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Sprint Review and Retrospective

* Demonstrate how the various roles on your Scrum-agile Team specifically contributed to the success of the SNHU Travel project. Be sure to use specific examples from your experiences.

Each Scrum role played a vital part in the completion of the work over the duration of this course. Firstly, the Scrum Master provided excellent support and facilitated the team to complete the project in a timely manner. Without meetings like the daily standup, the team likely would have had difficulty communicating their progress and difficulties. Insufficient communication can slow down the project immensely. Next, the product owner engaged with the users and stakeholders to assure that the project was headed in the correct direction. For example, they were able to provide the tester with clarifying information to help develop better test cases. Providing this clarity allowed us to transition the project into a design that more accurately fit what the users desire. Thirdly, the developers helped to make our project a reality. Without their coding work on the project, we wouldn’t have been able to even start. Their work is perhaps the single most vital part of our team. Lastly, the testers built test cases to assure that the product was working as intended. Their diligence and willingness to work closely with the product owner allowed them to develop more thorough cases. Our team worked together to create a quality product and delivered it in the time allotted.

* Describe how a Scrum-agile approach to the SDLC helped each of the user stories come to completion. Be sure to use specific examples from your experiences.

The flexibility of a Scrum-agile approach was incredibly helpful when working on our user stories. We were able to alter the direction of the project and the user stories since Scrum accounts for uncertainty. If we were unable to change our plan throughout the duration of the project, we likely wouldn’t have ended up with the product that we produced. Also, Scrum emphasizes clear and concise communication between various members of the team on a regular basis. Without this, we wouldn’t have received the information to update the user stories in the first place. In addition, the way that Scrum handles testing allowed us to test alongside our development. This assured that we had adequately fulfilled the requirements for the user story prior to the end of the project.

* Describe how a Scrum-agile approach supported project completion when the project was interrupted and changed direction. Be sure to use specific examples from your experiences.

Consistent collaboration between the members of our team was imperative to changing direction on our project. The tester needed clarity on what direction they should take when designing their test cases. The product owner was able to give them the information they needed to complete their tasks. The communication that a Scrum-agile framework provides is vital to shifting product requirements as the whole team needs to be on the same page. In addition, the short, iterative sprints that this type of approach entails encourages work in small, digestible chunks. Since each piece is small and should stand on its own, we were able to effectively shift our focus to a new direction when new information was provided.

* Demonstrate your ability to communicate effectively with your team by providing samples of your communication. Be sure to explain why your examples were effective in their context and how they encouraged collaboration among team members.

During the discussion for week 6, my team and I worked tirelessly to choose what aspects of a Scrum-agile based approach would work best for us. We were sure to ask each other what our preferences are and what would be beneficial for team cohesion. For example, our developer and I were on the same page regarding sprints and daily standup meetings; however, I wanted to see if they would agree with some of my other ideas. To assure that we were on the same page, I asked them “How would you feel about the other meetings that come with sprints (i.e. sprint reviews, sprint retrospectives, etc.)?” They responded “I feel it would be beneficial to our growth to incorporate the other meetings that go hand in hand with sprints…” This assured that we agreed on the direction our team was going and helped to foster an environment of effective communication.

* Evaluate the organizational tools and Scrum-agile principles that helped your team be successful. Be sure to reference the Scrum events in relation to the effectiveness of the tools.

One of the most vital tools to our success was the Product Backlog. The product owner met with the prospective users of the product we were working on, and we were able to use that information to develop clear and concise user stories. These user stories were compiled and refined into the product backlog. This provided us with the perspectives necessary to create a product that provides the highest value to the consumer. In addition to the product backlog, the test cases that we developed assisted us in assuring that we were delivering the correct functionality. While creating these, our tester contacted the product owner and provided us with updated requirements to create something that is more in line with what the users desire. Although it may not seem like an important tool at first glance, I felt that the agile charter that we created early on helped to keep us on track with our vision and end goal of the project. The charter gave a sense of identity to the team and demonstrated what was expected of each member. This was done in both a technical and a behavioral sense. Without first establishing ground rules and expectations, we would have likely not come into the project with the same direction. This would have led to a heavily disjointed approach that would have had to be fixed early on, wasting valuable resources and time.

* Assess the effectiveness of the Scrum-agile approach for the SNHU Travel project. Be sure to address each of the following:

1. Describe the pros and cons that the Scrum-agile approach presented during the project.

There are many advantages and disadvantages to a Scrum-agile approach. During our project, I feel as though I encountered many more of the advantages than the disadvantages. Our choice of approach allowed us to more easily account for the uncertainty that we faced. When we encountered a change in the plan, we were able to change direction quickly and without much time loss. The meetings that the product owner had with users allowed us to create a product that is more in tune with what the consumer may want. Scrum has an emphasis on communication that was instrumental to our success. However, I did feel as though sometimes the pace of it all and the changing requirements could become overwhelming. When we swapped over to a new framework for the program, I felt that the work I had done so far was only tangentially related to the new requirements. I ended up feeling a bit demoralized that a portion of my work was no longer applicable toe the project.

1. Determine whether or not a Scrum-agile approach was the best approach for the SNHU Travel development project.

I think that the approach we took was the right one for this project. The uncertainty that we faced with rapidly changing requirements was best suited to a Scrum-agile approach. Also, personally I prefer approaches that more heavily emphasize strong communication. However, I feel as though the team should have communicated more ahead of time to assure that everyone agreed with the direction we were taking for the sprint prior to the sprint.