**Journal: Communication Practices and Project Management Tools**

Justin Starr

Department of STEM, Southern New Hampshire University

CS 250 – Software Development Lifecycle

Professor Joseph Martinez

February 12, 2023

# Journal: Communication Practices and Project Management Tools

For this journal entry, we have been asked to reflect upon the importance of communication in an agile environment. A variety of agile communication practices are described in our text, such as information radiators, face-to-face communications, daily standups, and methods of communication among distributed teams (Cobb, 2015, p.139 -p.142). The communication practice that I believe is the most effective in creating openness and transparency within a scrum team is the use of information radiators. The reason why I chose information radiators is that they promote “one of the most important values behind agile,” which is openness and transparency (Cobb, 2015, p.139). While this helps team collaboration, it also helps to prevent any illusion of progress, meaning that all team members, including the product owner and stakeholders, can track the progress of a team for any project. This can be done by using methods such as a whiteboard or, similarly, an entire wall of a room that can be used for progress tracking (Cobb, 2015). In some cases, it could also be in an electronic form by utilizing services that are dedicated to doing the same and more, such as Microsoft Azure Boards. Having information radiators that are completely visible to an entire team, who all can access each other’s progress, helps promote a unified teamwork approach where the team can hold each other accountable.

We are also asked to identify an example of a communication practice from this course that has helped our team complete work. Personally, I think that the discussion board itself is an excellent example of an information radiator that we have utilized to communicate effectively as a team. While it is not as elaborate of a tool as Microsoft Azure Boards is, it has still been a tool that we have used to essentially track each other’s progress, especially while completing this week’s discussion assignments. The discussion board has been a place where we have been able to establish and maintain communication about each other’s roles that comprise an agile team that we each selected. The goal has been to ultimately agree on at least one essential principle that is to be adopted within our agile team. A principle that each member elected as to why they thought the principle’s to be critical for our team’s success. The information radiator (the discussion board) has been the key to not only the team as a whole’s success but also a measure of success for each member individually. Without the discussion board, it would have been much more challenging to communicate effectively. We would have had to communicate through alternative means, such as email, which would have been a significant hindrance and likely would have caused significant communication gaps.

Last, we have been asked to identify one way that an agile project-management tool can help coordinate and increase efficiency within an agile team. I’ve chosen Microsoft Azure Boards. While reviewing this incredible tool provided by their documentation through Microsoft Learn (Microsoft Corporation, 2023), it can be seen how they have incorporated many significant aspects of agile. By simply going through the documentation provided and after having learned about agile methodology, one can easily infer how beneficial this tool can be. Examples of the utility Azure Boards provide are the ability to track user stories, bugs, features, and epics, alongside interactive backlogs, which can be used to prioritize and organize assigned work, not to mention having the ability to create and track sprints for Scrum events. Remarkably, this list of features within this tool continues, all helping to coordinate and increase efficiency within an agile team.

**References**

Charles G. Cobb. (2015). The Project Manager’s Guide to Mastering Agile : Principles and

Practices for an Adaptive Approach. Wiley.

Microsoft Corporation. (2023). *What is Azure Boards?*. [https://learn.microsoft.com/en-](https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/devops/boards/get-started/what-is-azure-boards?view=azure-devops&tabs=agile-process)

[us/azure/devops/boards/get-started/what-is-azure-boards?view=azure-devops&tabs=agile-](https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/devops/boards/get-started/what-is-azure-boards?view=azure-devops&tabs=agile-process)

[process](https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/devops/boards/get-started/what-is-azure-boards?view=azure-devops&tabs=agile-process)