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Sprint Review and Retrospective

Review and Retrospective: Applying Roles

Throughout this course, I took on the roles of various Scrum team members as we transitioned from a waterfall approach to an Agile approach to develop an application for SNHU Travel. Our team included a Product Owner, Scrum Master, and a Development Team comprising Developers and Testers. In this paper, I will analyze the Scrum-Agile methods applied to this project and draw conclusions about how these methods influenced the final deliverable.

Product Owner

In an Agile project, every team member plays a crucial role, acting as a vital link between the client and the Development Team. As the Product Owner, my duties extended beyond traditional project management. I was tasked with defining the project's implementation requirements, gathering input both from the client and through a focus group of end-users. My primary responsibilities included creating and prioritizing User Stories for the Product Backlog. These User Stories guided the Development Team's approach from the project's inception to its completion.

Scrum Master

When I stepped into the role of Scrum Master, my responsibilities included assisting the Product Owner with Backlog creation and maintenance, ensuring full transparency within the Scrum team. I acted as the go-between for the Development Team and the Product Owner. After the Product Owner defined the User Stories, I facilitated a Sprint Planning session to review and accept the User Stories for the first Sprint. During these sessions, we used the planning poker estimation technique to determine the effort required for each User Story. With the Backlog items defined, project development kicked off. I also led daily Standup meetings, quick 15-minute sessions to review the day's activities. These Standup meetings helped maintain transparency and identify any potential issues that could affect development. As the Scrum Master, my goal was to be a resource for the team and provide guidance on Agile methodology.

Development Team

As a member of the Development Team, I had the creative freedom to structure my code using industry best practices. This allowed me to implement solutions effectively and efficiently. In my role as a Tester, I collaborated with team members to create test cases and identify potential bugs. The principle of "Test early, test often" was key, as early and frequent testing is crucial in iterative development. Both these roles were essential to the Scrum-Agile process, as they are where the real business value is created.

Review and Retrospective: Completing User Stories

The Scrum-Agile approach to the SDLC is great for isolating critical functionality within a project. Software planning can get really complex if not done properly. Breaking down complex tasks into smaller, manageable increments is key to a successful deployment. For the SNHU Travel project, we gathered requirements from end-users and created User Stories. These stories defined the necessary functionality and were designed to be short yet descriptive enough for both users and developers to understand. Standard practice for User Stories is to state the requirement and clearly define its functionality and purpose. A User Story includes the "who" (the intended user), the "what" (what the user needs to accomplish), and the "why" (the reason behind the functionality, which adds value to the requirement).

Review and Retrospective: Handling Interruptions

By definition, Agile means "flexible" and "responsive," so it's naturally open to changes. Agile projects are expected to have some degree of uncertainty. For instance, when the SNHU Travel project shifted its focus to detox/wellness travel, we were able to adapt by revising the existing code to meet the new requirements.

Review and Retrospective: Communication

With the SNHU Travel project, the requested changes brought up questions about the functionality of the existing code base. As a Developer, my role is to minimize redundancy while ensuring no new bugs are introduced. This careful approach was evident in my communication with the Product Owner and Tester, as shown in the email below:

To: Christy (Product Owner); Brian (Tester) **Cc:** Ron (Scrum Master) **From:** Nicole (Developer) **Subject:** Clarification on New Requirements and Testing Guidelines

Hi Christy & Brian,

As we discussed, I'm starting to revise the code to incorporate the new requirements focusing on detox/wellness travel destinations.

If the original code base remains unchanged, this addition should be relatively simple to implement. However, Christy, could you confirm with the customer whether they prefer the default display to show detox/wellness destinations, or if they want users to select this option in their traveler profiles? Also, Brian, could you provide me with some test case scenarios so I can include them in my code?

Thanks,

Nicole

I believe this email was concise and to the point. It restates the requirement, seeks clarification from the Product Owner, and asks the Tester for additional testing requirements to implement in the code base. The tone of the email reflects a proactive attitude, rather than displaying any resentment towards accommodating an unexpected change. Depending on the Product Owner's response, the Tester may also create new test cases based on the requested information and submit them to me. This communication fosters a transparent and collaborative environment.

Review and Retrospective: Organizational Tools

There are several tools that can assist a Scrum team in transitioning to Agile. For the SNHU Travel project, we utilized Azure DevOps and JIRA. Azure DevOps facilitated the transition into an Agile environment by allowing us to develop the project through creating a Product Backlog, User Stories, and Sprints. We used JIRA to manage individual tasks and bugs, maintaining transparency in our distributed team environment. Our daily Standups were

conducted remotely using video conferencing tools like Webex and Skype. These tools provided an alternative to traditional information radiators, offering a convenient, real-time visual representation of the project's progress and activities.

Review and Retrospective: Evaluating Agile Process

I believe the implementation of Agile in this project had its benefits, but it also presented some challenges. The SNHU Travel project was difficult to predict, and without a way to control the scope, it could easily go off-track and over budget. Scope expansion is almost inevitable in an Agile project since the customer's needs can change at any moment. However, the upside to this unpredictability is that while requirements may change, the quality of the product improves, along with the involvement and satisfaction of stakeholders.

Overall, implementing Agile for the SNHU Travel project was a great decision because it allowed for greater transparency and flexibility. We also reduced the risk of missing any critical customer requirements. In the end, we delivered a quality product that satisfied both the Development Team and the customer.

In conclusion, Agile is gaining acceptance among project management teams. However, not all projects are the same. It is crucial to understand the requirements before committing to an Agile approach. Having access to critical resources is also helpful when implementing Agile in any project. In my opinion, the benefits of producing a quality product that adds value far outweigh the uncertainty that comes with Agile. Value-based products are essential for organizational stability and customer retention.

References

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

Practices for an Adaptive Approach. Wiley.