Sprint Review and Retrospective

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CS 250 Software Development Life Cycle  
February 19th 2025

Applying Roles

In our Scrum-Agile project, each team member played a crucial role in ensuring the project's success. As the Scrum Master, I facilitated daily stand-up meetings, removed impediments, and ensured adherence to Agile principles. The Product Owner acted as the bridge between stakeholders and the development team, refining the product backlog and prioritizing user stories based on business needs. The Development Team was responsible for coding, testing, and delivering working software increments at the end of each sprint.

For example, during one sprint in the SNHU Travel project, the Product Owner identified a critical feature enhancement—implementing a more secure login process. The development team worked together to break the user story into smaller tasks, ensuring each aspect was completed within the sprint. As the Scrum Master, I resolved a dependency issue with a third-party API, allowing the development team to meet the sprint deadline. This demonstrated the importance of collaboration and each team member’s contribution to project success.

Completing User Stories

The Scrum-Agile approach to the Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC) enabled our team to complete user stories efficiently through iterative development. At the beginning of each sprint, we conducted planning sessions where user stories were refined, estimated, and assigned to the development team.

For instance, one of our user stories involved integrating a payment gateway for the SNHU Travel project. The Agile methodology allowed us to divide the work into specific tasks, such as API authentication, transaction handling, and security testing. By the end of the sprint, the feature was fully implemented and tested. Agile’s incremental approach ensured that we delivered functional software consistently, incorporating stakeholder feedback after each iteration.

Handling Interruptions

One of the advantages of the Scrum-Agile approach is its adaptability when projects encounter unexpected interruptions. In the SNHU Travel project, a significant requirement changed mid-sprint when the client requested a multi-factor authentication (MFA) system instead of the originally planned single sign-on.

Instead of disrupting the entire workflow, we conducted an emergency backlog refinement session, where the Product Owner re-prioritized tasks. The development team shifted their focus to researching and implementing MFA in the next sprint while maintaining progress on other ongoing tasks. As the Scrum Master, I facilitated communication between stakeholders and developers, ensuring alignment without causing major delays. This scenario demonstrated how Agile’s flexibility supports project success despite unforeseen changes.

Communication

Effective communication was vital in maintaining collaboration among team members. We utilized Slack for daily updates, JIRA for sprint tracking, and email for formal project updates.

Example of a Slack update:

*"Team, we have resolved the database connection issue. The API should now function as expected. Please pull the latest changes and test before the next stand-up. – Marianna"*

This message was effective because it provided clear instructions, acknowledged progress, and encouraged proactive testing by team members. Additionally, we used Microsoft Teams during Sprint Reviews to present completed user stories and gather feedback. These communication strategies improved team efficiency and stakeholder engagement.

Organizational Tools

The use of Scrum-Agile principles and organizational tools played a crucial role in our project’s success. Our team relied on:

* JIRA: For backlog management, sprint planning, and task tracking.
* Trello: For visualizing workflow and identifying potential bottlenecks.
* Daily Stand-Ups: To align team members, discuss roadblocks, and adjust priorities.
* Sprint Planning & Retrospectives: To continuously improve processes and adapt strategies.

During one retrospective, we identified that testing was often rushed. To improve quality, we allocated dedicated testing time in each sprint moving forward, ensuring robust software delivery.

**Evaluating Agile Process**

Pros and Cons of the Scrum-Agile Approach

The Scrum-Agile methodology had both strengths and challenges during the SNHU Travel project:

Pros:

* Flexibility: Allowed us to adapt to changing requirements without derailing the project.
* Continuous Feedback: Regular sprint reviews helped refine features and align with stakeholder expectations.
* Improved Collaboration: Agile fostered close communication between developers, the Product Owner, and stakeholders.

Cons:

* Frequent Changes: While flexibility is beneficial, constant shifts sometimes slowed progress.
* Time-Intensive Meetings: Daily stand-ups, sprint planning, and retrospectives required significant time investment.
* Learning Curve: Team members new to Agile required additional training to follow best practices.

Was Scrum-Agile the Best Approach?

For the SNHU Travel project, Scrum-Agile was the best approach due to its adaptability. The iterative development process allowed us to refine features based on stakeholder feedback, ensuring a user-centered design. Had we used a Waterfall approach, changes to requirements—such as the MFA feature—would have been difficult to accommodate mid-project. Agile’s flexibility helped us deliver functional software in incremental stages, making it a more suitable methodology.

This Sprint Review and Retrospective highlights the effectiveness of the Scrum-Agile methodology in managing the SNHU Travel project. The defined Scrum roles, iterative user story completion, and strong communication strategies contributed to project success. While some challenges existed, Agile’s adaptability and incremental delivery model ensured we met stakeholder expectations efficiently. Moving forward, refining our testing phase and balancing meeting time with development work can further enhance our team’s productivity.