Product Owner Journal

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Software Development Lifecycle

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First and foremost, the thing that I think is most important is to not make promises without discussing work with the team. This can get the product owner in trouble when the team says they cannot support it. It is important to ask questions if you don’t understand. You are talking to more than one person who has a different idea than everyone else of what they are expecting in your software so to make sure all stakeholders are happy it is okay to keep drilling down. It is also particularly important to be a good listener and interpreter. You need to listen so that way you get everything you can out of a meeting to bring back to the development team so they can also properly understand. It is like a serious game of telephone. Without clear communication from the business, it will be exceedingly difficult to meet their expectations.

User Stories help the development team to better understand the ask of the business. The user stories help the development team put themselves in the shoes of the users to get the best feel for how they should be implementing the software. This also helps the developers discuss and get into the same mindset. If the team is on the same page and has a similar understanding it will make the development process much easier and makes for quicker pair programming. In the specific case of SNHU travel we can take positive and negative feedback from the user to take the same wins and learn from the losses of other travel agencies. The users know what they want in the software, so if we can provide exactly that to them it will provide some of the best experiences for them.

Meeting with users is especially important, as I already said people are going to have different perspectives to offer. The more meetings with users that happen provides an opportunity to have more user stories to create features out of. In the SNHU travel project the meeting with the users provided a few different specific features. One was filtering vacations that are within your budget. I for one agree that this is a good feature. I do not want to see vacations that I cannot afford unless I specifically want to look and save. Another was being able to use your travel history to see recommended vacations, but what if they never used SNHU Travel to book a vacation before. This can be a little difficult, but that is where another story can tie in from this meeting. There was an additional request to set preferred vacation types. Pairing the two ideas means you could see recommended vacations even if you have never used SNHU Travel to book a vacation. It is important to try and listen to your customers as they are the people keeping you in business, the happier they are the more likely they are to return. This returned business could also lead to recommendations to friends and family leading to more potential business.