Sprint Review & Retrospective

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Software Development Lifecycle

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At the beginning of the project in developing a booking system for the SNHU Travel agency, I was required to assume the role of Scrum Master. This position was assumed after being introduced to the requirements of adopting the Scrum-agile approach to ensure iterative development and frequent feedback. Throughout the project, the various roles on the Scrum-agile team played a crucial role in its success; the user stories were completed effectively, and the agile approach supported the completion of the project despite interruptions or re-direction.

**Role Contributions**

**Product Owner:** The Product Owner displayed the project vision and prioritized the user stories that were solely based on the company value the provided. They intentionally collaborated with the stakeholders to ensure the project aligned with the specifications they requested. In this scenario (mock agency), the Product Owner closely communicated with the SNHU travel agency to develop a better understanding of their requirements and any features they would like the team to prioritize to improve their existing booking system.; essentially building a product backlog for the rest of the team.

**Development Team:** The development team consists of developers, designers, and testers who actively collaborated to deliver the product in an efficient and timely manner. Their comprehensive skills along with the guidance of the Scrum master help them gain a better understanding of User stories. The developers work hand in hand with the designers and testers to ensure not only the quality of what they produce, but also the functionality. They are able revisit their products after they gain feedback on what works and what does not. Afterwards, they complete their revision to the needs of the testers and can move forward once the features fit the product backlog.

**Scrum Master:** As the Scrum Master, my role is to encourage the scrum process, remove any impediments, and foster a collaborative environment. I ensured that the team adhered to Scrum practices and helped them resolve any conflicts or issues that arise. When the team comes across and issue or impediment, it is important I instigate a discussion to identify alternative solutions and support the team throughout the process. This can be very brief or very thorough depending on the severity of the issue.

**SDLC and User Stories**

The Scrum-agile approach played a crucial role in completing user stories effectively. The use of iterative sprints allowed for continuous feedback and adaption to the process. During each sprint, user stories were evaluated and broken down into smaller tasks, which made it easier for the development team to base their estimation and complete it. Daily Scrum meeting ensured the transparency among the team members and helped highlight what issues need adjusting and what required additional resources from the Scrum master or Product owner.

**User Stories/ Interruption; Changed Direction**

In addition, the agile process (as stated multiple times) promotes collaboration; in this case the Product owner directly interacts with the stakeholders and end-users to define and refine the user stories. The development team then works closely with the Product owner to clarify requirements and validate the deliverables against the user stories. This loop of feedback ensures that that the user stories are improved and eventually completed to reach the desired outcome. During this interaction between the stakeholders and Product Owner, the Scrum Master can address a scheduled dedicated sprint that introduces new policy requirements. Then the Product owner collaborates with the stakeholders to reprioritize user stories and adjust the product backlog accordingly. The Development team then adapts the systems to accommodate the changes while minimizing disruption to the existing functionality of the software or project. The Scrum-agile framework provides the necessary flexibility and structure to navigate any interruptions without compromising the project’s progress.

**Communication effectiveness**

As mentioned previously, the Daily Scrum meetings seemed to be most effective when encouraging communication among the entire team. In this short meeting (tends to be 15 minutes), each team member could share their progress, any impediments or challenges they came across, and upcoming tasks as well as how they will be completed or by who. This practice facilitated transparency, promoted collaboration, and helped identify any roadblocks that I (the Scrum Master) can assist early in the Sprint. This is furthered by Sprint planning meetings that is briefer and gives the team a list of requirements for the desired sprint; open discussion is encouraged to ensure the specifications are understood among each member. In addition, another form of communication I found to be beneficial was direct emails to the Product Owner, developers, or even the testers. By sending emails, I can directly ask questions that can be reiterated to the rest of the team. For example, when there is a change of direction or new requirements surface, I can email the Product Owner to provide me with a prioritized product backlog that I can transcribe to the team of developers. Furthermore, once sprints are completed, some of the testers may email me which consists of failed tests or errors they came across that can be fixed by the developers.

**Tools**

As I stated in my last journal entry, the most effective tool seemed to be the JIRA project management tool. This platform is capable of Backlog management; where user stories can be categorized by issues or success and can help prioritize specific tasks. Sprint planning is also seen as a helpful feature that correlates with the Backlog management and allows the team to commit to those issues that may arise and focus on them. In addition, it gives a visual representation of the sprint progress providing the status of each issue. The JIRA platform does very well in Agile reporting, where the various features are seen that are useful for agile teams. From the Backlog to management to other task management, the team can create sub-tasks within any given issues and assign them to team members. These are organized into velocity charts and flow diagrams that visualize the team’s progress and help identify any other potential issues. Overall, this tool is used to track the team’s performance and is used to adapt and improve the agile process in current and even future sprints.