# **Scrum Retrospective for Final OSS project**

As I look back in the last 2 to 3 months, it was indeed an arduous but fruitful journey working on the OSS project. Throughout the course and the project, I learnt different aspects of project management, and skills that can use used in everyday life which involves interacting with other people. In this class and specifically OSS project, I learnt about how to be a better team member. This project reminded me of the importance of communication. Without effective communication among the members of a given group, it is not possible to achieve its goals and unnecessary conflicts may arise. Group communication was one of the vital lessons learned during the group project. Though this OSS project and course, I also gained valuable insights about myself, discovering my strengths and weaknesses when working in a team, as a member and as a leader.

For the software project management class, I belong to OSS Team 3 – Sprinters. My role is a software tester. Reflecting upon the last 2 to 3 months, cohesiveness was something very valuable which I picked up from this group project. At the initial stages, we were all grouped randomly and as we did not know each other that well in the beginning and so one of the hardest tasks was to estimate everyone`s attitude working in a team was like and how much effort every single member is going to put in our project. Through our daily scrum meetings, we got to know each other very well and our working style which assisted all of us to get familiar with one another.

We were ambitious as a team and when working on the project, we were looking through various projects to work on such as product-based kind of projects mainly relating to Alexa, Siri for people who are deaf and dumb. We really wanted to work on that project but since the scope would be too big, we decided to work on a project that was smaller in scale. We had chosen Apache Spark integrated with HADOOP for AdTech platform company known as Sprinters AdTech for OSS project mainly for customer segmentation. My initial role for the project sprint 1 was to identify the possible risks & mitigations for the project, add user story for software tester role and assist in adding references for the whole team on each slide on whatever they have researched for their portions/parts. For Sprint 1, the easiest task that I had on hand would be adding user story for the software tester role because I have the knowledge on the topic of software testing and what software testers do and based on data architect tasks, the software tester basically tests these tasks. The difficult tasks were to add references and identifying possible risks and mitigations for the project. For the risks and mitigation tasks, I had difficulties as I tried to research on the internet, library books for plausible risks such as business and technical risks that Apache Spark might have and there were tons of information being bombarded at me. I overcame the difficulty by selecting those risks that were applicable to our project and discussed with the team on their perspective which helped to ease the task. The other difficulty was doing up the references as there were many references to format and I had to wait for team to include the links to format the references but I managed the difficulty by doing those references where team members had already given me the links so that there were lesser references to format at the last minute. For sprint 2, I had to work on Testing portion for the whole OSS. As a software tester, I had to come up with OSS testing strategies and methodologies to test for OSS. The task was generally manageable and we incorporated the testing portion within the release plan and included bug management and tracking for release 1. After the final project was over, we had to prepare for the pitch competition. We chose 3 team members for the pitch competition and we had several rehearsals. Even if we did not win the pitch competition, we felt that we did the best of our abilities. Thus, the overall OSS project experience was very enriching.

As a team, we all agree that the areas that we did well in the specifics of our project would include good competitive and swot analysis, good upstream and downstream specifics and separated risk types which was organized well for the project. Personally, I believe that from the scrum meeting, different team members provided his/her perspectives that assisted in different areas of the project. Group members had interacted with each other positively and we respected each other’s ideas and perspectives. As a team, we believe that the daily scrum meeting that was conducted every day was very productive which helped in the completion of daily project tasks as it allowed team members to share ideas and feedback more easily which helped to improve the quality of work. The key success factors which I believe that led to the success of our project would be firstly, health team culture. A team’s culture defines what they consider normal and unusual. This influences their decisions and actions, regardless of whether they’re being supervised by team. Safety, empowerment, and accountability create a breeding ground for collaboration, constructive feedback, problem-solving, initiative, and grit. Another critical success factor in project management is constant improvement. In order for actions and decisions to be reviewed, they have to first be properly documented. Documentation can feel like an extra administrative task for project managers. But done right, it has many benefits. Proper documentation and knowledge management can help you trace your team’s thought process. Last but not least it would be effective communication. For group work to be successful, I believe that members must interact with each other positively. This implies that one must be able to relate with each other constructively through understanding and management of personal and others’ emotions. Most of the communication among the group members was verbal, and one had to ensure that the language used was formal and respectful. The silence was also applied where necessary to prevent the escalation of disagreements into chaos. This inter-relational style is known as compromising to prevent the problem that may be developing from escalating. Another important thing learned about the inter-relational style is the need to allow everyone to learn from each other. As mentioned earlier, listening to one another was of paramount importance for the group to work together. the inter-relational style promotes team dynamics by encouraging the free exchange of information in a respectful environment. I also learned that it is not always possible for people to agree on everything. At times, the disagreements between the group members over a certain issue strengthened the discussion, everyone became engaged, and more suggestions were raised. One of the advantages of group discussion was that it allowed team members to explore the issue deeper than it would have been if only one person was involved.

As a team, we felt that JIRA software was difficult to use initially as we all were not familiar with the usage of the software so we had to look through various resources to familiarize with the software. Secondly, we also felt that blending of SDLC model consumed a lot of time as we were not well versed with the concept at the initial stages and finally after the feedback, the SDLC model was done right. For areas that did not go well, I personally feel that there were certain parts of the project where we were confused on the content to be included like sprint planning, product roadmap and release roadmap and we had to spend lot of time re-working on the area. Even-though we were familiar with the theory, when it came to application to our OSS project, we struggled to get the content to be precise and to the point and there were some areas for example task on risks management where we did not include the risk matrix table as we thought it was not necessary so we lost points due to those careless mistakes.

As a team, we felt that some of the areas of improvement would include OSS project specifics such as using spyder chart for the release plan, incorporating the key slides like Architecture in the pitch deck, incorporating beneficiaries for ROV and ROI content and better competitive analysis. For the areas of improvement of our overall OSS project, it would include participation of all our team members. I personally believe that some of our team members were not interactive enough, only 3 to 5 people were interacting with one another and the rest were silent most of the times. It would have been good if they participated in the team discussions as well so that we get more ideas from the discussion. Furthermore, it would have been good if some of us were prepared well with information for our team discussions daily so that it could have saved some time for certain parts of our OSS project.

In conclusion, I would like to convey that this is my first time learning the software project management and I learnt the subject from scratch. The knowledge and experience gained from the OSS project as well as from the overall Software project management class, it will prove highly valuable to the success of future projects. What I have learnt from this journey is that wrong decisions are bound to be made how much ever experience we have with respect to software project management. Instead of focusing on the negatives needs to take some positives from it. One way to do this is by taking the opportunity to learn from these mistakes and bad decisions. A popular action taken by project managers is conducting a lesson learned review at the end of every project. When this is done correctly it can contribute to the success of future projects as it will encourage the recycling of good ideas and highlight the avenues that previously didn’t work well. By having a controlled approach to how you gather this information you can make a huge difference to an organization’s costs, project quality and resource time. Therefore, the OSS project which I worked on as well as the overall Software project management course was overall beneficial for my knowledge and understanding.