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1. Microsoft applied Lean principles in their “synch and stabilize” process where developers paused their development to fix bugs on a daily basis. Building daily while focusing on smaller development tasks, the development teams were frequently integrating their changes, abiding by the lean principle of “building integrity in” the product. Having daily builds also gave customers access to see the progress that the development team was making, following the principle of “delivering as fast as possible”. Even though the process was not formally named Lean and the principles were not yet established, it’s clear that Microsoft had been abiding by Lean principles for a long time.
2. Value stream mapping is a method of showing the flow of information in the lifetime of a project. Value stream mapping diagrams the flow of goods and/or information in a project. There is a current map that shows the current development situation of the project and the future map that shows the desired situation. Value stream mapping can be used to identify waste that should be removed from the current map and the changes that we need to make to establish the future map.
3. Currently, our team communicates via GroupMe and at team meetings. Whenever something comes up that affects the entire project, like renaming a folder or restructuring the unit test files, the team member making the change notifies the group members via GroupMe. Each member is responsible for the development and testing of the user stories they pulled into the sprint. When a user starts a new user story, he or she creates a new branch on the repository, and after their code is completed and tested, the branch can be merged into the master branch. On Sunday nights for submission, I download a copy of our repo and package it up for submission along with our team’s spreadsheet.
4. Sometimes it takes a while for our GroupMe notifications to go through. It’s a great app to connect Apple and Android users more seamlessly, but it delays notifications sometimes. An alternative process that would eliminate this waste would be to switch to group text messaging or to another group chat option like Facebook messenger.