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Sprint Review and Retrospective

As the Scrum Master for the SNHU Travel project, I led our transition from the traditional Waterfall method to the Scrum-Agile approach. This report summarizes what we did, how we did it, and what we learned. I'll talk about the roles in our team, how we completed our tasks (called user stories), handled interruptions, communicated, used tools to stay organized, and whether the Agile approach worked well for us.

Each role in our Scrum-Agile team played a crucial part in the project's success. The Product Owner was essential in setting priorities and defining what we needed to do. For example, when our client changed their focus to health and wellness vacations, the Product Owner quickly updated our task list, ensuring we worked on the most important things first. As the Scrum Master, I organized all our meetings and made sure everyone was on track. When the client requested a mid-sprint change, I arranged a special meeting to discuss and adapt to these new requirements without delaying the project. The Developers in our team wrote the code and fixed bugs. They worked closely with the Product Owner and Testers to ensure everything met the client's needs. For instance, they updated the database and search functions to filter health and wellness vacations, showing their flexibility and technical skills. The Testers made sure our application worked correctly by creating and running tests. After the pivot to health and wellness vacations, they focused on ensuring the search feature filtered correctly, making sure the changes worked as expected.

Using the Scrum-Agile approach helped us break the project into smaller, manageable tasks. For example, one of our tasks was to implement a search filter for travel packages. Initially, it was for general travel packages, but when the client changed their focus, we updated this task to filter health and wellness vacations. This iterative process allowed us to adapt quickly and ensured each step added value to the project. Handling interruptions was another area where the Scrum-Agile approach shined. When the client asked us to shift focus mid-sprint, we quickly held a meeting to re-prioritize our tasks and update our plan. This flexibility allowed us to adapt without significant delays, ensuring the project stayed on track.

Effective communication was key. We used daily stand-up meetings, Jira for task tracking, and Microsoft Teams for real-time collaboration. For example, I sent an email to the team to address a change request, proposing a meeting to discuss the updated requirements and setting clear expectations for the discussion. This helped us stay aligned and focused.

Sample Email:

To: Product Owner and Testers

Subject: Clarification for New Plan

Dear Team,

Given the new direction for the SNHU Travel project, focusing on health and wellness vacations, I propose we meet to discuss the updated requirements. Please review the following questions before our meeting:

- What stories are we deprioritizing?

- Can we reuse any existing features or easily modify them?

- What are the pass/fail criteria for the new features?

Let's aim to meet on Monday at 2 PM. Please confirm your availability.

Best,

[Eskinder]

This email set clear expectations, outlined specific questions, and facilitated a collaborative discussion, ensuring everyone was prepared and on the same page.

Organizational tools like Jira, Microsoft Teams, and GitHub were crucial. Jira helped us manage our tasks and visualize our workflow, identifying any bottlenecks. Microsoft Teams facilitated real-time communication and collaboration, with integration to Jira allowing team members to tag issues and keep discussions focused. GitHub ensured our code changes were tracked and managed effectively, preventing conflicts and facilitating smooth integration.

The Scrum-Agile approach had its pros and cons during the SNHU Travel project. On the plus side, it allowed us to adapt quickly to changes and continuously improve through regular feedback sessions. Enhanced collaboration and strong communication were also significant benefits. However, transitioning from Waterfall to Agile was challenging and required some adjustment time. Additionally, predicting exact timelines was harder because of the iterative nature of Agile. Despite these challenges, the Scrum-Agile approach was the best choice for the SNHU Travel project. It allowed us to adapt to changing requirements and deliver a high-quality product on time. The flexibility, continuous improvement, and enhanced collaboration provided by Agile outweighed the learning curve and uncertainty challenges.

In conclusion, the Agile methodology made our work more responsive and collaborative, helping us succeed even when changes occurred mid-sprint. This experience showed the value of Agile principles in delivering high-quality, client-focused software.

References

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