Effectively Using Agile Techniques in Distributed Development Environment

Introduction

Agile methodology allows you to follow an iterative, collaborative approach that involves users and assumes that software development needs to consider change rather than discourage it.

Agile processes are collaborative and they work well only when there is a high degree of involvement between the users and developers.

As agile methodology matures, the teams are confronted with the problem of handling distributed teams. This raises challenges in addressing hurdles, effective communication and collaboration.

CI has overcome these challenges faced in distributed agile teams by combining adaptive processes, tools and management techniques. This white paper is aimed at giving you some insights at the processes and management techniques that we are effectively using.

Addressing the Time Zone

Language barriers and time zones across different countries make it difficult to hold the Daily Scrum. In such a scenario it is very important that both the teams decide on a time slot. Usually there is a comfortable time window slot between the two teams like when it is evening 5:30 PM for one team it is morning for the other team.

Addressing Communication Issues

When you are dealing with different teams from different countries then there might exist language barriers like accent issues which make it difficult for the teams to communicate and understand each other. You can hold the daily scrum in writing in a common language. This can be used when the team can read/write in the common language but cannot speak it well. Usually this kind of writing works in small teams. As the team size increases this will not be a practical solution.

When the team size increases, you can make use of instant messaging like Skype. All the team members can be in the conference and the questions can be answered right away.

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Who should attend the Daily Scrum

When you have different vendors across different continents working on the same project then it makes sense to have more than 1 scrum on a daily basis. Each key stakeholder would be participating in two scrums to keep the information flowing i.e. what he or the team has done since the last scrum, what they would be doing after this scrum and what are the barriers that they are facing. Not all the team members are required for the daily scrums. Only the key stakeholders are required.

At CI, we usually have scrums between the product owner and our scrum team consisting of senior developers and the business analyst and our scrums usually run for 20 minutes.

It is always better to have a plan incase you have missed a scrum. It is better to prepare scrum notes on the same day and post it in the collaboration platform so that everyone on the team is updated with the status.

About CI

CI is a global product development services organization and a partner to established technology leaders, helping them bring software products to market in less time and at reduced costs.

CI partners with clients to create dedicated delivery centers. By leveraging on its capabilities, a partnership with CI increases product quality while reducing the time to market and the operating costs.

CI has been able to continuously maintain partnership with clients for almost 10 years through a compelling combination of proven methodologies, expert developers, high standard of quality and commitment.