CS-250 3-4 Journal: Product Owner

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My work as a Product owner with SNHU Travel Agency has bolstered and encouraged growth in this new role. As the Product Owner, it is my job to provide my team with goals that are the goals and priorities set forth by our stakeholders. Doing this requires certain steps and considerations such as direct interaction with the user and stakeholder. Converting the needs and wants of the user and stakeholder into clear, actionable goals, and the use of Web-based analytical tools and surveys.

Direct interaction with the user and stakeholders benefits the Product Owner immensely, especially when it comes to the creation of trip booking software. The user expectations, areas of frustration, and user behavior are learned firsthand by the Product Owner and can be converted into succinct product objectives and priorities. Early and consistent involvement of stakeholders improves transparency and ensures ongoing product development aligns with business requirements while solving legitimate pain points of the user. Based on Cohn (2019), such interaction not only improves user alignment but also instills confidence and responsibility throughout the Scrum Team as well as partners.

The User Stories exercise in this module highlighted the significance of converting user demands into actionable development objectives. User stories are a conduit between vague business demands and concrete development activities. User stories enable the Scrum Team to keep the focus on delivering value in small increments, making it possible for ongoing feedback and iteration. If written correctly, stories also define acceptance criteria and eliminate uncertainty regarding what "done" is, which saves time and prevents the team from getting out of sync. As Schwaber and Sutherland (2020) emphasize in the Scrum Guide, a mutual understanding of user stories makes Sprint Planning more effective and Daily Scrums more substantive. Interviews and user meetings were particularly useful in the development of our user stories. These helped to discover not only what users wished to do, but why they wished to do it. Allowing stories to be written about real goals and challenges instead of assumptions. One person's irritation with tropical location recommendations, despite no desire or history of travel to tropical locations, for instance, led to an understanding of the need for optimizing and improving our curation to the end user’s preferences. These interviews added to our understanding and offered real context which would otherwise be hard to obtain.

To solidify this basis, further approaches to gathering feedback are required. Surveys provide quantitative information from a larger user group, while usability testing can expose latent issues by observing live usage. Analytic tools can further expose trends in user behavior that will not emerge through interviews. Merging the qualitative and the quantitative ensures the Product Backlog is always dynamic and reflects real-world usage.**References**

Cohn, M. (2019). *User stories applied: For agile software development*. Addison-Wesley Professional.

Schwaber, K., & Sutherland, J. (2020). *The Scrum Guide*.<https://scrumguides.org>