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# Journal: Communication Practices and Project Management Tools

Reflecting on the importance of communication in an agile team environment, it's pretty clear that effective communication practices are a key to the success of a development project. Having taken on each role within the Scrum Team, I've gained insights into various communication practices and the use of agile project management tools.

**Most Effective Communication Practice for Openness and Transparency:**

Among various communication practices, such as information radiators and Scrum events, I believe that Daily Scrum meetings are the most effective in creating openness and transparency within a Scrum Team. Daily Scrums, being short, focused, and regular touchpoints, provide team members with an opportunity to share their progress, plans for the day, and any impediments they are facing. This routine ensures that every team member is aware of what others are working on and any challenges that might impact the team's progress. It fosters a culture of openness by encouraging team members to speak up about their work and any issues they might be encountering. Additionally, Daily Scrums help in identifying and addressing issues quickly, which is crucial for maintaining the momentum of the development process.

**Example of a Communication Practice from the Course:**

During the SNHU Travel assignments, one of the communication practices that notably helped our team complete their work was the use of a shared product backlog. The backlog, regularly updated and prioritized by the Product Owner, served as a single source of truth for what needed to be worked on. It helped in ensuring that the entire team was aligned on the project's priorities and that everyone understood the requirements and the order in which they needed to be tackled. This practice was particularly beneficial in clarifying expectations and reducing ambiguities around task priorities and specifications.

**Agile Project-Management Tool to Increase Efficiency:**

An agile project-management tool, such as JIRA, can significantly enhance coordination and efficiency within a team. For instance, JIRA offers a visual representation of the workflow in the form of boards, which can be customized to reflect the team’s process. This visualization helps in tracking the progress of different tasks and it makes it easier to see which stage of the process each task is in. It allows for easy prioritization and re prioritization of tasks, which is also seemingly common in agile environments. Overall, JIRA integrates various aspects of the project management process, from backlog management to sprint planning and tracking, in one platform. This kind of centralization of information streamlines communication, as team members do not need to switch between different tools or platforms to get an overview of the project's progress. These types of tools also facilitate better reporting and analytics, which can be used for sprint reviews and retrospectives, thus also enhancing continuous efforts for more improvement.