**Sprint Review and Retrospective**

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CS-250: Software Development Lifecycle

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In Scrum-Agile, there are many roles for team members to help them be successful. Product owners are an essential piece, and they help gather the information and needed things from the customer. It is great to have someone that understands the needs of the customer to help the development bridge the gap. My experience during the project writing stories, was that it is important to write them and communicate clearly to the customer and the developers so that the product comes out how it is needed.

Additionally, the developers are essential to actually build the software. I did notice, however, that it is hard to develop anything without having clear requirements and user stories. The developer needs to know exactly what is wanted. Once they know that, they can get things with no problem. The next step would be to get it to the tester. Testers do a lot more than simply testing the software. I learned they need good communication with both the developers and the product owner. By talking to the developers, they get a better understanding of how the software was built. Secondly, by talking to the product owner, they can understand how it should be working. The acceptance criteria also help the testers ensure that it fulfills the users' needs.

When I was testing a few of the stories for SNHU Travel, I did end up having a few questions about the user story and what the acceptance criteria was. I had to write an email to the developer and the product owner to ensure I was understanding it correctly. They know both sides of the story, so they were the best source to ask.

Scrum-Agile also helps the stories get completed faster and in a more complete way. Because we can split the work up into smaller user stories that have a clear outcome, confusion along the way is avoided. Also, agile is all about being transparent and having discussion actively with the customer and development team. This allows for active communication between team members to really understand the stories as they are completing them.

During the last few months, I have had questions as I went about testing, developing, and planning stories. Because we are agile, I could ask questions and clarify parts of the stories throughout the whole process. This ended in a better product and much closer to exactly what the customer needed.

At one point during the project, the customer came back and wanted the whole design changed to fit a different need. They wanted a slideshow format rather than a list view. Because we were using agile, we were able to accommodate their needs; however, they didn’t want to change the due date. We had to work to fix the issue and make it to their liking at the same time, which was hard from a developer standpoint. We just did the best we could and finished it up.

That is one of the drawbacks to the development team in Agile. Sometimes changes happen that affect the whole outcome. But we need to be adaptable and agile to allow the customers to get what they want. Agile is made to improve life for the development team and the customer after all.

One example of communication I sent was from the perspective of a tester to the developer and product owner. When testing a story, a button was not in the place I thought it would be. So, I emailed them this to get their feedback, “I am emailing to request more information on how to test story #55555. The acceptance criteria states that the user should be able to set an input field to a dollar amount that will filter the top 5 destination list. Where is that input field located in the application?” I made it short and to the point, while outlining the main concern. This communication is effective for this question because it is directed to the correct people to answer and encourages communication by posing an honest question. When the team feels like they can talk, agile is in its best state. It thrives and depends on open communication to make meaningful pivots.

Organizational Tools: Evaluate the organizational tools and Scrum-Agile principles that helped your team be successful. Reference the Scrum events in relation to the effectiveness of the tools.

Agile also has many tools for the teams to use. One tool that I learned about was sprint planning. This is a scrum event that allows the team to meet and discuss what they will be working on for the next few weeks sprint. They also can assign points to stories based on the effort required for the story. This is a key stage to find out what we are ready to start, and what we may need more clarification to work. Then communications can be sent accordingly.

For the development team, I also liked the planning poker method of pointing stories. It allows all team members to pick a number for points to a particular story anonymously before anyone else sees it. This ends up showing the individuals’ true thoughts on the effort of the story and can cause discussion if people disagree. This way, the discussion comes freely, and we can see all different views of working a story: testing, developing, and communicating.

Overall, the Agile process has its pros and cons. I loved the communication and how the customer can come to us with a need at any time. The most important thing is that the customer gets a product that they are satisfied with. The user stories also ended up a lot clearer for the developers and the testers. Either way, if a question was needed, we could ask at any time to get clarification and refine the story. There were, however, a few drawbacks. The main concern I had was when SNHU Travel came to us with a change to the software, but didn’t want to change the deadline because they were trying to beat the vacation time rush. This really didn’t give us a lot of time to mess around, and we had to finish development quickly.

I honestly think that Agile was a good approach for SNHU Travel and helped it come out better in the long run. The changes that they had us make were not too complicated, and we were able to finish by the deadline. However, I do think that if their goal was to have a functional finished product by a deadline, waterfall may be a better choice. This way, we could get all the requirements beforehand and just work until it is finished and ready for the vacation rush. My only concern would be that we get something wrong, or they didn’t give a requirement correctly, causing us to develop the product differently than desired.