James Jones

Nicholas Schnack

CS-250

8/13/22

Sprint Review and Retrospective

We will begin our sprint review and retrospective by discussing how the many different roles on the Scrum-agile team worked together in order to complete the SNHU travel project. The product owner, scrum master, developer, tester, and client are all vital members of the Scrum-agile method. We will then discuss the various phases of the SDLC, then a comparison between Scrum-agile and waterfall development, and finally what should be considered when choosing between the two methodologies.

The product owner is similar to a project manager in traditional project management such as waterfall. However, the product owner has some quite a few differing responsibilities such as defining development requirements. The product owner is responsible for the product backlog which is the backbone to the Scrum-agile project flow. This is how the project becomes organized for the rest of the team. The product owner also is in direct contact with the client during the entirety of the project, while working on the SNHU travel project the product owner had numerous meeting with the client to identify features, priorities, and changes. The product owner will then take the information gathered to begin creating user stories for the product backlog, he/she needs to take the clients needs and translate them into easy to understand user stories than any one on the development team can easily understand. This leads into one of the product owners other key responsibilities which is clarification, due to their close relationship with the client they will have the best idea of the clients needs. During the course of the project clarification on certain functionality was needed on the developer side, all the developer had to do was send a quick email to the product owner for quick clarification. While it is important to have the client involved with the entire team it is unlikely that the client can be there every time a question is raised making the product owner the key person for quick clarification, they are also a decision maker giving them the ability to make on the fly decisions about the project.

Next we will discuss the scrum master’s role within the Scrum-agile methodologies. The scrum master is often called a “servant-leader”. This is because the scrum master has many responsibilities to both the product owner and development team. The scrum master acts as a grounding point for the project, they do this by working with everyone outside of the team to ensure that interactions with the team are beneficial opposed to detrimental to the team. They work with the product owner to find efficient management practices for the product backlog, and then work with the development team to ensure there is clear easy to understand items on the product backlog. They are also the Scrum-agile “subject matter expert” they ensure that proper Scrum-agile principles are applied while also remaining flexible to the possibility of changes within those principles to better serve for said project. The scrum master is also a facilitator, by ensuring scrum events are held, such as daily stand-ups. The scrum master isn’t in charge of the daily stand up they are simply there to facilitate it, keeping the meeting on track by ensuring the meeting stays on topic, keeping track of potential sidebars, as well as keeping an eye on time. During one of the daily standups for this project there were multiple discussions that were a bit off topic, as scrum master these were written down as sidebar topics and set aside for discussion after the standup. This ensures that the daily standup is able to serve it’s purpose but by coming back to these issues as sidebars, the scrum master is able to properly handle the situation removing the impediment to the team.

Next is the development team’s role in the Scrum-agile framework. The development team is ideally self-organizing, independent, and cross-functional. Essentially this means that there should be no specialization between team members, however this is generally unrealistic. Since responsibility is shared by the whole team though teamwork is encouraged making some specialization within the team okay and even beneficial for mentorship and cross-training purposes. During the SNHU travel project the development team was responsible for making the actual product, specifically a list of the “Top 5 destinations”. During development there was a change to the way the client wanted this feature implemented. The team was responsible for not only making the change but helping create an estimation to reflect how the change would impact the rest of the project in terms of potential shifts to timeframes as well as additional costs related to the change.

The Scrum-agile approach helped user stories be completed in numerous ways. Starting at the top, interactions between the product owner and client allow for the development of clear easy to understand user stories, that can then be ranked by importance and then added to the product backlog. From here the development team can begin sprint planning to decide what portion and features of the project can be completed within said sprint. Due to agile promoting open communication everyone on the team gets a say, a method such as planning poker can be used during the sprint planning process to help decide on how many/which features to include in this sprint. One the sprint planning is complete the sprint can then proceed, here the scrum master will continue to ensure proper Scrum-agile principles are being applied such as the daily stand up which will help get the team organized everyday, as well as allows for possible problems with the project to be brought up to the rest of the team.

Scrum-agile methodologies are build around being flexible in an everchanging environment. This was shown to be effective during the SNHU travel project, SNHU travel decided to switch their focus to health and wellness/detox related vacation packages. The product owner received this information directly from the client then called a meeting with the team. Since scrum-agile is flexible and based on changing requirements this change isn’t detrimental to previously completed work. When the product owner held a meeting with the development team it was in a more conversational manner allowing for everyone to communicate their potential concerns and make proper decisions. In the waterfall methodologies this small change could have derailed the project but due to Scrum-agile being built for change this change could be easily worked into the project.

The Scrum-agile framework focuses on communication. The SNHU travel project began with a meeting between the product owner and the client, the product owner took what they got from the client and then worked with the scrum master and development team to begin forming plan for the project. All of this was conducted face to face ensuring everyone got their say and helped to clear up potential misunderstandings about the project requirements. Communication is encouraged through out the entire scrum-agile team there is no chain of command type hierarchy so information can be shared much more efficiently. Opposed to a developer talking to a manager, who then goes to the project manager, who then goes to the client, Scrum-agile doesn’t recognize this and instead a developer has the opportunity to talk directly with the product owner and even the client. Scrum-agile produces working code throughout so the client will be involved throughout the project allowing for even the development team time to talk directly to the client.

Scrum-agile principles were key to successfully completing the SNHU travel project. Scrum-agile encourages people over process, customer over negotiations, software over documentation, and response over detailed planning. During the SNHU travel project each of these principles were implemented and helped the team complete the project. As previously stated the face to face interactions helped ensure everyone on the team was on the same page and greatly sped up the teams response to changing requirements. Instead of negotiating contracts time was spent fully understanding the clients needs in order to develop an overall idea of what the project truly needs. Since code is written incrementally and sprints are independent there is functioning software early and often, allowing for client feedback. Due to response over detailed planning when a change comes up such as the switch to health and wellness/detox, the team is easily able to incorporate this change into the overall project. All of these principles together create a highly adaptive team environment than can easily respond to change without derailing the project.

A Scrum-agile approach to the SNHU travel project was in my opinion the correct framework. The biggest con to Scrum-agile is the lack of a detailed plan writing everything out, however this is one of the biggest pro’s as well. This can make somethings such as estimation difficult for newer teams however it also allows for flexibility in an environment that is rapidly changing. The lack of a traditional hierarchy can be difficult to adjust to however it influences individual growth and independence which promotes creativity and innovation. Once again flexibility and response to change is a big pro, traditional project management could be derailed by changes to the requirements, where as the Scrum-agile framework allows for change. Finally the prioritization of communication ensures problems and changes can be quickly and efficiently dealt with. Taken together this makes Scrum-agile the best framework for the SNHU travel project. Since SNHU travel wants to be a leading platform they need to be able to keep up with emerging trends and Scrum-agile allowed for this during development.