

I. Preface – Communities of Practice and the Public Library Association

In recent years the Public Library Association (PLA) has become more aware of reluctance by members of the organization to participate in leadership position due to existing meeting requirements. Because PLA desires greater participation in the organization, in response to this and other organizational structure concerns, the PLA Board began a series of formal discussions addressing what was identified by PLA as a “Mega Issue” – “How do we maximize our volunteer workforce and create a more nimble structure in order to respond effectively and efficiently to member needs?”

In a January, 2008 memo to PLA Board of Directors, Executive Director Greta Southard, summarized the progression of these discussions,

At the January 2007 Board of Directors meeting, the Board authorized the PLA Executive Committee to continue the work identifying how PLA might work differently in order to maximize the volunteer workforce and create a more nimble organizational structure. The Executive Committee continued the work and developed recommendations that were presented to the PLA Board of Directors in the Volunteer Restructuring Report for review at the June 2007 (American Library Association) Annual Conference. (At that meeting, Paul D. Meyer, CAE, Principal Partner, Tecker Consultants joined the discussion to help facilitate and provide external context.) The Board accepted in principle the Volunteer Restructuring Report and authorized organizational restructuring.

It was during these discussions that the topic of Communities of Practice (CoP) first arose. In addition to Communities of Practice recommendations also included changes to the PLA structure including, Board of Directors, Nominating Committee, Standing Committees, Advisory Groups and, Working Teams (Groups) or Task Force.

After the January and June, 2007 meetings, the Executive Committee was directed to continue to assess the impact of the proposed changes on the existing Bylaws and determine next steps to implement organizational change to the volunteer workforce structure. As a result of the Executive Committee’s review proposed changes were made to the PLA Bylaws. (See Appendix ?)

In addition to the proposed Bylaws changes which would establish a framework for Communities of Practice, PLA also requested that one of the ALA Emerging Leaders project groups be assigned to further define CoP and elaborate on how their implementation might better serve PLA’s response to the original Mega Issue.

“Communities of Practice” is a relatively recently coined term to describe “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.” (Wenger, “Communities of Practice: A Brief Introduction”, p. 1) In order to be a true CoP this group must interact within a shared domain. While a CoP could include a group of children’s librarians who regularly meet to share new books with one another, the shared domain of CoPs has more often referred to virtual or online communications.

As PLA sees them, CoPs provide an avenue to opening up important issues for discussion among the larger PLA community. Although under the proposed Bylaw changes, CoPs would have no Board representation and would not be allowed to declare policy, they can serve as sounding boards for proposed policy changes and provide insight into crucial issues being addressed by the PLA Board, thus helping to better inform decision making.

According to a report from the June 25, 2007 Board of Directors discussion, the Board supported the Executive Committee’s recommendations regarding CoPs. These recommendations included the following characteristics of CoPs;

- PLA provides technology to support CoPs (My PLAspace)
- Communicate and network primarily virtually, but may meet face-to-face.
- Self-emerging.
- Provide ability to post documents, pictures, links, etc. online.
- Provide online ability to connect with other communities of practice.
- Self-sustaining.
- Dedicated staff available to support technology and systems.
- Leadership can be appointed or can come from the community. Leadership is not required, but encouraged.
- Do not have representation on the Board.
- Board may solicit ideas/projects of CoPs.
- PLA membership is required for participation although non-members may be able to view discussions.
- Specific communities will not have assigned staff support.
- Communities cannot speak on behalf of PLA.
- Integrated with electronic newsletter and PLA directory, etc.
- Can create recommendations for consideration of programs and services.
- Work Teams (Groups) doing a project of the association, may morph into a community of practice.
- Communities of Practice (CoP) – not necessarily doing the work of the association. They provide a venue for subject interest discussion, and are a benefit of membership – networking avenues.

Currently, PLA does allow for committee to have “electronic members.” These electronic members are supposed to have the same standing as other members of the committee on which they serve, although there is an understanding that the electronic members are often not able to attend the face-to-face meetings held at national conferences.

Currently there are ten people listed as electronic committee members. In response to a brief questionnaire about their experiences as electronic committee members distributed

by the Emerging Leaders Project Group, all respondents cited a desire to be involved but a lack of time and money to attend face-to-face meetings as the reason behind their becoming electronic committee members. However, most said they did not feel engaged with the work of their committee due to the current focus on face-to-face meetings. Comments included, "I am not sure our committee even KNOWS it has electronic members." Another respondent commented, "Communication with electronic members is better with some committees than others. Communication is key to making sure that electronic members feel like real participants."

