not fulfilling the role of that and everyone since I already have all of the previous information without needing to discuss it, however I would almost argue in a normal setting that the Scrum Master may have the most important job of all, as they are sort of the glue-like substance that holds the rest of the team together, a literal communication channel if you will. As I described before because of the nature of the Scrum Master I personally would say I don’t have any experience in the role myself currently minus what I have learned about it in this and my other CS 255 class. However, I am currently starting a new project outside of school in which I may be fulfilling the role of Scrum Master because, I will be the most experienced developer on the project, the duties of ensuring that everyone is on track may fall on to me. Which would now be ok, as I currently have the understanding necessary to both develop and develop some sort of scrum.

In development, the role itself is sort of the meat and bones of the SDLC, it’s where I would argue most of the actual work gets done, where everything else previously was all planning and ensuring that everyone was on the same page so when work did start happening, it was done correctly. Or in the case of the Product Owner, a promise of work. It’s the developer’s job to actually code the system itself using the diagrams of the proposed system to gain an understanding of what it should do. Ideally this isn’t just one person rather a team of people who will all be coding individual parts of a system over several sprints which are proposed by the Scrum Master. In this instance we were given a prompt that was changed as we were midway through the “development” of the project. However, since the entire system was designed with an agile mindset, switching to a vacation package that focused on wellness rather than an individual top 5 list was easily supported.

As I said before there weren’t any actual Scrum Events, or what you would consider them to be in a traditional sense taking place, as I myself was the Scrum Master. There was that brief group discussion we had but that was mostly showing that we individually knew what each of the roles did and how they communicated with each other, in which I as the developer in that discussion was responsible for attending daily Scrum, helping the Product Owner groom the backlog, develop the software itself and then communicate that to the testers, and work with them to ensure quality control. However, there was nowhere in that where any actual Daily Scrum took place just the theoretical concept at least in a typical sense. However, I personally have been using the concept of a Daily Scrum in my life since I started attending online school in 2016. Everyone Monday, the start of a new school week I ensure that I have a plan set for the rest of the week or some sort of mental timetable as to when each assignment etc. needs to get done, interweaving it into the rest of my daily life. Each morning before the distractions of the rest of the day take fold, I ensure if possible that whatever homework or task is done for the day. I am certain, especially in what has become a major work from home environment, that this will continue into my professional work life.

I would say the biggest organizational tool that helped me be successful is what I described before. Simple daily planning, and then actually committing to that schedule. It’s trying at times, but it definitely pays off in dividends. By doing even a small part of something every day it ensures a few things: one that the product will inevitably at some point get done and two, that you the developer have a very hands on approach with your development, allowing you to actually spend in-depth time looking and really understanding your code and what you want it to do, allowing you to fully utilize your skills and make the best possible product.

Finally, for the SNHU Travel Project utilizing scrum and agile turned out to be very effective and basically necessary with the changes the “customer” requested. If I had been utilizing a waterfall approach, I basically would have had to submit the product with the original functionality, had I actually needed to code it further. Then later we would have had to go back and update it later for the new required functionality. Utilizing agile all it took was one half-hour session to change write some new lines of code and the product was working with the new functionality immediately.