Final Project

To start with, we will review each role and their contributions to the SNHU Travel project. First was the product owner, who was our main interface with the client. The product owner was responsible for ensuring the team knew what the requirements were and translating those requirements into user stories to present to the team. It was the responsibility of the product owner to ask questions and gain what information they could from the client and potential users, so that we could provide them with the value they were looking for. An example of this was the meeting in which the product owner was told what user would want to see on the site, such as the top five list. Next, we had the scrum master, who’s primary responsibility was to lead the team in the daily standup and to facilitate the team through the different sprint events. Next, we had the tester, whose job was to develop test cases for each user story. By making the test cases, it helped provide direction for the developer so that the software was not only functional, but also provided the value that the customer expected. Finally, the developer was responsible for the code itself. They had to ensure that the code meet the requirements of the test case and had to make sure to ask questions when clarification was needed, such as asking questions about the test cases to ensure the value being provided by the software is what the customer wants.

The aforementioned roles helped in the development and refinement of the user stories. First, the product owner gained info from the client to create the user stories. Next, the team chose which stories to work on. Then it was time for the tester to create the test cases so that the developer could start working on each user story. The product owner was essential to getting as much info as possible to help refine each user story. The developer and tester had to work together to make sure that the user stories and test cases were both understood in order to ensure that the software met the clients’ requirements. During this process, the team also had to communicate any questions or uncertainties with the product owner in order to ensure that what they were doing was in accordance with the client’s idea of value.

One reason why Agile is helpful, is that change happens. In the project, the client did some research and discovered that wellness and detox vacations are going to be a big deal in the near future. Because of this, the client wanted the focus to be on vacations that lined up with these ideas. Since the team remained Agile, we were able to adapt to these changes. First, the client communicated the new requirements to the product owner, who then relayed this to the team. We were able to discuss changing which user stories we worked on in order to support the change and remain within the time requirement for the project. Having the structure of the team helped to ensure that we understood the client’s new requirement and were able to make the necessary changes to the software.

This communication was a major cornerstone of the project. A prime example of this was during our discussion with each other in separate roles concerning how we would like to implement the Agile methodologies. Since the focus is on people over processes, we were able to tell the team which parts of Agile we wanted to incorporate, and which ones we didn’t want to use. This type of communication can go a long way to helping a team mature and become more Agile. During the project, the product owner also kept in constant communication with the team. This helped the team adjust to the new requirements as well as refine older user stories when questions came up regarding how to implement the user stories to give the customer the most value.

Some major components to keeping up good communication are the different tools and principles of Agile. Different events like the daily standup help to ensure that everyone can be honest and transparent about what they are working on, what has been finished, and what is hindering them from completing more work. Other tools, like JIRA or other information radiators, can also help keep things transparent. While an ideal environment for a team might be on the same floor of an office building, sometimes this is hard to achieve. If the team is more spread out, having a tool like JIRA can ensure that people in different locations can still easily make updates and keep track of ongoing user stories. This way, even if the team is split across multiple states, or if someone must work from home, the team stays up to date on the project.

Finally, we come to the effectiveness of Agile and its methodologies. Agile’s main strongpoint seems to be its ability to help a team react and adapt to change in the project. That change can come from the client asking for new requirements, changing existing requirements, or from clarification of existing user stories. It also has a solid setup for maintaining good transparency and communication throughout the team so that everyone is aware of where the project stands at any point. The one downside in my eyes is that it doesn’t seem well suited to very short term projects. There were times during the SNHU Travel project that felt as though a waterfall approach could have been better. The only exception to this was the change from a general top five list to a detox and wellness list. Other than that, Agile seems to be a very strong way to approach project management.