SNHU Travel: Sprint Review and Retrospective

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**SNHU Travel: Sprint and Retrospective**

For the successful completion of a project like SNHU Travel in an agile work environment, team members have specific roles and responsibilities that make the process constructive and fluid. As the Scrum Master, I facilitated the Scrum events such as Daily Scrum Meetings, Sprint Plannings and Sprint Review and Retrospective. I also helped coach the team along and get past any obstacles that were hindering the progress of the project. The events also helped out with the teams communication and collaboration skills. I used Daily Scrum Meetings to check in with each team member on what they’ve been working on, what they intend on completing that day and what has been hindering their development. It allows everyone’s input and creates constructive discussion. Our Sprint Planning helped the developers understand what was expected to be done during each sprint, which would then be analyzed during the Sprint Review and Retrospective.

For SNHU Travel, the Product Owner communicated with the client/stakeholders in order to figure out their needs. Ideas and suggestions from the client that were more of a priority were then turned into a user story to be sent over to the Testers. The Testers worked with the Product Owner to figure out the exact needs of the client based on the user stories and create test cases to be shared with the development team. For example, the Product Owner understood that the client wanted an option for a price limit in the SNHU Travel software. With it being a high priority in the Product Backlog, they then created a User Story and shared that with the Testers. The testers then created a Test Case from the User Story and shared it with the development team for development of a “Filter” setting that allows for a user-specified price limit.

The Developers are the ones hands on creating the product for the client. The rest of the team shapes out what the product should look like for the client and the development team makes it a reality. Developers are assigned different tasks that are typically listed in their team’s project management system (such as JIRA), that maps out what needs to be done and what takes priority. A few points were left a little too broad leaving the development team needing clarification. After clarification, the test cases were updated and provided to the development team. On example would be the clarification needed regarding the “detox and wellness” focus that the Product Owner provided. The development team was concerned on what detox and wellness was supposed to encompass. The question was if there were specific types of vacations that were more directed toward detox and wellness or if the descriptors of the listings should be adjusted to be more detox and wellness friendly.

When the project changed gears to be focused more on detox and wellness, everything that was currently being worked on needed to be adjusted. The focus was shifted so the work everyone put in needed to be changed such as the test cases, vacation listings and descriptors. Rather than having popular points throughout the world in the product, they were changed to more detox and wellness focused places like relaxing spas, quite nature adventures, etc. This was difficult for the team to adjust to as they already had specified tasks for completion, but effective communication and prompt adaptation was what kept the team on track.

In order to communicate with the team effectively, I made sure that everyone shared their points in our Daily Scrum so everyone could have a chance for open communication. When the team was adjusting to the change in direction, the team made sure to push out the updated materials for the team such as the test cases in order for the team to adjust as smoothly as possible. The team was also encouraged to reach out to whoever they needed to in order to ask questions and gain clarification so that the progress could be best fit for what the client visualized. Not communicating not only hinders the collaboration within the team but also causes room for needed project changes in the future.

For the team’s organization, we made sure to have the Product Backlog up to date, especially when the focus changed. We also made sure to stay on topic during our Daily Scrum Meeting as well as keep track of time in order to keep the meeting at 15 minutes length so there was no wasted time needed elsewhere. As far as the user stories and test cases, a big organizational piece we focused on was keeping the test case names the same as the user stories so we could accurately correlate them together. Small details such as these time constraints and labeling measures kept the team with minimal confusion and need for clarification to maximize the development in the timeframe given for the sprint.

The Scrum-agile approach for the SNHU Travel project helped the project itself be more versatile whereas the Waterfall method would have kept the focus more linear. Some might say that having a linear focus can help get straight to the point but in this case, it would have missed the point totally. If the Waterfall method would have been kept in place for this project, the team would have no way to adapt to the changes needed and may have had to start from scratch. The Waterfall method is not accustomed to adaptation and reflection as the Scrum-agile approach is. The Scrum-agile approach helped the team focus on the needs coming from the client and adjust them according to changes that occur. It also helps the team stay focused on their collaboration and communication in order to best fit the client’s needs and produce the product that is specific to them. Overall, the Scrum-agile approach was the best fit for this development project.