Communication is key to the formation and success of CoPs. Throughout this document we will present and discuss how the PLA can develop a framework in order to make Communities of Practice successful and to better and more thoroughly involve PLA membership in the future development of the organization.

II. A Community of Practice FAQ

What is a community of practice?

A community of practice (CoP) is a group of people who continuously come together to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for a specific subject. Their regular interactions produce an even greater understanding of the subject matter and serve to solve problems or even generate new ideas within a field. Moreover, a significant component of the learning process and consequent value of CoPs can be attributed to the social interactions that they inspire. The knowledge base built by a CoP is cumulative and ever-changing. Once CoP members create a foundation of knowledge within their speciality, their time is typically spent tackling more complex concerns. Although CoPs are quite widespread in both profit and not-for-profit organizations, they must be supported if they are to flourish. According to Etienne Wenger, if begun and then maintained properly, a CoP will develop the following critical components: a body of common knowledge, practices and approaches; personal relationships and an established way of interacting; and a common sense of identity.

Etienne Wenger, Richard McDermott and William M. Snyder, *Cultivating Communities of Practice*, (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002), 4-5.

How does a Community of Practice differ from other kinds of groups?

A community of practice differs from other kinds of groups in the way they define themselves, how they can exist over time, and how set their own boundaries:

- A community of practice is different from a *business or functional unit* in that it defines itself in the doing, as members develop among themselves their own understanding of what their practice is about. As a consequence, the boundaries of a community of practice are more flexible than those of other organized units. The membership within a community of practice involves anybody that participates and

contributes. The participation level can vary in both the how and the how much.

- A community of practice is different from a *team* in that sharing, learning, or interest in an area is what defines it, whereas a team is more defined by roles and a specific common goal. In other words, a CoP is more about the knowledge than the task.
- A community of practice is different from a *network* in the sense that it is "about" something; it is not just a set of relationships. For example, a network would be *we are all librarians*. Whereas a community of practice would say *we are librarians looking to know something*. It has an identity as a community with a common interest of knowledge and learning, for the sake of knowledge and learning.
- interest/discussion group/roundtable would go here...

What are the components of a Community of Practice?

Communities of Practice are truly diverse in their sizes and formats. They can be large or small, local or dispersed throughout the world. Nevertheless, it is essential that all CoPs maintain three components: a domain; a community; and a practice. The **domain** involves the common ground that unites participants, for example, librarians working in rural public libraries. It is imperative that the domain is a topic that encourages participation amongst members yet is also relevant to the umbrella organization. Furthermore, the domain guides the type of knowledge that a CoP will steward. The **community** creates the learning environment within a CoP, for example a monthly meeting to discuss customer service issues within libraries. A CoP is not just a website, a database, or a collection of best practices [citation]--it is defined by its members, their interactions, and relationships. This is one reason that ongoing dialogue and planned interactions are so crucial to CoP success. Finally, the **practice** is defined as the language, documents, information, etc. that community members share, for example, the "jargon" that librarians regularly use but is foreign to nonpractitioners. Although a CoP takes into account existing research and documentation, members should also be investigating the innovations occurring in their field.

Domain=What...What are the concerns, what are we talking about?

Community=Who, When, Where...Who is participating, when do we interact, where do we interact?

Practice=Why and How...Why are these interactions significant, why do they contribute to the organization, to the profession? How should the information be documented?

What is the mission of PLA's Community of Practice initiative?

The Public Library Association strives to form a dynamic community of practitioners who stimulate, engage, and share their knowledge, experience, and expertise with other PLA members.

The PLA community of practice initiative accomplishes its mission by providing a forum for members to:

- Discuss subjects of interest

- Exchange best practices and resources on clearly defined topics
- Network with others in the field
- Create recommendations of programs and services to the PLA Board
- Evolve project work teams into more agile communities
- Maintain involvement with dissolved committees
- Share topics of interest in the field with non-members

How do I benefit from a community of practice? How does forming/joining a community of practice maximize the value of PLA membership?

