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CS250 Module 7

12/11/2024

Sprint Review and Retrospective

The sprint has ended, and it is time to review. The first item to review is all of the roles that have led to our success. From the top, the role of the product owner is to communicate with the scrum master, organize sprint stories and the product backlog, and have a comprehensive view of the scope of the project. Within an agile environment it is important for the product owner to not try to plan every detail from the jump. User meetings and interviews help detail time to set the expectation for the project. “Through discussion with the Product Owner, the Developers select items from the Product Backlog to include in the current Sprint. The Scrum Team may refine these items during this process, which increases understanding and confidence” (Schwarber, Sutherland). Within SNHU Travel the product owner led a meeting and asked the team what kind of features they would like to see, this led to new sprint items. The second role is the Scrum Master. The scrum master job is to communicate with the product owner and the team, help detail the product backlog and coach or manage the team. There are multiple meetings that the scrum master is heavily involved in, the daily standup and the sprint review, and initial client meetings. In the SNHU Travel team the scrum master was intently recording the desires of the client and set out to build a team that best suited their needs. The next role is the tester, they must test, record, and detail all their steps. Ultimately their job is to find flaws in the code and record how they were able to get there. Within an agile environment it is necessary for the tester to keep up with the new stories being worked on and presents and roadblocks to the scrum master and product owner. In SNHU Travel the tester detailed problems with memory storage on a feature. The feature was a list of “like” vacations based on the user's prior trips, but to do this we would have to store all the user's data. This had not been a story yet and was caught by the tester. The final role is the developer. The developer relies the most on the other roles, and is at the mercy of the agile environment, more so than any other. Their job is to build the product and stay flexible. Change will incur and a good developer will take it in stride. In the SNHU Travel example the developers build all the stories and help each other when needed. In one of the SNHU daily standups two developers decided to work together on a story so that they both could learn more.

The Srum-Agile approach to SDLC helps user stories get to completion by defining roles and allowing teams to approach the product the best way for them. The daily standup meetings allow developers to outline what they need help with and what they are currently working on. Other team members are then able to help when someone has reached a roadblock. The roles defined in an agile environment are there to best streamline a project. A small team working closely can achieve very effective detailed results. The SNHU Travel daily standups helped the developers communicate and tackle the user stories.

An agile approach to user stories leads to a flexible project that in the end will achieve its desired goal more closely than with another approach. In the SNHU Travel project the product owner came to the team during development and changed the type of vacations that were to be suggested to the user. Their research indicated that health and wellness retreats are going to be the next big thing. The team pivoted quickly, changing the top 5 best destinations with the top 5 best health and wellness destinations. This type of agile approach allows the team to provide the best product in the end even when interruptions are encountered.

Communication is pivotal in all roles of the scrum, but one role I found communication intensive is the tester role. The tester has to be able to take very detailed notes about their process and it is keenly important to communicate those findings to the team. One sample of communication was the email written to the product owner and scrum master outlining the need for data storage on user vacations. The User Story #5 Similar Trips: was intended on showing trips to the user that are like previous vacations that the user has taken. This would require data on the user’s previous trips, which was not already part of this story. Although this is not face-to-face communication it is still a good example of the type of communication that the tester has to rely on. This communication was effective because it got the product owner to change the story to create user accounts that stored the data.

There are multiple scrum events that relate to organization. From the beginning sprint planning allows for the team to organize the stories that were chosen for a particular sprint. This event empowers the team and provides important insight into many different stories that the scrum master and product owner could have missed. The next event is the daily standup. “The Developers meet daily to inspect their progress toward the Sprint Goal, discuss any challenges they’ve run into and tweak their plan for the next day as needed” (Scrum.org). This event keeps all the developers on the same page and is an important initial step in communication. One of the tools used is in the daily standup is the information radiator, a highly visible and detailed board of all the aspects of the project that are being worked on. This can be digital or in person and may need to be changed to fit the type of workplace environment. The information radiator provides a map for the scrum team to view and categorize what stories are being worked on and their progress.

The agile scrum approach worked well for SNHU Travel. Some of the pros consist of defined roles, built in events that promote communication and effectiveness, and multilayered flexible sprint planning. Defined roles allow the team to know what everyone's job is at that moment and help spread the workload. The built-in events help the team communicate with each other by integrating time set aside specifically for it and flexible sprint planning allows for the proverbial goal posts to move and not affect the team. The cons of agile are that it is not as easy as it seems. Just because you are flexible does not mean you do not have to make detailed plans. It is on the product owner to know the limits of the agile environment and if it is exceeded then the deadline may be moved consistently. The Scrum-Agile approach was the best for SNHU travel as it allowed for the flexible change to the health and wellness vacations, and allowed for strong communication from all levels of the scrum team.

Citation

Schwaber, K., & Sutherland, J. (2020). *Scrum Guide | Scrum Guides*. Scrumguides.org. <https://scrumguides.org/scrum-guide.html#product-owner>

*The Scrum events*. Scrum.org. (n.d.). <https://www.scrum.org/learning-series/scrum-events/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=adwords&utm_id=psmii&adgroup=%7Bgroupid%7D&gad_source=1&gclid=EAIaIQobChMInrK91_WfigMVpofCCB3DnyzdEAAYAyAAEgIWq_D_BwE>