Module 6 Journal

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Software Development Lifecycle

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When it comes to communication practices, I think that the use of an information radiator is the most effective in creating openness and transparency within a Scrum team. The reason behind this is this is something we must agree will be always accurately kept up to date. This means that at any time someone can get into your information radiator and review the status of work in the current sprint. At my job we use a project management tool called Jira. My Scrum Master, PO, and other team members can all login and view the current sprint for statuses, all team members can review the product backlog, we can find closed out stories to reference old comments, it interacts with Github, and recognizes when builds have been created and even if they failed. Jira has many other uses. It’s even better if you can pair it with Scrum meetings, we use it all the time. Sometimes in our daily scrum we “Walk the Board”. This means we use our 15 minute-long stand up to just go over the status of all the work we pulled in to be completed this sprint. It helps us get an idea of if we need to get certain stories started.

A good example of communication practices that came to mind for me was sending an email to the product owner as a tester. This assignment made me think of the QA Analyst on my team. I often hear him say that he needs to either talk to my PO or that he needs to send her an email. This is so he can ensure he is properly writing good tests that will cover the functionality being delivered. I think it is healthy to communicate outside of meetings via the use of email to ask for information, request a meeting, or get feedback from the team. Things may come up in the middle of the day that may require additional information. The tester was required to get information from the Product Owner so they could improve the quality of their test cases. If the team needs information, in agile it is completely healthy to communicate that you need something, and they will provide you with a status update at the next scrum ceremony or through an email if they can respond sooner.

I previously mentioned my team at work uses Jira. The reason this can increase efficiency is it gives the team a universal place to jump in and see the status of something. This can also let the PO and Scrum Master give status updates, see the projected size of the work, or be used to go over to see how we are doing at achieving the sprint goal. This gives us a good reference to go look at in general when we need information. I can go look at other team’s boards when I need to see the status of something they are working on as well. Overall, it’s very convenient. Another good example is you can see who is working on what. Sometimes we do pair programming so we would create sub tasks in Jira under the story we are working for Dev 1, Dev 2, and QA Testing. We can each assign ourselves, report hours worked, and leave comments in any of those stories for progress updates and more. This information is accessible to everyone on the team, that’s the important thing take away.