Communities of Practice have benefits for both participants and organizations. Some of these benefits occur quickly while others take much longer to materialize. Individuals who belong to CoPs get a chance to network with peers, share ideas, learn from colleagues, and contribute to an organization. As a result, many participants feel a boost in their morale, there is a sense that they are connected and actually assist in problem solving within their field. In turn, organizations find that their CoP participants are more energized and provide valuable contributions to organizational issues. In addition to professional development opportunities and their social component, CoPs can produce real outcomes such as better documentation, improved skills for practitioners, and faster problem solving capabilities.

Benefits of becoming a member of an online PLA CoP (vs. logging in as a guest) will depend on levels of access PLA decides to grant to guests. However, **online membership benefits** could include:

- **Ability to post and participate in online discussions.** Online discussions will enable members to build relationships, share resources, and work on online projects.
- **Access community restricted knowledge.** This is an incentive for non-PLA members to join.
- **Subscribe to updates.** This makes it easier for members to keep track of updates by having emails sent to their email inbox. Depends on Drupal functionality.
- **Access to member contact information.** Having this as a member-only privilege not only protects member privacy, but is added incentive to join PLA. Member profiles allow CoP members to easily find other members with similar or shared interests.
- **Access to collaborative workspace.** This is a vital component of an online community of practice. Members should be able to easily work together on projects, presentations, and other activities using web tools.
- **Ability to share articles, resources, and other content.** This is a vital component of an online community of practice. Members should be able to easily work together on projects, presentations, and other activities using web tools.
- **Ongoing identity building as an organization or profession.** Ongoing communication helps to sustain interest in topical information and helps to build towards a more cohesive and knowledgeable community.
- **Other features dependent on Drupal's capabilities**

Guest benefits could include:

- View limited content and discussions (enough to tease guests into becoming members)
- Information and results from the shared knowledge of the community

III. Guidelines for Starting a PLA Community of Practice

All PLA members have the ability to contact PLA and apply to start a community of practice. Below are the steps that a member should follow in this process. Please review the [Online Community Builder's Purpose Checklist](#) before applying.

1. Submit an online PLA Community of Practice Application. Applications will be reviewed by PLA Sponsors.
2. You will be notified via email if your community is approved. Inside your approval confirmation, you will find your Administrator's Account information for PLA Space.

Note: The applicant who originally applied for the community is the default Administrator. For security purposes, each community will have only one Admin. You can transfer your administrative privileges to another member if you choose.
3. Begin populating the public portion of your community site by posting your proposed statement of purpose, mission statement, etc to attract prospective members. Remember that as your community grows, this statement of purpose may change somewhat. That's OK.
4. All active PLA members will receive an email notification whenever a new community is registered on PLA Space. You can also actively recruit colleagues to join your community.
5. Members who are new to your community should complete their Member Profiles.
6. Once your community has adequate membership, or within 60 days of the community's formation (which ever comes soonest), you should schedule your first "formation meeting." This meeting should clearly establish your official domain, timeframe, and additional rules of engagement for your community.

Remember that only you can decide what constitutes adequate membership, since the purpose of your community dictates its ideal size.

7. Submit to the PLA Sponsors your official domain and timeframe after your formation meeting.
8. After PLA reviews your domain charter, you will be assigned a PLA Sponsor. This establishes a doorway of communication between the community and PLA.
9. As your community grows, consider the various member roles necessary to sustain a thriving community, especially a Community Leader(s), a Reporter, an Event Coordinator, and active members. See *Roles In a Community of Practice* for more information.
10. Schedule regular meeting times – whether they are online, by phone, or face to face – to establish and maintain rhythm in your community.
11. Time bound communities expire upon the completion of their charge. The community space will be deleted six months after the completion date. Perpetual communities will be deleted after six months of inactivity.

Minimum Elements each CoP should include

- A descriptive statement that outlines the purpose of the CoP. This could be the "mission statement" of the CoP.
- Members
- Member profiles
- Links to Community Guidelines
- Individualized community guidelines or code of cooperation
- Online discussions
- Shared resources

IV. Guidelines for Maintenance of a Community of Practice

The way you interact and participate in PLA CoPs will shape the communities of practice. In order for this structure to work for you, we ask participants to understand and observe the following guidelines. These guidelines were developed to foster frank dialogue, mutual respect and a sense of community among all in the organization.

- **Engage in a professional, congenial community.** Please realize that *thousands* of people may eventually see your messages as archived for future decades. They may include individuals you know, patrons, or someone you may

employ or seek employment from in the future. Information blindly or impulsively posted may come back to haunt you.

