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CS-250 Software Development Life Cycle

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**Sprint Review and Retrospective**

The Scrum-agile roles feature the Product Owner, Scrum Master, and Development Team. Each of these roles helps progress the overall flow of work and progress of development of the product. The Product Owner understands the client’s requests of the product and develops user stories, such as our SNHU Travel client’s request of a niche vacation booking system. These user stories each represent a feature that the client desires their final product to have. The Product Owner then continuously refines and prioritizes the user stories in a list known as the Product Backlog. (Cobb, 2015)

Now, the Scrum Master can facilitate meetings that are considered Scrum Events. Sprint Planning is a Scrum event that features the Product Owner meeting with the Development team and discussing what user stories can be accomplished in the upcoming Sprint. Then as the development portion of the Sprint begins, a Daily Standup is facilitated by the Scrum Master for the Development Team. Here the Development Team discusses what they have accomplished yesterday, what they are trying to accomplish today, and what may be obstacles for them. The Scrum Master then begins to work on removing these obstacles to help the Development Team progress more efficiently. The Development Team then works on user stories to progress them towards a tested and “Done” completion status. (Cobb, 2015)

Once the Sprint has ended on a set period of time, the Sprint Review is then used to review what has been accomplished by the team with the Product Owner and possibly the client. Here additional issues can be raised and then created into additional user stories that the Product Owner will implement into the Product Backlog and re-prioritize for the next Sprint. Finally, the Sprint Retrospective is held, usually immediately after the Sprint Review. This Scrum event is crucial for the team to review what practices worked well for the team and what did not. Any updates that come out of this meeting will then be applied to the team in the next Sprint. (Cobb, 2015)

In our SNHU Travel projects, the Product Owner listed the user stories in the Product Backlog by priority. During the Sprint Planning the Development Team then gave effort estimates on what could then be achieved in the given Sprint. From there, the Development Team worked on each user story. Development Team members who specialized in Testing then created Test Cases to ensure that each feature was implemented correctly. If any additional questions where needed by the team, emails could be used to acquire that information from the Product Owner or Scrum Master. This helped ensure transparency across the whole team and helped the Development Team focus on getting each user story to come to completion.

During the SNHU Travel Project, the Product Owner met with the client and discovered that the client had done a research project that then made them decide to have their niche vacations be focused on wellness/detox vacation destinations. (SNHU Travel Project, 2022) In a Waterfall approach, this change would not have been able to be implemented and therefore not included in the product during the Product Review. This would have then been disappointing to the client. With a Scrum-agile approach, this major change in focus caused for an additional user story to be developed and inserted into the Product Backlog with a high enough priority to be included in the current sprint. While it is not good practice to include a change to the user stories of a Sprint Goal, this change was handled efficiently and included into the Sprint successfully. It was noted that other lower priority user stories would then be possibly left out and not complete by the Sprint Review.

One example of communication was in the emails created by the tester to the Product Owner about test cases they were developing. With the change in focus on wellness/detox vacation destinations, the Tester wanted to make sure the requirements for their test cases would satisfy the user stories updated in the Product Backlog correctly. By being able to communicate to everyone associated with the team, there is no need to have to rely on someone communicating the message through another person to reach yet another person. With easy access communications and information radiators that can feature project progress updates, every member of the team can then keep updated and update themselves and their team of any issues they come across. By finding out these issues early, they can then be corrected early preventing bigger issues further into development.

Organizational tools and Scrum-agile principles had a direct effect on how well every member of the team was informed on the progress and focus of the project. The Product Backlog being constantly refined and prioritized allowed for the Sprint to begin with the most up to date information. The Daily Standup helped each team member be able to see progress being made, as well as what everyone was working on and what they may be able to do to help. Information radiators like the Scrum Board provided a visual for everyone to understand and see the overall progress of the team during the Sprint. Each one of these along with the Scrum events themselves lead to transparency about the focus of the project and opened communications between everyone about any issues that may have come up.

The SNHU Travel project benefited greatly from the Scrum-agile approach. Each team member was able to have a role that progressed the development of the project successfully. The Scrum-agile approach was even tested in an adaptive way when a change in focus from the client was brought up during development. (SNHU Travel Project, 2022) Each member was able to focus on their role and understand what that change meant to the team’s progress. When the change was made, each Team member could easily communicate any issues they may have to the appropriate person. That person could then easily respond with updates and more information quicker to help solve the issue faster. This adaptive quality in the Scrum-agile approach proved valuable in this situation, as the product that would be featured in the Sprint Review with the Product Owner and client more closely aligned with the wishes that the client had.

**References:**

* Cobb, G. (2015) The Project Manager’s Guide to Mastering Agile: Principles and Practices for an Adaptive Approach. John Wiley & Sons
* SNHU Travel Project (2022) [Course CS-250] Southern New Hampshire University