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 Project  
  
 The SNHU travel project proved that using an agile approach to plan for a project has many benefits compared to using a waterfall approach. In order to begin and follow through with our planning process, we made sure to include various roles in our Scrum-Agile Team. For example, one of the roles we had was the Scrum Master. Many people consider the scrum master to be the middleman when it comes to communication between the product owner and the developers, but the scrum master played a much more important part. In the agile process, we ensured that there was facetime with all of the roles, which largely contributed to the success of communicating what was expected. However, the scrum master, who worked closely with the developers, was also able to describe to the product owner what exactly was going on in the development team. This kept the product owner more informed on issues and predicted timelines. The scrum master also knew how to talk with the development team, and because he is considered part of the team as well, he was able to connect with the developers rather than coming off cold and unfamiliar. This may not seem like a big deal but having a strong bond with your team creates a foundation of trust and helps aid them in finding motivation. During the project, the scrum master kept everyone on task and led the team through the sprints. Overall, these roles proved necessary and paved the way to completion.

In order to create the user stories, first the scrum master got with the product owner to go over what the customers wanted to see improved on the website. He made sure to take notes during the discussion, and also had his own communication with the product owner in order to clear up any requirements, and discuss other changes and updates needed. When we first started working on the user stories, the scrum master was telling us what was required from his notes. Then we all got together and decided how much effort was necessary to complete the user cases, how long we thought the user case might take, and the steps that would be required to get that specific user story completed. Because we used an agile process, we were able to make changes easily when the product owner had more time to consider the changes she wanted to see. For example, later on in the project, we were told that wellness trips were in trend, and that we should edit our top five locations to show exactly that. Had we had used a waterfall approach, we may have found it more difficult to meet timelines, and to integrate the change without having to entirely restart the code. This saved a lot of manpower and kept the developers from feeling disconnected with the product owner and overworked.

An example of the communication I had to have was when I was clarifying what was expected when changes were being made to the user stories. I wanted to make sure that my development team had a clear idea of how, and why the project was changing. During the abrupt change, I asked for examples of what they would consider “detox and wellness” locations from Christy. Also noting that we were almost done with the project when the change was requested, I asked for an extension on our deadline in the email in a professional manner as so: “I also hope that you will consider extending the deadline for completion. The developers on my team are more than skilled to complete any additional requests, but our originally agreed upon completion date was based on a certain number of requirements. By adding more, the developers will have to spend additional time in order to ensure the product produced is the best, for the best.” I wanted to make sure that my development team would not feel as if the work they did was for nothing, and I wanted to show them that I respected the hours they had already put in and would make sure they did not have less time to complete the requests. This maintained their trust in me.

The communication practice we used in the SNHU travel project was mostly face-to-face, but we also had email communications as well. While this seems like it was upfront and straight forward, without written guidance, it is very easy to lose track of all the things required, what was going on at what times, and more. We were lucky that we had a smaller team, because information can easily be misinterpreted during face-to-face discussions and can even be forgotten afterwards. I think that we could have tried using a tool like an online whiteboard to clearly list out what was being completed when and allow the product owner to get a firsthand view of what was going on.

At the end of the day, the scrum-agile approach was likely the best way to go for this project. Even though the team was small, we still had some last-minute changes occur that we were easily able to take on. It was good that we had higher adaptability, but I still would have liked to see more of the project manager involved. The development team did not have many opportunities to discuss the project with them or give possible suggestions to improve the project overall. If I had to run this project again, I would still use the same method. The waterfall approach would not have been the right fit.