CS-250 Final Project

Throughout this course, I have played the role of every type of member on a Scrum team as we transitioned from the waterfall methodology and incorporated the agile methodology into the team. My team consisted of the Product Owner, the Scrum Master, the developers, and the testers. This paper will provide analysis of the agile methods this team has used throughout the development for SNHU Travel, and if these methods did or did not support our final deliverable. As the Product Owner, my responsibilities went beyond traditional project management. I defined the requirements of how the project would be implemented to the development team. I was also responsible for creating and prioritizing User Stories to add to the Product Backlog. These User Stories were crucial for the development team, as they would shape the way the development team would approach the project throughout its development.

As the Scrum Master, I supported the Product Owner with Backlog creation and maintenance while ensuring that the Scrum team was kept up on the Scrum framework. Once the Product Owner defined the User Stories, I then facilitated a Sprint Planning session to review each user story that would be accepted into the first Sprint. During our Sprint Planning session, we implemented affinity grouping as our estimation technique to review. Since it is considered one of the fastest estimation techniques to use, it also encourages diversity and increases commitment among the team, which are all important principles to an agile style work environment.

As a Developer, I had the freedom to structure my code as I see fit using industry best practices. Having this freedom was important when changes to the Product Backlog were made and I had to revise my code to fit the new requirements

As a Tester, my responsibility was to collaborate with all team members to create test cases to identify any bugs that may be introduced. This role is vital as testing early and often is a key principle in iterative development.

The Agile approach to the SDLC helped isolate critical functionality within a project as software planning can be overcomplicated and even go horribly wrong if it is not executed properly. Breaking down complex tasks into smaller increments is key to a successful deployment, which is why I focused mostly on affinity grouping for our estimations. With the SNHU Travel project, requirements were collected from end-users where we created User Stories. The User Stories defined the functionality of these requirements, and the vision of what the final product should be. User Stories are short but descriptive to the extent that it can be understood by both users and Developers, that way the development team can also have a good vision of the final product. A User Story consists of the who, what and why. The “who” represents the intended user of the final product, the “what” represents what the user needs to do to complete a specific task and the “why” represents how the functionality adds value to the specific requirement.

Agile means “flexible and responsive”which means that not only does it need to be reliable to changes, but sometimes necessary for change. Agile projects will have some uncertainty in them. The change from the SNHU Travel project to focus on detox/wellness travel is an example for changes in agile to be necessary for the success of a project.

Throughout a discussion between the product owner and I (as the developer), I learned that there were changes to the project, that SNHU was focusing on detox vacations, making all other user stories obsolete. During this discussion, for everyone to be able to communicate properly, everyone had to speak with respect, and everyone had to participate in the discussion. This is important as for an agile methodology to work, there needs to be participation from everyone even during discussions like this, as the team needs to know how each member will take on issues and new situations like the forementioned discussion about SNHU’s new detox vacations

When it comes to tools for assisting a new agile team, JIRA and Active collab are two that helped us. JIRA helped us manage individual tasks and bugs, whereas Active Collab allowed us to easily organize tasks among the team and estimate dates for when certain tasks will be completed. We often used Skype for video conferences as it provided a convenient visual representation of the project and its activities in real-time, which was great to have especially when in person meetings were not possible for the team.

The implementation of Agile in the SNHU Travel project gave the team benefits, it allowed the team to become more flexible, better visibility over the final product, and decreased the risk of missing notable features requested by the client.

While the implementation of Agile in this project had its benefits, it also had some drawbacks. The SNHU Travel project was difficult to predict, with no way to control its scope. The unpredictable nature of the project could lead to its failure since the team must be able to change alongside the project's scope. The upside to the lack of predictability is that while requirements may change, the quality of the final product increases since it fits a better scope than the original.

Overall, I think the implementation of Agile to the SNHU Travel project was good as it allowed for more flexibility in case changes to the project were to occur.