ISYS 620 Agile Sys Analysis & Design

Sprint Team 1

Agile Estimating

October 2, 2019

1. How did your team arrive at a scale that worked for you?

An overall outline of the project was the basis for our backlog. We each wrote out user stories separately then came together to discuss how they could all be combined into our main backlog. In many cases we were able to break stories down further into smaller isolated entities. In the end we felt like we had a complete epic broken down into its smallest pieces at the top of the backlog iceberg. This was the scope of our project. It was then easy to analyze and give each portion a value of effort. In our case we used an effort scale of 1 through 5.

1. Imagine you are the development team building this tool.  How many story points could you complete every two weeks?  Calculate how long this total initiative would take?

We decided to break the project down into 2-week sprints for a total of 26 weeks (6 months) with a goal to hit the MVP line at 10 weeks. The efforts we gave each story allowed us to divide all the stories as evenly as possible into 2-week sections. We did this by finding a total effort we felt we could handle in each sprint and then balanced the stories until the values were as close to the total as possible. In this way we found that we have what seems to be a nicely balanced backlog assuming our effort estimates are correct.

1. How did your team reconcile differences of opinion in estimates?

Along the way we found that some stories could be interpreted differently and therefor some of us thought they seemed as though they had been broken down as far as possible while others thought they could be broken down further. In these cases, we discussed our methods of thinking about these stories and after we were comfortable that we had all the information we decided as a team which way to go.

We also encountered differing opinions on effort. I’m sure this is very common as estimating effort is almost like throwing out arbitrary numbers. But the more numbers we assigned the clearer the picture became. Some of our effort choices were readjusted along the way as we began to grasp the overall picture of things. Greatest effort and minimal effort stories began to solidify which gave way to the medium effort items. It was an iterative process with different members giving different efforts along the way. Each time a disagreement happened we were able to discuss what we thought would be involved and this led to an overall agreement on what value that story should be given.