**Scrum Master Sprint Review and Retrospective**

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As explained in previous journal entries, the collaboration within a team is by far the most important aspect to any Scrum-agile Team approach. Each role, described as, Product Owner, Scrum Master, Developer and Tester have their own respective tasks that they must complete and adhere to. When a team works with fluidity and completes their tasks on time and to the best of their best ability, a project is bound to be successful. With the use of agile in a team atmosphere, questions and concerns are subject to be a priority, but it is the team’s sole duty to discuss these impurities and come together to find the best solutions. Among many of the aspects that go into an agile approach, communication is by far the most important, which there are many means to effective communication in an agile-team setting.

The Product owner has a very important role of managing the backlog and intaking all products, items and resources that the team could possibly need throughout the duration of a project. With a coherent and observant Product Owner, the team is given security that their needs will be met and understood as they progress through the project. Having a distinguished Product Owner allows everyone on the team to focus on their own tasks and not have the apprehension that they won’t be able to do their jobs correctly because something that they need, might not be available to them on time. During the SNHU Travel Project the Product Owner needed to take initiative when SNHU Travel wanted to change the direction of their project to focus on detox/wellness. After relaying the information to the team, the Product Owner also was tasked to answer any following questions that surfaced. From this point, the Product Owner had to proceed with editing the backlog properly to adhere with the teams’ new requests from SNHU Travel.

Following the Product Owner, the Scrum Master has the responsibility of leading the scrum events and ensuring that everyone is on the same page with theories, practices and rules. Seeing as how the Scrum Master’s role intertwines with the Product Owner’s role within effective backlog management, it is crucial that communication remain prevalent and fluid. Scrum Master’s must have a solid understanding of the entire process and what everyone’s roles, if there are any discrepancies that the Scrum Master does not understand, things could go sideways as they are essentially the mediator to the team. Facilitating scrum events for the team is quintessential for success because if there are any concerns that go unanswered, then the team will not have faith in the Scrum Master moving forward. During the SNHU Travel project, after the Product Owner approached the team, the Scrum Master raised questions for the timeline of the project. Questioning any timeline changes was crucial for the team because it gave insight to the development team (Developer and Tester), regarding any major shifts that could have needed to happen.

Although “work-horse” may sound to have a negative connotation, it does not when considering what the Developer’s do within an agile team. The Developer’s are the individuals who get the project off the ground and produce results. It is the Developer’s duty to intake anything and everything that is constructed in the scrum events and bring it to reality. Seeing as how what is discussed during the events is just ideas and thought bubbles, it means nothing until the Developer’s but their hands to work in creating something tangible and ready to be reviewed during the sprint review. As mentioned during the SNHU Travel project, the customer asked for some changes to be made to what the team was working on, and the Developer raised the questions regarding the progress that had already been made. When a project is changed suddenly, as such, it could potentially leave more work for the development team seeing as how they might have to start from the beginning again. But thankfully, in this case the Developer was made sure that they would not have to worry as they were able to work from what they already had and just to change a few aspects.

Testers are extremely important when it comes to the finished product of any project. Creating and implementing test cases to make sure that the Developers are on the right path is their sole purpose, and a meaningful one at that. Having to precisely piggy-back off what the Developer has created, the Testers must create accurate and effective test cases to guarantee that the Developers are on the right track. Testers are underwriters, they use their test cases and “attack” the Developer’s code with brute-force, just to cover any irregularities that may arise, and communicate any bugs back to the Developer so a solid foreground can be presented during the sprint review. The SNHU Travel Project was a solid example of what it means to be a Tester because once the changes were brought to the team, the Tester immediately mentioned he would start working on new test cases. With the perseverance of the Tester, the Developer will have any easier time adjusting to the changes because it allows for them to know what will work and what needs to be modified.

Using the Scrum-agile approach throughout the entire project gave me the opportunity to see what it was like to have the flexibility and access of a team to make changes when necessary. For example, being able to create test cases and apply them to the project, gave me a clear vision of how much work can really go into testing and making sure something is bullet-proof. From creating the user stories with the given information to running the test cases on those specific stories, witnessing the full cycle of what it was like to use agile was eye-opening at the least. Having a Kanban board was imperative because it established a communal frame of reference for anything and everything that needed to be completed. With the ease to make changes at any time, especially when changes were requested during the project, the team was able to take a step back and reevaluate what was important what was not important. When the Product Owner presented the changes to the project, several questions were raised, such as “Do we still have the same schedule or are we moving the deadlines back to accommodate this major shift in content?”. With questions like this, it opened the floor for any further questions and how it will affect the entire team moving forward.

Having access to a Kanban board, such as JIRA, made it possible to display the user stories, tasks, responsibilities and the backlog to the team. With the use of a Kanban board, every member of the team was able to view what needed to be completed or think of questions that could be raised during the next daily scrum. When the team was given the next steps for their project, it was important to have a Kanban because they were now able to take the information they were given and proceed to the board and make changes where they saw fit. Being one of the pros, having this ability to take a few steps back and rethink what needed to be done, allowed the team to be successful in changing the project on the fly. Another pro that this agile approach had, was communication in general, from every member of the team, there was a contribution made in order to move forward to the next steps after such a big change had been presented. Although there are few cons to agile, one would certainly be that it could tend to be overwhelming to the team and there might be too much information given at once. But thankfully, the way to combat such a con, would be to simply communicate and organize everyone’s thoughts and get them in writing so they cannot be misinterpreted.

Agile is an extremely revolutionary approach to projects such as this, having the ability to test as you go, raise questions about certain aspects, and completely change something if its not working, is what made this project possible. The waterfall approach would have made this experience spiral out of control very quickly, and that is why I think that agile was the right method to use when navigating through SNHU Travel development project.