Community of Practice

Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.

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A Community of Practice defines itself along three dimensions:

What is it about—its joint enterprise as understood and continually renegotiated by it members

How it functions— the relationships of mutual engagement that bind members together into a social entity

What capability it has produced—the shared repertoire of communal resources (routines, sensibilities, artifacts, vocabulary, styles, etc.) that members have developed over time.

A informal, peer-driven facilitated gathering that convenes regularly to consolidate and continue learning and practicing skills that were acquired during training and follow-up coaching skills.

Communities of Practice develop around things that matter to people.
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Three characteristics of a Community of Practice:

1. **The Domain**: There is an identity defined by a shared domain of interest. Membership therefore implies a commitment to the domain, and therefore a shared competence that distinguished members from other people. The domain is not necessarily something recognized as “expertise” outside the community.

2. **The Community**: Members engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other and share information. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other.

3. **The Practice**: A Community of Practice is not merely a community of interest, rather, they develop a shared repertoire of resources, experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems— in short a shared experience.

Communities develop their practice through a variety of activities:

- Problem-Solving
- Skill Practice
- Requests for Information
- Seeking Experiences
- Sharing Assets
- Coordination & synergy
- Discussing Developments
- Documentation of Projects
- Visits from others
- Mapping Knowledge & Identifying gaps

Key Principle: No one person is in charge of someone’s learning