Southern New Hampshire University

CS 250 Module Six Journal

Sprint Review and Retrospective

Roles

The Product Owner, or PO, contributed to the project by keeping lines of communication open among everyone involved in the project. The PO communicated with the stakeholders to create requests and translated these requests into user stories which guided the work of the development team. The user stories are kept concise to avoid any misunderstanding while including the important details. After ensuring the user stories in the backlog were clearly communicated, the PO prioritized the backlog based on the value that each element brought to the project. As plans changed, new priorities were communicated openly to everyone on the Scrum Team. They disseminate details about the project, the current work assigned in each sprint, and progress ensuring transparency for the stakeholders and the Team alike.

The Scrum Master, or SM, ran scrum events keeping everyone on task and focused, saving the Team valuable time. During a standup meeting our SM kept a “parking lot” for tangential discussion topics that should be revisited later. As our team is rather new to Scum, the SM helped ensure that we were utilizing Scrum in a way that would best serve us.

The Development Team started work by reviewing the prioritized user stories in the backlog and selecting work for the coming sprint. The Team reviewed the top ranked stories to estimate the size of each one, breaking them down into smaller, more manageable sizes if necessary. Next, they selected stories that seemed reasonable to complete within one sprint. Using the stories as a guide, the Team developed testing to ensure the objectives of the stories were met while other members wrote the code needed to satisfy the story.

The Team held standup meetings where each developer would answer the following with regards to the sprint's goals:

- What did I do yesterday?
- What will I do today?
- What impedes me from completing my work today?

They shared their recent progress, intentionally set a goal for the day, and informed the team of what they needed to be successful. Keeping the team informed of their progress and goals in a group setting helped to keep them accountable for their work. This helped utilize cross-functionality because teammates were able to jump in and offer help where they could because everyone knew what each member of the team was working on, allowing them to easily adapt as the project evolved.

Completing User Stories

Planning - Utilizing rolling wave planning and progressively elaborating requirements for work that is about to be assigned saves time and money and keeps the Team focused on what is important.

Communication - The Product Owner communicated with stakeholders to ensure that requests are properly detailed and prioritized. User stories act as outlines to start from without being too rigid. Including acceptance criteria for each user story ensures that the testers are aware of the expected functionality.

Sprints - Work is broken down into more digestible chunks. If a story is estimated to take longer than one sprint to complete, it may be reviewed to see if it can be deconstructed further. This helps a team self-assign an amount of work that is reasonable to complete in one sprint. This can boost morale and give the team a sense of accomplishment while keeping the pace sustainable.

Test Driven Development - Before there is code to be tested, developers are referencing the user stories to create tests ensuring the requirements are met. If revisions need to be made, the code can be returned to the developer and revised within the same sprint. Developing features and tests in tandem helps the team to increase productivity.

Review - At this point the Product Owner has seen the developers' work product several times, but this is their final opportunity to sign-off that the story requirements are met before the product reaches the stakeholders. This early and often approach to sharing the work product with stakeholders ensures that they are involved in the decisions being made throughout the development process, they are invested in the product, and getting the most value for their investment because they were able to help guide the journey

Interruptions

One of the benefits of showing the work product early and often to the stakeholders is that if the work is not going in the right direction, it can be corrected before much time has been invested. Stakeholders often realize that they need something more or different after having the chance to see the work in progress.

Originally, SNHU Travel requested a scrollable web page for the Top Five Travel Destinations. After the webpage had been in development, SNHU Travel requested the webpage be adapted into a slideshow. The slideshow was created utilizing the same copy and images from the webpage. Then SNHU Travel wanted to focus on detox and wellness travel destinations specifically. The Team was able to pivot and adapt thanks to the Agile methodology. The team has been developing in small batches and can reuse some of what has already been created. Even with this amount of change, the costs will be lower than being asked to make these revisions later after having completed the project.

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Communication

In the discussion for week six, I was able to work with our Product Owner, Chris, to select a software for the backlog, progress tracking, reporting, and testing. We agreed to try JIRA and see if the software suits our needs. Below, I explain why I would like to utilize software and relate it to Agile practices. "... utilizing software that will help us plan and track our progress. Both practices allow for transparency within the project and help us to keep ourselves and each other accountable." Chris follows with, "Could you speak more on software that helps track our progress? Specifically, what software you may have in mind… While I am not opposed to software tracking progress I do not want our team getting stressed out about having everything tracked." I respond by clarifying my intentions, "Avoiding stress is exactly what I have in mind also. I was thinking we could utilize JIRA, or similar software, to collect information about how many story points each team is able to complete on average each sprint. Progress tracking will be important as we are just getting started with Agile. After we have a few sprints under our belts, we will be able to get an idea of each team's velocity. Knowing a team's velocity will allow them to plan sprints that are achievable and sustainable. The ideal here being that each team has enough time each sprint to complete the work they have assigned themselves." Ultimately, Chris agreed that JIRA sounded like the right fit and we should use it on a trial basis.

Organizational Tools

Information radiators create transparency in several ways. A radiator is a home for the teams' plan, current assignments, and progress. In addition to being a reference for what is going on "right now", a radiator can be a tool for review and data collection and analysis. JIRA is one such tool, a hub where a development team can utilize features as they choose on a small scale or to do almost everything needed to plan, track, and execute their code. JIRA can be used to

schedule a project, house a backlog of stories and epics, assign stories to team members, track individual and big picture progress, share files, run QA testing, and report aggregate data to help improve processes.

We employed iterative and incremental development. Through backlog refinement and sprint planning we worked on small batch sizes which allowed us to review and refine our work. As the plan changed, we reassessed what was needed and continued to be productive.

Evaluation of The Agile Process

During the SNHU Travel project changes were made easily because the project was not completed before SNHU Travel had a chance to make a request. Having less of the project planned in advance does mean that it is less predictable which means planning what you can and addressing the rest “just in time” which is a big change from the waterfall method. While change is a built-in part of the process, there should be a limit to and a process for requesting changes.

A Scrum-Agile approach was the best approach for the SNHU Travel development project because it was not a project that was fully envisioned at the start. Time and money were not wasted when the initial plan was adapted because planning was not a large, up-front investment. In this instance, there was a need to embrace change and Agile enabled that to happen in an economical way.

Having development teams that are cross-functional and working in tandem on different elements allows for testing and development to be completed efficiently. Everyone is assigned work, and no individual has an extensive backlog. Having the opportunity to see the product early allowed the stakeholders to provide feedback early and to change their requests before development was complete. These changes were easier to accommodate because they were

applied in small batches of work during development. Utilizing Agile would help Chada Tech create quality work in an efficient and sustainable manner.

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Overeem, B. (2016, April 15). Characteristics of a Great Scrum Team. InfoQ. https://www.infoq.com/articles/great-scrum-team/

SNHU CS 250 Course Materials 2024

Christopher Bennett (2024) SNHU CS 250 6-1 Student Discussion: Vision Quest Software Case Study

CS-250 2018 The NEW Jira Begins Now Modern Software Development CC https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZlkeElEhYc&feature=youtu.be