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First off, the product owner is responsible for maintaining a healthy and communicative relationship with our clients. This strong line of communication will ensure the team is aware of the processes they must execute and the specific things the client asks to be included in the project. Without this essential role, our SNHU Travel project may have been in shambles. Midway through development, the client requested a change to the project. The Product Owner was able to intercept the team from heading in the now, the wrong direction, and steer them in the new correct direction.

The Scrum Master is an essential role in the team because every effective team of people has a great leader. The Scrum Master was able to guide the team in a way that everyone understood. Just as a manager in any other setting may task their employees with different goals that are specific, a Scrum Master will make sure the boundaries are understood. The Product Owner may not give a clear direction to take in terms of how the project is designed, but rather, what the client wants and how the team could design specific items to make this possible. The Scrum Master will transform the general direction into small chunks the team understands and can tackle one by one. The SNHU Travel project benefits from the Scrum Master because they are the person that held the team together, especially in tough times like when the direction needed to change with the project. The Scrum Master became responsible for creating this big shift and facilitating efficiency during a more than likely stressful time where things like conflict may have risen.

The tester is responsible for well, testing. What if the client tries to book a vacation using –1 for the quantity of tickets? What if the processes fail when a certain link is clicked? The tester ensures these processes and edge cases are in good working order and free of bugs, most of them anyway! Our SNHU Travel project needed a tester to make sure our client received a working product. Without this essential team role, the client could have faced things like crashes, or even monetary loss from bugs under the right circumstances. Testing went hand in hand with the development process, so the development team was working side by side with this role. Test cases were updated when the shift happened, so that the new processes were in line with what the development team was working on, or what they would be completing by the end of the project. Prioritization allowed the tester to see what needed to be working at its best, whereas other things could be tested less if necessary.

The development team played a crucial role to the scrum team as they oversaw bringing the ideas to life. Again, they are only a small part of the team, as they would not have a great idea of what needed to be done if it were not for the scrum master and the product owner relaying the information from the client. They needed to be informed of changes immediately so that they could change course immediately if needed, which in fact, was needed. The development team had already developed a good chunk of the project when the client changed their mind on some things. Working together as a development team even in a stressful environment was essential to reaching the end goal of a working travel booking system.

The Scrum-agile approach helped the user stories come to life by allowing them to adapt to what is currently happening. The small teams that make up the scrum team can listen to what the client may want to change with their project at any time. Now as always, changing something that has already been done will take some time as well as money. The client should be informed of this as they may be blindsided by something not being implemented by the initially planned completion date. The user stories allow the team to get a great idea of what the client wants from the product, then relayed to the team from the product owner and the scrum master. Initially, the user stories formed the idea of a travel booking system, with top destinations to travel to. Later, the user stories transformed the booking system into a specific niche that the client had in mind, which was wellness and detox vacations. If it were not for the user stories, the client may receive a product that is not at all what they had in mind.

The Scrum-agile approach supported the project completion when the team was already midway through development because of the ability to adapt to change. Initially, the client had a general idea in mind for a kind of booking software that would show top places to book vacations based on popularity. Later as we had seen in module five, the client wanted to update the project to include top detox and wellness vacations instead of top vacations overall. This essentially shifted the team in a whole new direction because this wellness and detox vacation thing was new and trending, not really based on past overall vacations to places and/or things. The team was able to change their plan to accommodate this request to satisfy the customer and give them a product that would show a new “trending” vacation sector. If the team was using waterfall, they may not have been able to effectively change their plan to switch these packages due to the rigid structure and planning that goes into it.

A good example of effective communication between the team members was the email from the tester that required additional information for a good working project. This email showed how the team could work together even when the instructions were not entirely clear. The email that I sent back directly addressed each question so that the test cases could be updated accordingly. This encouraged collaboration among the team members because they could share information so that everyone was informed of the specifics and details needed to complete the project. It would be difficult to complete a project with unclear instructions, so it is essential to collaborate with your team to get a high-quality product for the customer.

An organizational tool that seemed to be extremely useful was Azure Boards. These boards seem to bring everyone together digitally as they are all informed on what everyone is doing with the use of this tool. Understanding what the other people are doing on the team allows for planning that can increase efficiency. When certain tasks are being worked on or completed, it is visible to the entire team with this tool. It is also nice to be able to use the social tools within this tool, that way, in case you need clarification from someone on the team, it is right within the tool that also contains the tasks.

The Scrum-agile approach made the SNHU Travel project more effective because of the need for change throughout the project. This really is one of the biggest pros to using agile, as the customer may change their mind on a particular aspect of the project when you are halfway done. It may seem like a hassle, but the customer should know this comes with downsides, as their project could slash other features or have a moved deadline to capture them all. I would also consider this constant change to be a con of using agile as changing a project when so many features have already been added could be stressful and tiring. Agile is one of those methodologies that you almost need to find the balance for. Though, the advantage of constant clear communication helps to make sure the customer knows the risks of making drastic changes to their project during development. I do think this approach was the best choice for the SNHU Travel project. It would be a shame to be on a rigid structure like waterfall where the development process could have been less forgiving to the change in the project structure. The team was in constant collaboration to ensure each aspect that the client desired was met to the best ability. Change is not always easy, but some methodologies can be easier than others.