- **Foster useful, dynamic discussions and ask questions.** We encourage frank and thoughtful dialogue. Realize that your posts will be read over time. When posting, please keep your comments consistent with the subject and purpose of the conversation thread. Deliberate disruption -- such as consistent off-topic commentary -- will not be tolerated. We reserve the right to remove posts and whole conversations that are of an abusive or disruptive nature (from Salon Table Talk guidelines). Give your message posts a meaningful and accurate subject line descriptor. This will enable members to easily follow and find topics that interest them.
- **Own your own words.** You are responsible and liable for words you post on the CoP site.
- **Fashion a community that works for you.** Help others find you by keeping your personal profiles updated. However, respect the privacy of others, as well as your own. Be active in developing norms for your community. "Lurking" is okay. Sometimes you will want to read what the community is doing before you jump in.
- **Build a community spirit that you can take pride in.** Welcome new members as you would want to be welcomed. Make sure conversations are inclusive. Suggest content/discussions that would be helpful to other members of the CoP or other practitioners (way of recruiting new people to PLA).
- **Respect the role of CoP moderators.** But help the moderator ensure that all are following the spirit of these guidelines. It takes a village to maintain a Community of Practice. Members should report inaccurate, out-of-date, or off-topic content to content owner or Moderator
- **Play nice with others.** Disturbance of the general peace and public slander (insults or attacks) are inappropriate as well as using profanity or expressions of obscenity, sexism, racism, and other types of prejudice. . We encourage spirited discussion and debate but remember that disagreeing with an idea is different from attacking an individual.
- **PLA respects freedom of expression.** PLA will not censor or edit messages and content contributed to the site, unless it violates the community guidelines or terms of use.

- **Use the CoP for its intended purpose** (link to mission statement of PLA and individual CoP) and not to promote personal agendas (is there something in PLA documents about this?)
- Activities that are grounds for revoking membership (need to be worked out with PLA):
- Depending on the requirements of Drupal, there may be some best practices that should be included here, such as don't attach a file that is larger than X size, etc.
- **Observe basic netiquette.**
 - Do not type in all caps. It reads like screaming. Use **asterisks** or underlines to emphasize a word.
 - Respect the privacy of others, as well as your own.
 - Be yourself (i.e. don't pretend to be someone else online).
 - Avoid unsolicited or repetitive attempts to communicate, especially should the receiver not respond, or request that you cease. In person, you might say excuse me, or some appropriate introduction before interrupting, or before speaking to a stranger. Consider doing the same for on-line, e-mail, and conversations. Remember there are human beings with feelings who read your messages.
 - Please be **very** cautious about using sarcasm and humor. Without nonverbal cues and voice tone, "subtle" humor can easily be interpreted as searing sarcasm.
 - In the online environment without facial and verbal cues to convey emotions, words can be misread. Use your words, or emoticons, to convey emotion.
 - You must have copyright rights to content you contribute to the site. PLA needs to define this.

Terms of Use

Here information should be included about membership accounts, copyright, non-commercial and personal use only, links to Third Party Websites, unlawful or Prohibited Uses, use of the Services, account termination and modification, etc. This should be written by PLA legal council with input from coordinators of the CoPs.

