Sprint Review and Retrospective

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**Applying Roles:**

The different Scrum-agile Team roles include the Product Owner, the Scrum Master, and the developer. The Product Owner functioned as the business representative of the team. When the client approached the team about the requirements of their potential project, the Product Owner discussed the requirements to find potential user stories and epics. The Product Owner worked on the Product Backlog items to ensure that user stories were clear in their requirements and intent from the specific end-user. In addition to talking with the SNHU Travel client, the Product Owner discussed potential user stories with a focus group. The Product Owner was able to take suggestions from the focus group and the Travel client and decide how the user stories were written and the relative priority of the user stories. The Scrum Master facilitated the structure of the Scrum Team to ensure that the resources are available to meet the client’s goals. As an example, when travel booking tool was first pitched to the Product Owner, the Scrum Master took the initiative to form the Scrum team and organize plans for future meetings including the Sprint Planning, Daily Scrum, Sprint Review, Retrospective, and Backlog Refinement. The Scrum Master created the team charter which properly framed the objective, culture, risks, and team members for the new project. This helped orient all team members towards the goals of the project and created a realistic framework to work through. The Scrum Master helped facilitate the Scrum process so that all other team members were oriented on current objectives. During our daily meetings, the Scrum Master helped lead the meetings so that all relevant information was discussed in a timely manner. The Scrum Master’s organization of the daily meetings enabled the team to understand what issues needed to be dealt with, what objectives had already been completed, and what is going to be done in the future. The developer is a self organizing, cross functional team member that provides value to the project through iterations. In our team we had a tester and a developer working on the user stories. Each team member took initiative to complete work in a timely and proper manner. Team members sent emails to the clients, Product Owner, and other team members To ensure all work was correctly implemented.

**Completing User Stories:**

The Scrum-agile approach helped bring user stories to completion by establishing appropriate guidelines/concepts to identify, develop, and complete user stories. A focus group was utilized to gain insight into potential user stories within the scope of SNHU Travel Project. In our approach, we used the MoSCoW technique to rank user stories by their relative importance. The technique lead the Product Owner to be able to develop an appropriate Product Backlog to provide value as quickly and responsibly as possible. The user stories were developed in a format where the end user was identified, the problem was identified, and the value derived from the solution for the end user with identified. The format of the user stories yielded a few benefits. Since the end user is identified, research and marketing could be done for that specific demographic. The value derived from the solution allows the team to justify that user story. The format leaves many of the details ambiguous too encourage communication with the client(s). All of these benefits yielded a better groomed end product. Our team created acceptance criteria to enable the concept of finishing an increment until it was just good enough. The clarity of the acceptance criteria enabled us to complete our first user story (allowing clients to view the top five destinations list) within a few days.

**Handling Interruptions:**

The Scrum-agile approach supported project completion during interruptions by allowing an appropriate change in the Product Backlog and open communication within the team. During one of our sprints, the Product Owner informed the team that's the focus of the travel website needs to be shifted to wellness/rejuvenation types of vacation spots. Some of the developers became anxious of the prospect of reworking much of the software that was already implemented into the website. Since the team was using an agile approach, the backlog simply needed to be re-ordered and re-prioritized. The functional changes that occurred in the new front page of the website, were easy to implement due to open lines of communication with the product owner, testers, and clients through emails. The tester on our team was able to quickly create new test cases for the new requirements. The scrum master was able to quickly reorients the team towards the new objectives. The developer on our team sent clear and concise emails involving specific elements of the implementation for the new requirements. The attitude towards accepting change and open communication are values that allowed our team to deal with the changes.

**Communication:**

During my time as an agile team member I worked with test cases and development. I have two examples of communication which includes an e-mail I sent to the clients about their recent user stories and an e-mail to the Product Owner/Testers to gain more details about a recent change in direction for the website. To ensure that my communication with the e-mail recipient was clear I addressed the recipient directly, gave a short summary of my intentions for the e-mail, organized the main body of the e-mail in a labeled and clear format, and provided multiple opportunities of further communication. For my first example, I addressed the client by name and provided a short sentence to understand the intentions of the email “I am currently developing test cases for the recent list of user stories. I need clarification on some specific details to develop pass or fail tests. Could you answer the following questions?”. This detail allows the client to immediately understand what I am requesting. Each portion of the many body is organized by the user story ID for clarity. At the end of both emails, I provided possible lines of communication for a response, including by email or by video chat. These details about my emails allowed for prompt responses and appropriate actions taken for the respective issues.

**Organization Tools:**

The main organizational tool that was used by our team was a whiteboard. This information radiator facilitated much of the communication between team members on what has been completed and what still needs to be done. This tool works well with the daily scrum meetings. Every day in the daily scrum each team member addresses what has already been done, what is currently being done, and what still needs to be done. This information is reflected on the whiteboard in a persistent manner by sticky notes that represents user stories and completed iterations. During our Sprint planning meetings, we used a technique called planning poker. Each user story was presented and given a relative score between one to ten by each team member. The team deliberates until a consensus about that particular user story is reached. This allowed a realistic outlook on current sprints. These tools allowed for the agile principle of transparency and clear communication to be enacted by our team. The other major scrum events which include the scrum retrospective and scrum review became a formality for the completion of a sprint. The transparency that was created from these tools and principles allowed much of the planning, preparation, and reworks to be done on a daily basis.

**Evaluating Agile Process:**

Some of the benefits of the agile approach were: quicker project setup time, efficient communication, higher resilience to changes, and less project management overhead. Emphasis on high level organization and short sprints allowed work to start quickly. The nature of the Product Backlog allows the Product Owner to organize user stories in a manner that adapts the a changing environment. Developers and testers were self managing which allowed the team to focus on their respective tasks. Some of the drawbacks of the agile approach were: large amount of retraining for employees comfortable with traditional approach and less structure for large and complicated projects. Many of the benefits diminish when the size of a project increases. Specific Strategies and technologies need to be implemented to reduce the diminishing returns. The Scrum-agile Approach was the best option for development on the SNHU travel project. The project had a high amount of uncertainty that resulted in sudden shift in focus to health/wellness packages. Agile was uniquely equipped to deal with this change in an efficient manner. The emphasis on clear and transparent communication allowed for efficient work and rework on relevant user stories. The project team was small and able to adapt to the agile environment quickly.