Agile With SNHU Travel

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Roles and Their Importance

Product Owner: This role manages the Product Backlog, including:

- Ordering items in the Product Backlog to complete objectives effectively
- Clearly writing the Product Backlog items
- The items show what the team will work on next
- Makes sure to clarify items in the Product Backlog

This role is important for being the mediator between the user and development team. The role also needs to set up the product backlog in a way that allows the team to make progress correctly and at a good pace. (Schwaber 2013)

Scrum Master: This role enacts Scrum and guides the team when using it:

- Assists the Product Owner in organizing the Product Backlog
- Facilitates Scrum events as needed
- Coaches, helps, and removes obstacles when working with the Development team.
- Teaches and mentors the team on Scrum practices and events.

This role is important for implementing Scrum and helping the team achieve agility and allow the team to be as self-organizing as possible to increase efficiency. (Schwaber 2013)

Ken Schwaber and Jeff Sutherland, “Scrum Guide” Scrum.org (July 2013), https://www.scrum.org/scrum-guide

Roles and Their Importance

Development Team: This role includes developers and testers, depending on the project and the team:

- Self-organizes to create releasable functionality from Product Backlog
- Scrum has no titles for the Development Team besides Developer, despite the different work being performed by persons.
- Scrum has no subsidiary teams, even if it includes testing or business analysis, only the “Development Team”
- Accountability belongs to the Development Team as a whole

This role is important for the creation process of the project, as well as the release and quality measures of development. This role may have different specialties, but accountability and communication is key between members of this role and the Scrum Master or Product Owner.

“Team Role”, *The Project Manager’s Guide to Mastering Agile* Charles G. Cobb 2015

Scrum SDLC Phases

Sprint Planning:

- Determine which stories will be taken into the Sprint
- The Product Owner makes any final revisions in the priority rankings of backlog items
- Determine how many stories can be completed in Sprint
- Determine what and how tasks will be allocated to achieve stories

This phase ensures that some planning is done in an agile approach, and tasks are set forth with clarity so the team can understand the requirements.

Daily Standup:

Each team member answers threes typical questions:

- What did you accomplish yesterday?
- What are you going to accomplish today?
- What obstacles are in your way?

The Scrum Master facilitates the Standup and the event is done in front of a digital tool or physical Scrum board.

This phase ensures that the team explains anything that is happening in the development process, and works keep the process moving along smoothly.

"Backlog Grooming," Agile Alliance, http://guide.agilealliance.org/guide/backlog-grooming.html

Scrum SDLC Phases

Sprint Review

- Team presents finished work to Product Owner for their review and approval.
- Use sprint review as an extra review of results, not as the first one
- Defects should be resolved unless the Product Owner defers them to a later Sprint

This phase is important for a final review of the items completed in the product backlog, and in helping measure the progress of the project.

Sprint Retrospective

- Review and discuss how the Sprint went. What went well and what did not go well
- Reflect on the process and how to improve for the next Sprint
- Promote continuous improvement and innovation, and examine mistakes and their solutions

This phase is important for the team to take time and reflect on the latest Sprint. This allows the team to make improvements in technical ability, communication, and improvements in Scrum implementation.

"Sprint Review" and "Sprint Retrospective" *The Project Manager's Guide to Mastering Agile* Charles G. Cobb 2015

Comparing to the Waterfall Approach

A Waterfall approach for the SNHU Travel project would have proceeded more rigidly and restrictively. For example, when the project clients wanted a new display for the vacations, the change would have potentially caused a complete refactoring of the code. For a waterfall approach, the software could have been made statically and only allow a one-scenario use for the software. Styling and UX changes would be difficult if the planning was already set in stone, and communication between the Product Owner and Team is already discouraged in a waterfall approach. Any further changes to the project would cause more delays, and it would force the project to be more flexible in its approach, or risk cancelling the project.

Factors affecting which approach to take

Factors to consider when deciding which approach to take:

- Is the project based on technical or scientific fact, such as physics simulations and management systems?
- Who will be using the product in the final stage, everyone or just businesses?
- Is the project based on a recent business analysis, or on common tools used over time?

The answers to these questions help determine whether to use an agile approach or a waterfall approach. In the SNHU Travel project, the product was based on appealing to a wide base of customers, and the time opportunity for deployment was limited to the vacation season. This would require an agile approach, since the business scene could change rapidly, and/or the feedback of users could change depending on what the prevailing UI/UX designs are currently.

References

“Backlog Grooming,” Agile Alliance, http://guide.agilealliance.org/guide/backlog-grooming.html

Ken Schwaber and Jeff Sutherland, “Scrum Guide” Scrum.org (July 2013), https://www.scrum.org/scrum-guide

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