**CS 250 Week 6 Journal:**

**COMMUNICATION PRACTICES AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS**

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**Which communication practice (such as information radiator, Scrum events, and so on) do you think would be most effective in creating openness and transparency within a Scrum Team? Why?**

The communication practice that would be most effective in creating openness/transparency in a scrum team is the daily stand-ups, and in that, creating an open environment that fosters the creation of trust, new ideas, and growth as a single organism. Daily stand-up meetings ensure the team has regular, quick updates on their progress, aims to tackle challenges head-on and efficiently, and sets goals to work towards project completion.

Daily stand-ups benefit the team in many ways. Having frequent or daily meetings with the team members helps create bonds between them. Spending more time with someone, learning how they think and react, and how to work alongside them are all critical things to know to grow team cohesion. The more time the team spends with each other, the easier it will be to come to resolutions, along with having a deeper understanding of the project's requirements/needs of the users and stakeholders.

Frequent or daily meetings can also increase participation by more team members. Sometimes, in team scenarios, it's easy for some members to take most of the speaking time while others choose to listen instead of contributing. I sometimes feel that I would be the listener, especially if the meetings were early in the morning when my brain isn't fully functional. In these types of meetings, it's encouraged to hear from all team members, and strategies are introduced to make everyone answer with more than a yes or no answer. This can help people like me contribute more information and ideas to the project instead of being overshadowed by others who may be morning people.

Frequent or daily stand-up meetings can also help resolve issues quickly and efficiently. By getting the team involved, we have more minds to tackle a single problem, giving new insights or strategies than a single member may develop on their own. By using the team's knowledge, a strategy can be fine-tuned and made more applicable by incorporating the knowledge from the other roles of the team. These meetings also help with team alignment and ensure everyone is on track. Hearing other team members' insights, problems, and solutions gives everyone a better understanding of the overall scope for the team, themselves, and other individual members. By incorporating other team members' insights into my work, there's a higher possibility of the project working as desired and reaching full completion.

**What is an example of a communication practice from this course that helped your team complete their work? Consider an example from the SNHU Travel assignments or from the group discussions.**

An example of a communication practice from this course that helped the team complete work would be the module where we included user feedback to complete our user stories. This practice helps guide the team towards producing a finished product that meets user and stakeholder expectations. By using the input of potential program users, we can better understand the needs and preferences of the user that may be overlooked by the scrum team. This can be done through direct interviews, surveys, or other ways of gathering user information. The insights gained from the users were used to create and refine our user stories. By understanding the need and the possible requirements to make it happen, we can give it a priority and difficulty of development level. This allows us to deliver features that are most relevant to possible users. Incorporating user feedback can also increase team collaboration by having devs, testers, and the product owner working closely together to translate the feedback into usable user stories.

**What is one way that an agile project-management tool (such as JIRA, Azure Boards, or RTC) can help coordinate and increase efficiency within the team? Be sure to consider a tool and not a Scrum event.**

An agile project management tool like JIRA, Azure Boards, or RTC could help increase coordination and efficiency within the team. Starting with JIRA, this software tool is primarily used to track issues and overall project management. Each task created can be assigned to specific team members and statuses for real-time progress tracking, which is incredibly helpful for team cohesion and mindset alignment. This tool allows everyone on a team to know what needs to be done, what everyone's tasks are, and their current progression. Additionally, JIRA can also be integrated with many dev tools, offering options for reports and analytics. Adding this can increase a team's coordination, efficiency, and transparency.

Similarly, Microsoft has Azure Boards, which provides agile tools for coordination and efficiency. Azure Boards offers some key aspects, such as providing backlogs, team dashboards, and allows the team to efficiently plan, track, and discuss elements of the project throughout the development process. Additionally, Azure boards have a user-friendly interface, seamless integration, and would increase a team's coordination and efficiency.

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