Sprint Review and Retrospective

Applying Roles:

During the SNHU Travel Project I played various roles within the Scrum-Agile team’s positions, all of them contributing to our team’s success. When I was the product owner, I ensured the backlog was focused on value, from a shareholder perspective, as well as user needs. As the Scrum Master, I ensured daily scrums occurred and ensured team members were not set back by anything within my control. Also, as a developer, I helped in streamlining and stating what requirements and features are necessary for users searching for a travel destination based on their preferences.

Completing User Stories:

The Agile approach left little to be desired for user-stories and was efficient in breaking these down into specific tasks for members of the scrum team. By using sprints, we were able to deliver small but crucial parts of the SNHU travel project quickly and efficiently. For example, in one sprint, when we developed the preferences tab and what would be included in the options. The swift delivery of this feature ensured that improvements were able to be made as well, pending user feedback.

Handling Interruptions:

Throughout the project, our team experienced several interruptions. By utilizing Agile-method, we were able to adapt without skipping a beat. One major change we experienced was when we were tasked with creating the site as a PowerPoint template instead of a traditional website. Instead of panicking and scraping what we had already compiled, we got together at our next scrum and ensured everyone understood what the new priority was, and their tasks were divided out there, for us to succeed. Once again, by using Agile we were able to succeed and keep up with the ever-changing business needs this project came with.

Communication:

Without effective communication, we possibly could have failed as a team in this project. With daily scrums to discuss progress, changes, roadblocks, etc. we able to determine what the team’s next steps will be. In one instance, we had to decide what techniques we would like to use as we transitioned from Waterfall to agile. Everyone was prompt and constructive to determine out best course of travel for this transition.

Organizational Tools:

We utilized several Scrum-Agile tools and events in order to stay organized and “in the loop,” overall leading to our team’s effectiveness and efficiency. We used Jira for tracking user-stories and sprint tracking/planning, and even for backlog refinement. Our bread and butter really were the sprint planning meetings though. At these meetings we were able to define various objectives for the sprint, both as a team and individually. Sprint retrospectives allowed us to hear insights into how improvements can be continuously made, and what those should be. The daily scrums, as we called them, ensured each member was being held accountable for tasks in the past, present, and future. Using these tools and events allowed the project to be completed on time, while also leaving room for adaptations if necessary.

Evaluating Agile Process:

Pros:

* Feedback
  + Sprint reviews ensured stakeholders were involved in the development process, allowing them to have their input prior to a member wasting time on a feature the product owner already knew they didn’t need.
* Flexibility
  + Constant changes in requirements were no stress on the team, as time/capability for adaptation is built into the agile approach.
* Communication/Collaboration
  + An in-depth process such as program development as this was, the process enabled strong communication and ensured teammates worked together rather than for themselves.

Cons:

* Learning time
  + Moving from a waterfall mindset to an agile approach was difficult, as there are many moving pieces to it that aren’t incorporated into the waterfall method.
* Lots to it
  + Because Agile is so flexible and adaptable, required changes were introduced to us that shocked us the first time, as with the waterfall method this does not happen.

Overall, because this project was so dynamic, the Agile approach was successful. We required continuous feedback and room to make changes based on requirements. If we had stuck with the waterfall approach, we wouldn’t have gotten feedback as early on, and we would be scrambling to make changes once we thought the project was already completed. By using Agile as intended we were able to deliver an adaptable finished product that met up with stakeholder and user needs alike.