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CS – 250

Final Project: Retrospective

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During the software development life cycle, I was able to gain insight into each of the roles within the Agile methodology. Each role is important in maintaining a well-functioning machine. I first took on the role as Scrum Master. The Scrum Master is responsible for holding the scrum team accountable to the scrum values, their work agreements, and to the scrum framework. For the SNHU travel team, the Scrum Master contributed by acting as a coach, protector, leader, and advocate. The Scrum Master helped the team to understand the goals, scope, and product domain. They made sure the team understood the product backlog, especially after the project requirements changed. When the client decided to capitalize on the healthy vacation niche, the scrum master facilitated scrum events in order to understand the updated product backlog and understand the client’s needs. This was all done while keeping the communication and understanding between the Scrum Master and Product Owner.

One of the main objectives for the Product Owner is to communicate the vision of the client while translating the clients’ requests into tangible actions for the team. The Product Owner is an advocate for the client, and for the team. Setting and maintaining the product backlog is an important part of this process. The project goals set by the Product Owner must be clearly expressed to help reach the goal. They are also responsible for collecting feedback from the client and stakeholders on the product increments. An example of this is when the client for the SNHU Travel project decided to focus more on the healthy vacation niche. The Product Owner showed the client the progress so far and collected feedback from the client. Then translated this into actions and updated the product backlog to reflect the updated goals. This then allowed the rest of the team to adjust accurately on their next Scrum event.

The developers did an excellent job at using the user stories and test cases to complete each sprint. The developers are responsible for accomplishing their work to an agreed upon level – the definition of done. They communicated effectively to the product owner and scrum master when more information was needed in the user stories and test cases. When the client wanted to focus on the healthy vacation niche for the SNHU Travel project, they easily adapted. They were able to take what was completed and adjust it to meet the clients’ new requirements. They inspected and adapted through the daily scrum and managed the sprint backlog.

The scrum-agile approach helped the user stories come to completion because the versatility it gave the team and allowed them to break the process down into increments. As the user stories were completed, the product backlog updated according to the needs of the client and what task was the next priority. The product backlog organized the order of the task by priority, and the user stories were then completed accordingly. The user stories gave the developers the opportunity to ask for more specific details when needed. For instance, the team utilized revised test cases after communicating with the scrum master and product owner to get more specific details on how the product should look and operate. The agile approach was especially helpful when the SNHU Travel client wanted to add a focus to the health vacation niche. Since some user stories were already completed, the team was able to work off the completed user stories to adjust to the new client requests. This is one of many reasons why the scrum agile approach supported the projects completion. The product owner could effectively communicate with the stakeholders/client and translate their updated needs to the team. The team could then make the necessary adjustments utilizing scrum events and updating the product backlog and user stories.

The team communicated effectively by using many different methods. Communication between the different roles was critical to the team’s success. The developers and testers effectively communicated with the Product Owner when they were revising the test cases. After the initial test cases were created, the developers needed more information. They sent an email to the testers and product owner explaining what they felt was missing or where they needed more details. They effectively explained their expectations and laid out how they will be progressing. Additionally, the team utilized a Scrum Board so that everyone had a visual representation of the progress. The team also utilized a Scrum software to facilitate all the planning. The scrum software is very effective because the team can update the scrum board and the rest of the team can see any updates real time without having to be in the same location. The Product Owners were effective at communicating with the stakeholders and client. When the client decided to focus on the healthy vacation niche, the Product Owner was able to understand what the client wanted and accurately relay that to the rest of the team.

During the sprint planning, the use of user stories was particularly helpful. It helped the team to choose what stories to tackle and how to prioritize. Since the whole team is involved in the sprint planning, it is a good opportunity to get everyone on the same page. Once the user sprints were completed according to the teams agreed upon definition of “done”, the testers were able to write test cases from the acceptance criteria. The sprint review gave the team the opportunity to revise the user stories and test cases as needed. The sprint retrospective was equally as important because it allowed the team to review what worked best and what didn’t. They could then make necessary adjustments as needed. All of this was supplemented by utilizing a scrum software with a virtual scrum board and a digital product backlog that could be easily updated.

Overall, adopting the Scrum Agile approach for the SNHU Travel team was very effective. The methodology allowed for smooth and cooperative adjustments when the client wanted to make changes that were not originally planned. There were some challenges with this new approach because the company recently decided to switch to this approach. Since this was the first project they completed with the new approach, it took some trial and error for the team to adjust to the methodology. When the developers first heard that the client was making changes after they had completed that sprint, there was some panic and stress at first. This was because if that happened under the old methodology, it would have been a lot more intensive and stressful to make the changes. Once they were reassured and reminded that this was part of the process and that was completely okay for the changes to be made, they were able to relax and adjust more easily. If this project was completed with the traditional waterfall approach, it would have been more expensive and time consuming to adjust to the clients’ changes. Therefore, we feel the Scrum-Agile approach was the best approach to complete the SNHU Travel development project.