Final Project: Review and Retrospective

Jason Kremhelmer

Southern New Hampshire University

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Michael Rissover

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Review and Retrospective

During this course we delved into the various roles that make up a Scrum- Agile team. Every role plays a pivotal pert in ensuring the project is completed effectively and efficiently based on the requirements and needs of the client. The Scrum team is composed of cross-functional individuals that work together with a common goal and purpose. They work in an iterative and incremental manner to produce and deliver a product that is of the highest quality. The roles of this team are the Product Owner, the Scrum Master, the Development team (which consists of 1 or more members), and the Tester.

The role of the Product Owner is that they are responsible for defining and prioritizing the product backlog. This is accomplished by maximizing the value of the work and production of the Development team. They make all the decisions regarding development of the project, as well as provide direction to the team to ensure their awareness of what is needed (Cobb, 2015). Achieving this is done by ensuring the team understands the items in the product backlog, is always updating the backlog, as well as prioritizing items in the backlog so the team has full awareness of what is needed. During this project, SNHU Travel, the Product Owner was in close contact with the client, this allowed them to discuss the requirement, needs and mission of the project. This also allowed the creation of the backlog of user stories, and allowed them to be prioritized correctly.

Next, we have the Scrum Master, they are responsible to ensure the Scrum is following the rules of the Scrum. They must ensure that it stays on topic, keeps withing the timeframe allotted, as well as take notes of side items to discuss off-line. The Scrum master also facilitates the teams in removing any obstacles that may arise during the project (Cobb, 2015). The Scrum master achieves this by being the servant leader of the team. They coach the teams in self-organization and cross-functionality, facilitating scrum meetings as needed, as well as finding techniques for effective backlog management. This helps both employees and stakeholders understand Scrum (Cobb, 2015). In the course of the SNHU Travel project, the Scrum Master alongside the Product Owner had meetings with the client to discuss the goals of the project. This helped gain a better understanding of the client’s desire to build an agile team and backlog that would accomplish the goal.

Now, the Development Team, it consists of testers and developers that are a self-organizing group that work together to develop and test the actual product. They are the ones who design, develop, test, and deliver a functional software product for each sprint. They are also responsible for managing and organizing their own work and are encouraged to decide how to make the backlog tasks into working solutions (Cobb, 2015). This team is responsible for developing tests, executing tests, analyzing test results, as well as collaborating with each other to resolve any issues that arise. This is a team of equals, with no titles, however they all do have their strong suites. This allows for a well-rounded team, that can work together and accomplish the goal. As the SNHU Travel project was underway, there were requests for changes to be made to the requirements. When this occurred, the developer reached out to the Product Owner to address questions that had arisen from this in order to obtain clarification on the new requirements.

Using the Scrum-Agile approach for the SDLC assisted the user stories in coming to a successful close. This was done by detailing out each of the features’ requirements, and setting priority levels to each. This process supported the SDLC in all stages from planning all the way through deployment. In doing this, it assisted in making the stories for the SNHU Travel easier. It did so by specifically defining the requirements in a way that was easy to understand by both the developers and the users, this was accomplished by breaking down the requirements into smaller sections that can be built in sprints.

During the SNHU travel project, the direction from the client was changed to a different focus, using the Scrum-Agile method allowed for a smooth transition to the new direction due to it’s flexibility through adaptability and continuous improvement. Agile methodology “starts the implementation of a project with a less-well defined plan of how the project will be implemented and recognizes that the requirements and plan for the project are expected to evolve as the project progresses” (Cobb, 2015). Due to this the Scrum team working on the SNHU Travel project was prepared to change course once the requirements and needs changed during the development process. The backlog that the team had produced and completed were able to easily be updated due to them being in smaller, manageable sections. This allowed the team to reach the projects deadline with little effort.

One of the key components of the Scrum-Agile team is effective communication. Having effective communication is important due to the fluid nature of software development. Have an open and transparent dialog within the team is key to success. This keeps the team abreast of all completed tasks, as well as any issues that may arise. In doing so, they may be able to assist in resolving these issues. There are multiple ways of effectively communicating. One of those being the face-to-face meetings which can be accomplished through Scrum meetings. Another way to effectively communicate is an email. Below is an example of an email to the team to discuss the new changes to the SNHU Travel project.

# Sample Email

To: Product Owner and Tester

Subject: Clarification for new plan

Hello,

Now that we have a new direction for the SNHU Travel project, I would like to set up a meeting to discuss the new requirements and needs of the client. This meeting will go into details of the requirements as well as a plan forward for the new design.

I have put together a few examples of question that may be brought up in order to give you an idea of what I’m looking for:

* What of the existing code can we reuse?
* What is the plan forward? (what is being deprioritized, what is being prioritized, etc.)
* What are the new pass/fail criteria for the tests?

Thank you for your time. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Regards,

Jason

The above email sets the stage for a successful meeting. This meeting will ensure that the new requirements are defined clearly. In doing so, the team will be able to proceed efficiently and effectively to project completion.

Using the Scrum-Agile system, all the principles are important for any Scrum-Agile team, a few of these principles helped the team to be successful in the SNHU Travel project. The principles I am referring to include iterative and incremental development, collaborating between the development team and client, cross-functionality, as well as prioritizing the product backlog. The JIRA tool can be very effective and helpful during the Daily Scrum meeting. JIRA is an agile project management tool that can help increase efficiency and coordinate the team by creating a Kanban style of organizing features and user stories while they move through the development process.

There are pros to using the Scrum-Agile approach for projects. The flexibility and adaptability were helpful when the client changed the direction of the SNHU Travel project in the middle of the development process. As was the collaboration and communication that took place during the Scrum events, along with the transparency, and visibility. Due to the incremental style of development, the teams adapted quickly to the clients change in direction. This allowed for the to re-evaluate the clients needs, and make the necessary changes quickly and efficiently.

The pros of the Scrum-Agile approach far out-way the cons, however there are cons. An example of one is, there is a learning curve to using this method. At first it may be difficult for members who are used to using the traditional management styles to transition to the agile management system. The unpredictable nature of the agile system could also be considered a con, this is due to not being able to accurately forecast what is going to happen when, as it is a very fluid system that allows for inputs from the entire team.

# References

Cobb, C. G. (2015). *The Project Masters Guide to Mastering Agile Principles and Practices for an Adaptive Approach .* New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, INC.