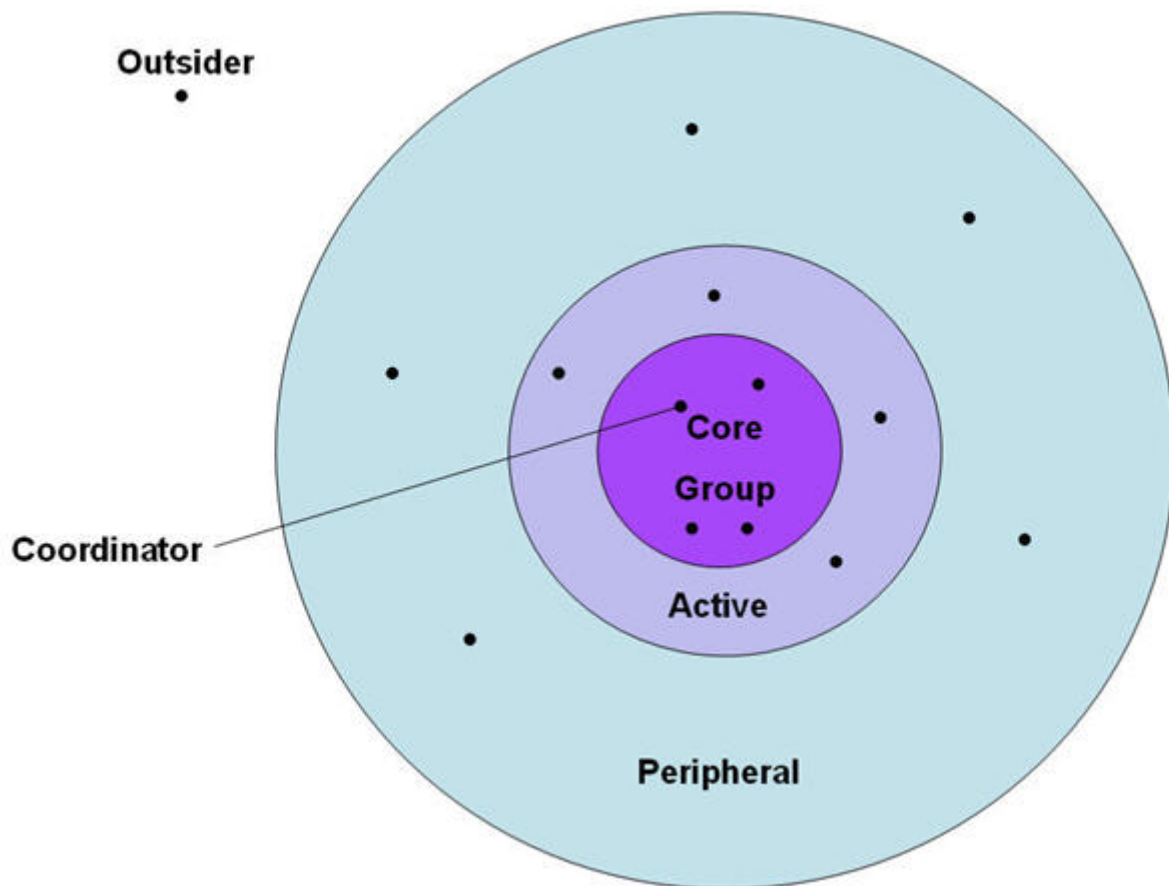
- Spamming is the Internet term that refers to the sending of unsolicited email generally an advertisement but may also be a form of "Soap Box". No member may use the list of CoP members to send unsolicited email (spam). The list is private and each member has the expectation that their membership will not expose them to unwanted email. Members found to be spamming shall immediately be removed from the CoP.

Community Building and Sustainability Strategies

Online communities require nurturing and maintenance just as F2F communities do. Below are some suggestions for making sure members of your CoP remain active and engaged. A healthy CoP also is welcoming to new members and values the contributions of all its members.

- Design for evolution
- Open a dialogue between inside and outside perspectives. A skillful and reputable coordinator who is knowledgeable about the inside workings of the CoP, PLA, or the topic is crucial for helping lead the community. It is necessary also to have members who have this "insider" knowledge to act as leader followers helping guide the development of the community. However, outside perspectives can prevent the community from becoming a stale "echo chamber" and will bring new ideas, new members, and a fresh perspective. There should be spaces and behavior that support both.
- Invite different levels of participation (engagement). Because people have different reasons to participate in a community (...), they should be allowed to participate at different levels. There should be visible management sponsorship, but without micro-management. See continuum of engagement.
- Develop both public and private spaces. Connections will happen in both public spaces and events, but private spaces for networking, relationship building, and problem -solving are necessary as well.
- Focus on value. Create a mission that energizes a core group to remain active, engaged, and have a sense of belonging. Content and discussions should address the details of members' practice. There should be strategic relevance of the mission of the CoP. Ensure that adequate resources are devoted to the CoP. Vibrant, respectful, professional relationships among members and a body of knowledge, methods, stories, cases, tools, documents that continues to grow and remain relevant to members' practice will keep members engaged.
- Combine familiarity with excitement. This is especially important as members migrate from one platform to the next. Create familiar spaces, but cycle new ideas and new people in enough to keep things interesting. Involve experts.
- Create the right rhythm and mix of activities. Plan formal events, activities, and structures to help celebrate milestones or to build a sense of purpose or comraderie as well as to enable knowledge sharing, but also allow informal and/or spontaneous events and activities. There is a dance of formal and informal structures.

