**Sprint Review and Retrospective**

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As a cross-functional Scrum Team, each one of us – Product Owner, Scrum Master, Tester, and Developer - contributed to the success of the SNHU Travel project. Individually, we brought unique value and insight. It is this kind of collaboration and

The Product Owner did an excellent job collecting information from the end user and client. She clearly conveyed the details of what the client expected from the product - a truly unique vacation booking system. Questioning end users allowed her to create, and prioritize, user stories that addressed these wants - like creating a profile that catered personalized results and the ability to choose vacation types. She was able to work with the Development Team to prioritize the Product Backlog so that they could get to work.

The user stories provided by the Product Owner served as an outline for the Tester to create test cases. The test cases were important to the success of the SNHU Travel project because they provided an acceptance criterion for the Development Team. Some questions arose as the Tester was working on the test cases, but he knew to reach out the Product Owner for clarification. This is a benefit of Scrum, because connection is encouraged, no one feels out of place when reaching out for help or clarification.

It was with the information provided by both the Product Owner and Tester that the Developer was able to write the code for the website. The user stories and test cases gave a frame of reference for the Developer to create a product that aligned with the Sprints Definition of Done. Even when there was a last-minute change, the Developer did not hesitate to express her concern to the Product Owner. She was quick to ask for clarification from the Product Owner and Tester when questions arose from the test cases. This ensured time was not wasted and kept any frustrations at bay.

Finally, as Scrum Master, I was able to facilitate and monitor the Sprint events so that the Team stayed true to Scrum theory and practice. The Agile Team Charter I created at the beginning of the project made sure everyone had a clear understanding of the Team direction and what behavior and values were expected of them. My presence and availability encouraged everyone to stay on task and complete the SNHU Travel project in the short time frame.

The Scrum-agile approach to the software development life cycle breaks a project into smaller, manageable Sprints (Cobb, 2015). The SNHU Travel project needed to be completed in 5 weeks. Therefore, during the Sprint Planning we needed to prioritize the user stories in the Product Backlog so that, for each 1-week Sprint, we were able to tackle the ones of top priority. The modular, independent, nature of the user stories made them more manageable. The Daily Scrum provided an opportunity for all the members of the Team to discuss their progress – past and present – and ask for input on areas impeding them. Then during the Sprint Review, the Team was able to discuss with the stakeholders what might need to change or be added to the user stories. The Retrospective gave them the opportunity to take this feedback and reflect so that they could be more effective with their user stories in the coming Sprint.

The Scrum-agile approach is ideal for uncertain environments. In the SNHU Travel project, a change was presented when the project was close to completion. The Product Owner informed the Team that the client wanted to focus on detox wellness vacation destinations instead of the originally stated top vacation destinations. Since the user stories were crafted to be succinct, and therefore independent of one another, this change was easily integrated into the Sprint. With some clarification the Tester was able to modify the existing test cases to meet the new requirements, and in hand, the Developer revised the code to reflect the same. It is important to note that the communication factor was key here as the Development Team was able to voice their concerns and receive feedback from the Product Owner in a timely fashion.

As a Scrum Master, I believe that my communication skills were most effective, and best served, during the Daily Scrum. It’s not as important for the members of the Team to see what I do behind the scenes – things like fielding questions from those outside the Scrum Team and defending their choices to the organization. What is important is being there to support them in sharing their ideas, concerns, and assuring them of their self-management skills. I was readily available when they needed me – whether that was during the Daily Scrum, via email, or one-on-one.

A good example of communication occurred when the Product Owner presented the Team with the change in requirements later in development. The Development Team was noticeably concerned so I asked the Product Owner for some clarification on the schedule and deadlines. I also made sure to mention that it was a major shift in content to express why the Team was seemingly taken aback. This effectively prompted a response of deprioritizing some of the user stories so that the Team could stay on track for the completion date while focusing on this change.

The Scrum-agile value that guided our Team was “individuals and interactions over processes and tools” (Cobb, 2015). This value was present throughout all the events. For the team to be successful, they needed to continuously interact and communicate with one another. It was also important, if not more so, for them to have confidence in their own ability to self-manage and share their knowledge. The events of Scrum-agile are not times for the members to be shy. It is a place for them to respectfully disagree and share perspectives so to optimize the experience and the product.

The organizational tools that helped the Team stay on task and communicate was using an information radiator. This way everyone was able to see what everyone was working on and what the status of that task was. This was especially useful during the Daily Scrum when the Team vocalized their current task, prior task, and impediments. I think that moving forward, the Team would benefit from using JIRA. This software would allow us to update tasks and events in real-time instead of having to reference a white board with sticky notes. Face-to-face interaction will still be preferred for the Sprint events but having this software will make us more efficient as location no longer be an issue.

I believe that the Scrum-agile approach was the best fit for the SNHU Travel project. There were certainly some setbacks being on a shorter time frame. The last-minute change to the focus of vacation type destinations, and the format of vacation destination listings shifting from list view to slideshow, was a little concerning. However, this proved to not be an issue thanks to the adaptable nature of the Scrum-agile framework.

Our Scrum Team excelled because we focused on supporting one another and consistently communicating. We each did our part to make sure the Scrum-agile events were followed, and the Agile values and principles, practiced. In the end, it delivered a product that met the customers’ needs and gave us pride as a cohesive, efficient, agile team.

**References**

Cobb, C. G. (2015). *The Project Manager’s Guide to Mastering Agile: Principles and Practices for an Adaptive Approach* (1st ed.). Wiley.