

Community of Practice

What is a Community of Practice?

A community of practice is a type of network where the shared domain or interest is the identity.



So it is a group of people who share a concern or passion for something they do and they learn together how to do it better by interacting regularly.

Yes!

There are three elements:

1. **Domain:** people brought together by shared concern, interest and passion
2. **Community:** collective learning together
3. **Practice:** interaction produce resources and products together



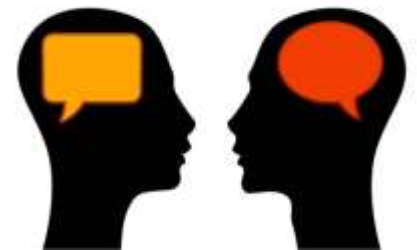
Domains could be topic and special interest groups, short or long term.

Communities could be hierarchical, non-hierarchical, knowledge or role, face to face, online etc. etc.

Resources and products can be agreed together and range from guidance to policy to education materials...anything!

How does a Community of Practice add value?

1. Useful for working in diverse groups and across organizations.
2. Helpful to explain your participation in groups or meetings.
3. Grounded in 'situated learning theories' where learning is social and influenced by participation in everyday life as well as theory.
4. Predominately self-organizing with members maintaining the momentum because the end results are for their benefit.
5. Develops ideas, resources, documents and tools from the members' experiences and ideas.
6. Is concerned with relationships rather than solely knowledge and roles (e.g. personal rather than role characteristics may add value).
7. Encourage a non-hierarchical knowledge and relationships
8. Develops others and supports sustainability of relationships in other areas.





Community of Practice Framework

A type of network where the shared interest is the identity and the knowledge, learning and practice is developed together.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ There are clear terms of reference which cite the purpose and objectives for what the community of practice is expected to achieve.○ Most members understand these objectives and could articulate the value of it to others.○ There is an agreed plan for developing the COP over an agreed time span.
Governance and Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Governance of the COP has been considered and is in place at the appropriate level.○ Sub-groups may be emerging around specialist subjects.○ There is a good coverage of potential membership and awareness of any gaps in representation.
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The COP has a credible leadership in place (Hospice UK /members) with dedicated time available for the role.○ The leadership is informally supported by members of the COP and members engage with the leadership when required.
Vitality and Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The domain is people brought together by a shared interest.○ The COP makes use of varying forms of interaction and communication with each other.○ Contributions come from a wide range of members.○ Queries receive responses.○ Leaders sometimes work 'behind the scenes' to find responses to unanswered questions or topics.
Learning and Sharing Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The community is shared learning together.○ Members pool and validate their most useful material and share good practice.○ Experiences members may summarize discussion threads into FAQs.○ Members demonstrate an interest in learning from their peers and are willing to ask for help.
Impact and Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The practice is the production of resources and products.○ COP members have a shared understanding of the value they add.○ There are agreed outputs achieved e.g. examples exist which demonstrate clear impact – e.g. evaluation of COP events, products, impact to practice and meeting agreed objectives.
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Membership of the COP grows organically at expected levels.○ Leaders ensure members discuss the future of the network and are ambitious for growth.