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CS 250  
Final Project

In this sprint retrospective, we will summarize the role of each agile-scrum member. We will discuss what each role accomplished during the sprint, and how the scrum-agile framework did or not benefit the SNHU travel project. Additionally, we will discuss the pros and cons of the scrum-agile framework for the benefit of future projects.

For SNHU travel, the product owner was responsible for communicating with the people at SNHU travel to determine what were their requirements. Our Requirements can be developed and prioritized based on the MoSCoW technique: must have, should have, could have, and won’t have. From these requirements, the user stories were created to form the product backlog. For SNHU travel, a user story used a value statement as follows: “As an end user, I want to create a profile for myself with different criteria for destinations so that I can have my top five filtered to my preferences.” Anyone can write user stories; however, it is the responsibility of the product owner to ensure the backlog of user stories exists. The backlog of user stories is essential to planning and estimating. The product owner of SNHU travel prioritized the user stories and ensured it was visible so that the entire scrum team was on the same page at the beginning of the sprint.

The scrum master’s primary goal was to remove roadblocks for the SNHU travel development team. They also facilitated our sprint retrospective. They facilitated daily scrums, where the questions asked included, “what did I do yesterday?,” “what will I do today?,” “what obstacles did I encounter?” They kept development progress from being impeded by outside forces. A scrum master is all about servant leadership. They are there to serve the development team and update the product owner as needed.

The developer needed key information from both the product owner and tester so constant communication was required. Knowing the requirements ahead of time was necessary for developing the proper code. Everyone on the team was expected to work collaboratively and cohesively as a single unit. Clarification of requirements was sometimes required, and the development team was able to reach out to the project manager. With the SNHU travel project, clarification around the display of the top five was needed. A quick response around the ordering and the layout allowed the development team to change user stories and test cases. With the scrum agile approach, these changes can be identified, and implemented faster.

The testers are considered a part of the development team. Before any software was written, the testers developed test cases and worked with the rest of the team to determine the criteria for “done.” With SNHU travel, test cases were developed based on the user stories. Working with the product owner, clarification around dependencies and priorities was required. This clarification, along with the value statement, helped develop the test cases and pass/fail measures.

Once the user stories were written, the team was brought together to plan the sprint. They negotiated what stories would be taken into the sprint and how many could be completed in the sprint based on the team’s capacity and velocity. Allocation of the tasks were also determined during sprint planning. This planning process of the scrum-agile allows for shorter sprints, so user stories can be delivered quicker, and changes can be adapted quicker as well. With SNHU travel, user stories were seen to completion once they passed the test cases written and the product owner determined they were done.

There were a few changes and interruptions during the SNHU travel project. The product owner met with SNHU travel and they wanted to prioritize detox/wellness packages as it is a growing interest to travelers. In agile, the deadlines do not change. Other items in the backlog can be deprioritized to accommodate changes and shift focus. The tester can write new test cases as well. With agile being in shorter sprints, changes and pivots can be accommodated at a much faster rate.

The most effective way of creating openness and transparency within a scrum team was an information radiator. Because this tool can take on many forms (whiteboards, digitally) it can be easily adapted to a company’s framework. Individual members updated tasks in real-time in information radiators, so the rest of the team has visibility. It was used as a tool during daily scrums, which helped with transparency as well. It also gave teams the ability to be self-sufficient and kept management from having to resolve day-to-day issues. Self-organization is one of the key goals of the Agile framework. The SNHU travel project was successful because of frequent communication and the entire team being on the same page.

Scrum allowed the SNHU travel team to complete deliverables quickly and efficiently. While this was a small project, scrum can be beneficial for larger projects as it breaks the work up into easily manageable sprints. Development and testing can be done concurrently to deliver a quality product. Scrum and the short sprints adopt feedback from customers and stakeholders and can enable the changes more quickly, as was the case with SNHU travel. The team had clear visibility of requirements and progress through scrum meetings.

Like all methods, scrum-agile can have some cons as well. As we were a small team, this did not apply to us, but large teams can find it difficult to adopt the scrum framework. Daily meetings can feel frustrating to teams as it can feel repetitive and felt as if it is interrupting the actual work that needs to be done. Total buy-in from all levels is also a must for a scrum-agile approach, otherwise it is very difficult to make an agile development process work effectively if team members do not participate.

The scrum-agile approach proved to be the best approach for the SNHU travel project as it allowed the team to work together. It allowed changes to be accepted and adapted to quickly. It allowed direct contact with the stakeholders to discover their product needs. Constant communication with the team and stakeholders also allowed clarification of the requirements.

Examples of effective communication:

To: Product Manager

Subject: User Story Clarifications

Dear Project Manager,  
I have looked over your user stories and am developing test cases for the different features to determine whether the product passes or fails. I need some clarification on the stories to appropriately write cases.

**Priority**

* In each of the user stories, please provide the priority level: high, medium, and low. This will help me accurately determine the order of test cases to create.

**Dependencies**

* I see in some of the user stories, they cannot be completed without another one being completed before. Please include in each user story the number of the corresponding story that will need to be completed prior.

Thank You,

QA.

Hey Product Owner/Tester,

I see that we have some changes to our requirements and to begin development we need some questions answered prior to moving forward.

* What changes have been made to the requirements based on the customer’s requirements?
* Have the back log and user stories been updated accordingly and are they visible to the entire team at this time?
* Did the time frame for completion change as well?
* Have the user stories been prioritized based on these changes?
* Have the requirements for the user stories and the definition of “done” established?
* Do we have test cases for each new user story?
* Do we need to establish a new timeline or develop new estimations?

Thank you for your prompt response,

Developer

These examples prove to be effective because it summarizes the point at the beginning. They express the needs concisely. It gives actionable next steps for the recipient to follow up on. In scrum-agile, communication is vital between all members of the team. While face-to-face is the preferred method, and is achieved through daily standups, planning, and review, quick emails can be used for clarification and to improve the overall product. A successful daily scrum has the expectations for the meeting clearly set forth at the beginning. Everyone is given an opportunity to speak. The key questions are asked: What did I do yesterday to help meet the sprint goal? What will I do today to help meet the sprint goal? What impedes us from meeting the sprint goal? Sidebar conversations are also tabled to keep the daily scrum within the prescribed fifteen minutes.

References:

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