Sprint Review and Retrospective

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As one of the first teams to adopt the agile approach to scrums, I must say that overall it was a very positive experience. The process certainly came with growing pains; however, we were able to adapt to changes faster than the waterfall approach. Our scrum successfully filled each role that was assigned in their own ways.

The most important part of any piece of software is how the stakeholders react to the product. Our Product Owner had consistent communication with stakeholders and was able to have accurate user stories for our development team to work off. The user stories were used by our development team to ensure that the final product was exactly what the stakeholders needed. By having an open dialogue with the product owner, our development team would have finalized products to send to our testing team. When testing, our Testers had specific goals in mind and were able to brainstorm multiple issues that stakeholders could run into when using the product. Personally, I had a hard time being a Scrum Master as it was a new role for me to fill that was alien to me. However, over time I was able to make sure that all the Scrum’s needs were met, and I was able to make sure we hit our Sprint deadlines.

The Software Development Life Cycle is never a straight line, and this was very apparent when we were creating our product. The agile approach made it much easier to adapt to these hurdles, as opposed to the waterfall approach. By being able to take the user stories and use them to create changes while developing, we were able to create the perfect product for our stakeholders. Our testing team consistently went over releases that our development team created to endure that the user stories were accurately met. Our team was also able to quickly adapt to constant timeline changes when hurdles were met. I believe that the agile approach was the reason we were able to pick up so much slack during sprints. The largest aspect of the agile approach that assisted in completing this project was our communication.

Communication is important in any team setting, but in a Scrum, it is essential to the core of the agile approach. The main hub of communication in our team was our Product Owner; they were able to accurately take input from the stakeholders and create user stories for our teams to use. As a Scrum Master I facilitated communication between our testing and developing teams with the intention of meeting the requirements outlined by the user stories. For example, when we received a user story asking for personalized recommendations, we were able to successfully communicate between our Product owner, testers, and developers to fulfill the user story. To track all our user stories and Scrum events we used JIRA.

JIRA was a lifesaver for our team. Especially as a Scrum Master I was able to configure JIRA to be optimal for our team and our timelines. I could also post new Sprints for our Scrum to be aware of. By using the sprint functionality and the roadmap our Scrum was able to stay on the same page and correctly prioritize items that needed to be worked. JIRA was the core of our workload and would be updated constantly. I will be sure to use this software in the future!

Transitioning to the agile approach was a welcome change in our SDLC and I would love to use this method in the future. Even though the agile approach is fantastic this does not mean there are cons. While we were able to use this method to adapt quickly to new user stories, we had some communication issues. These communication issues came mainly from the agile approach and understanding what exactly was required from each team. I did notice that issues like this seemed to become less prevalent as the project went on.