CS-250, 7-1 Final Project

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Review and Retrospective

The adoption of Scrum for the SNHU Travel project at ChadaTech marks a shift in the company’s software development approach. This paper reflects on its impact on teamwork, communication, and project success. It is based on class assignments, where I assumed various roles, with each role's responsibilities outlined in class material. This integration of roles and class material is reflected throughout the paper. As Scrum Master, I will analyze team roles, user story completion, and how we handled interruptions. Additionally, the paper evaluates the effectiveness of Scrum tools and principles, concluding on the value of this approach for future projects at ChadaTech.

**Applying Roles**

Throughout this course, I assumed various roles within a Scrum team transitioning to Agile practices to develop an application for SNHU Travel. The team, composed of a Product Owner, Scrum Master, Developers, and Testers, worked collaboratively to achieve success. The following provides an overview of each role and their contributions to the project's success.

In the SNHU Travel project, I served as the Product Owner, ensuring the development process delivered value to stakeholders and users. I acted as the voice of the customer, maintaining a clear vision and communicating it to the Scrum Team. For example, I facilitated a user focus group (Southern New Hampshire University), and created user stories for the development team, guiding the entire team toward a user-centered, value-driven development process.

As Scrum Master, I guided the team through Scrum ceremonies, ensuring alignment and continuous improvement. I facilitated focused, time-boxed meetings, promoted open communication, and helped create a team charter to define roles and goals. These practices supported the team in adapting to changes and delivering incremental value, contributing to successful outcomes.

As a Tester, I used user stories to guide test case development, focusing on acceptance criteria and user role descriptions. Testing was integrated into each sprint, promoting collaboration with developers and ensuring early issue detection. Communication with the Product Owner was key to clarifying requirements and filling gaps, ensuring the product met user expectations and quality standards.

As a Developer on the SNHU Travel project, I worked with the Product Owner and Tester to transform client requirements into software. Using Agile, I broke down user stories into tasks, prioritized features, and adjusted based on feedback. Regular meetings ensured alignment, and retrospectives helped address challenges and improve the process.

**Completing User Stories**

User stories for the SNHU Travel project were initially based on insights from a client meeting and a user focus group. These discussions helped define key features, such as filtering vacation options, ensuring the user stories reflected actual user needs and expectations. During the development process, we continuously refined the stories based on feedback from the Product Owner and the team. Regular meetings like Sprint Planning and Daily Scrums allowed us to adjust priorities and clarify requirements, ensuring that each user story was completed successfully and met the client's objectives.

Handling Interruptions

In his book, Cobb (2015) emphasizes the importance of communication and how Agile teams can respond to changing requirements and unexpected shifts, which aligns with the approach I took in addressing project direction changes. When project management shifted focus to detox and wellness travel, I communicated effectively with the team to address concerns and ensure alignment. For instance, the Scrum Master asked a pointed question: "Is the original schedule still in effect, or are the deadlines being adjusted?" This inquiry clarified whether the deadlines were being changed, helping the team understand the potential impacts of the shift. By asking this question, I facilitated clear communication and a more agile response to the change.

**Communication**

Effective communication is crucial in Agile environments, where clarity and collaboration drive project success. In the email I sent to the Product Owner (*Module 4 Tester Email*), Christy, I asked clear, detailed questions about user stories to eliminate ambiguity and ensure alignment with project goals. This approach reflects Cobb’s (2015) emphasis on the importance of clear communication between team members, enabling effective collaboration and reducing the risks of misalignment. By fostering open dialogue and focusing on precise, actionable information, I helped ensure the team could move forward efficiently while maintaining shared understanding of project priorities and status.

**Organizational Tools**

Digital tools like JIRA and Trello were essential for the success of the SNHU Travel project. These platforms provided clear task management and tracking, ensuring that everyone stayed aligned with project goals. JIRA’s dashboards allowed for detailed progress tracking, while Trello’s visual boards made it easy to update priorities during Daily Scrums. These tools facilitated Scrum events by breaking down user stories into manageable tasks during Sprint Planning, ensuring transparency throughout the project.

In Sprint Reviews and Retrospectives, JIRA and Trello helped reflect on the team’s performance, aligning with Scrum’s iterative feedback process (Cobb, 2015). Tools like these ensured adaptability, helping the team adjust quickly to changing project direction and maintain progress.

**Evaluating Agile Process**

The Agile approach provided both benefits and challenges for the SNHU Travel project. A key advantage was its ability to keep the team adaptable to changing project requirements. Scrum's iterative process allowed for quick adjustments to priorities and the incorporation of feedback, ensuring the product aligned with evolving client needs (Cobb, 2015). Regular Scrum ceremonies, such as Daily Scrums and Sprint Reviews, ensured continuous communication and alignment with the project’s direction. However, the emphasis on frequent communication and collaboration also introduced additional overhead. Managing and updating user stories and tasks required close attention and daily checks, demanding extra effort from both the Scrum Master and the team. This need for constant coordination aligns with the Agile Manifesto’s focus on communication and collaboration (Beck et al., 2001). Furthermore, the use of tools like JIRA and Confluence, while essential for tracking progress and maintaining transparency, introduced added complexity. These tools required additional infrastructure, training, and ongoing management, which placed further demands on the team.

Despite these challenges, the Scrum-Agile approach was effective for the SNHU Travel project due to its ability to manage shifting priorities and promote communication. In this case, the iterative and adaptive nature of Scrum was well-suited to the needs of the project, making it a suitable approach for the development of the travel application.

References:

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