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Module 7-1 Final Project

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I will give a brief overview of each role and the benefits they provided during the SNHU Travel project. Starting off with the scrum master. The scrum master can be viewed as a guiding hand during the agile process. This is someone who the team would turn to learn more about processes and capabilities of scrum. During the project they were responsible for hosting the daily stands and removing any blocks that the team had. The scrum master put together a team charter for this project and helped keep the project and scope in sight. It was used to clearly define the goals and requirements of the project. This enabled the rest of the team to focus on their specific task for the given sprint while keeping the whole project in mind. They setup the structure in which the product owner then helps to keep in focus.

Moving on to the product owner who is the person who can be viewed as the person who keeps the sprint moving forward. They remove any obstacles in the way of the team and mitigate inference from stakeholders attempting to gain direct access to the team. They plan out the scope of the sprint and manage the back log of tasks to complete. They are the person who interacts with the clients and stakeholders most. Within the scope of this project, they assisted in creating the backlog and pulling the user stories from the stakeholders to give a clearer picture of what needed to be done. The user stories being an especially crucial step in the sprint as they give developers and testers a clear-cut vision of what needs to get done during the sprint. During the travel project our product owner took what the clients were saying and resolved it into a concise listing of necessary information for the team.

The testers have a crucial role on the team as they determine the test cases and break down user stories into usable components that developers can test within their code. In this project they grabbed the user stories and broke each one down into test cases that were applicable to the project. Each of these test cases broke down the requirements and pass/fail scenarios of the requirements. This in turn helps define when the sprint is “done” and can assist in time management and knowing how much longer a project will take. This is something that is communicated with alongside the developers. Having the testers break down the tasks for this project made developing the solutions much easier by giving clearly defined guidelines of what was needed.

The developers on the team were the main driving force behind the production. They were responsible for the changes that came down via the user stories and ensuring that the test cases were passed by the end of the sprint. They reported daily in standups on progress and anywhere they were stuck. They also collaborated with the rest of the team to give a realistic timeline of when this would be done and inform the product owner if there were any stoppages and if they needed assistance. For the project, the focus was ensuring the test cases were completed successfully and functionality was tested, and satisfaction was met.

The user stories were broken down piece by piece by piece by several members of the scrum team. For example, our product owner was made aware of a feature that the stakeholders asked for, that being the budget set in user profile, and they broke the request down into a user story. They input as much information as needed for a clear picture of the ask. Then the tester was able to take that story and develop a test case for the developer to then go ahead and work towards it. This all flowed naturally and without issue as the framework allows for this type of communication. The constant communication meant that any issues that were to arise were discussed early and often.

We were told toward the finishing of the project that focus of the travel site was now on wellness and spa packages. Being in a waterfall approach would not have allowed such a last-minute change as we would have already left behind the stages of coding and would need to revisit the project to accommodate the request. Thankfully, we were using our agile system which meant we simply translated the request into a user story, developed test cases for it and flushed out a fix with our developers. This meant that we did not need to stop all of production but simply change our direction all the while being transparent with each other and voicing our concerns. Our concerns being more focused on time constraints, but we were assured by the product owner that it would not take much more time. In the end because of the agile framework, we were able to get a feature done with that focus and test it without much change to our overall sprint plan.

During the travel project we were in constant communication with each member of the team. From daily standups which we voiced our progress our stops and our plans for the day, to personal emails explaining in more details. The emails helped get granular when we needed more clarity on a topic. For example, the tester emailed our product owner for more details on the user stories that were generated. This helped get the most concise and precise test cases out of the explanation. Simple bulleted emails asking for clarification helped drive information and clarity. This helped develop into a nice flow and cycle per sprint.

For this project what I think was most valuable were the daily scrums. I cannot state enough how important accountability and transparency help when it comes to moving a project forward. With daily scrums both were important and showed when it came to having stops and keeping everyone honest with how far along, they were in their given tasks. They kept the flow of communication open, and everyone knew what was on the agenda day by day. The recap of each sprint was also especially important. This helped us as a team reevaluate things that did not work and double down on things that did. It helped us adjust and make corrections where needed when preparing to go into the next sprint. For example, during one of the later parts of the spring we were hit with a redesign of the product by the stakeholders. During our meeting we were able to communicate these changes and quell any worries that developers and testers had about it. This kept us on task and on target even with some of the team pointing out some concerns with the changes. We were able to get the changes done and finished in the same period due to the framework and communication we had in place using agile.

For this project it was an open door of communication and it helped tremendously. This enabled everyone to be on the same page and help each other. It also limited the exposure to the stakeholders as the information and changes that came from them were summarized and turned into user stories for the rest of the team instead of individual members being bogged down by the details shared with them. I believe that agile worked out fortunately for us because we had a decent sized team to work with and were able to get most of the roles filled. I think one con would be that someone would have to wear multiple hats if the team size were any smaller and it might feel overwhelming at times. Especially if you oversee self-checks and testing. A second pair of eyes are always welcome when it comes to development. Regarding this project, I think our being flexible enough to change something at the last minute was a misstep and there should be some failsafe in place with that.

I believe that for the scope of this project and the way the project went, scrum-agile was an effective way to go about it. We were able to accomplish our goals per sprint and it was a great project to introduce our company to the values of scrum-agile framework. I do believe that we could have accomplished the project under the older waterfall framework as well, but we would not have been as flexible or timely with changes. Which I believe to be key in this case.