Degrees of Community Participation (Wenger, 57, Figure 3-1)



Coordinator = organizes events and connects community members

Core group = small core group of people that actively engage in discussions, take on projects, identify strategy and topics for community to address, move community along learning agenda, and as community matures, takes on much of CoP leadership as auxiliaries to coordinator (10-15% of CoP)

Active = attend meetings regularly, occasionally contribute discussions in public forum (15-20% of CoP)

Peripheral = largest group, rarely participate. Instead keep to the sidelines and watch interactions. People on sidelines often learn from activity, gain their own insights and put them to good use. They may have private conversations about issues discussed in public forums.

Outsider = those who are not members of the CoP but who may have an interest in it. Includes "intellectual neighbors".

People will move through these levels, along a "continuum of engagement" in both directions. A successful CoP will not force engagement at any level, but instead will "build benches" (Wenger, 57) on the sidelines and enable easy transition from one level of engagement to another. They make opportunities for various levels of interaction that are private, semi-private, and public which keeps all members connected.

NOTES (find place for these):

- **Welcome new members (this is the role of the Community leader, but all CoP members should take this on as well).**
- **Observe basic Netiquette (link to a Netiquette document here)**
- **Organize cyclical events, both virtual and F2F**
- **Do suggest content/discussions that would be helpful to other members of the CoP or other practitioners (way of recruiting new people to PLA)**
- **Do engage in discussions and ask questions**
- **Do interact with peers and subject matter experts (can guest presenters be enabled?)**

Online Content Building Strategies

Will there be resource sharing on PLA CoPs? If not, this section is not necessary.

Content Management

PLA's CoP content principles and information architecture should be designed to encourage and allow maximum participation by all members, including contributing resources. This must be balanced with the need to ensure relevant, authoritative, and fresh sources of information. Without good content management processes in place, the community quickly becomes a dumping ground and eventual graveyard of content, useful to no one. See content management roles in Roles within a CoP document. Include here more detailed information architecture recommendations that facilitate good content management behavior.

Content Acquisition

Something about copyrighted material (PLA should craft this). Ideally, there will be a box you can select when you contribute content that states you have the right to distribute and you have read the community guidelines which will automate the permissions process

V. Roles In a Community of Practice

Administrator:

The Administrator is responsible for the general upkeep of the CoP. This person assumes the administrative duties of the CoP, including moving, deleting, and editing posts and content, as well as banning users.

Community Leader:

This person is charged with holding together the community of practice. Although other CoP leaders may organically emerge as the community begins sharing knowledge and engaging each other, each CoP must have an appointed Community Leader at the outset. The Community Leader ensures a sustainable community by fostering continued rhythm, support, contribution, and communication within the CoP. A Community Leader also acts as a point person when communicating with the PLA Sponsor in the event the CoP wishes to present a formal project proposal to PLA.

PLA Sponsor:

The Sponsor is the link between a CoP and PLA. A Sponsor will likely be assigned to several CoPs. The Sponsor maintains relationships with the various communities through their Community Leaders and also provides input to a CoP when it wishes to present a formal project proposal to PLA.

Member:

Members are the body of the CoP who share their knowledge and experience through discussions. Members are encouraged to engage other members within the community.

Reporter

The Reporter identifies, captures, and edits relevant knowledge, best practices, and new approaches and lessons learned into documents. A reporter also can be utilized to bring minutes back to the CoP after a face-to-face meeting.

Events Coordinator

Coordinate, organize, and plan community events or activities.

VI. Migration from Existing Structure to Future Structure (PLA Technology Committee as Case Study)

Is a Community of Practice Right for My Committee?

Your PLA committee is disbanding and you're considering carrying on as a community of practice. Answer these questions to help you determine if a community of practice is a viable alternative.

1. Does your committee already have one or two members in place who are passionate about the committee's charge and are willing to serve as the conversation facilitators of the CoP?

Rationale: Stuckey and Smith (2004) argue that there are identifiable features to a successful CoP, and most importantly the ability to sustain the community, the chief of which is the need for 'leadership' which, in the case of a CoP, may be a moderator, facilitator or list owner.

2. Does your committee already have a high level of trust?

Rationale: Your PLA community of practice will primarily interact in a virtual workspace with limited face-to-face interaction (although live meetings are encouraged!) Face-to-face interaction and socializing builds trust and consolidates group membership. If your committee does not have a high level of trust, you may find your members working autonomously and not fully engaging the community.

3. Is your committee as a whole tech savvy? Do committee members have access to adequate technology?

Rationale: Don't overlook the basics. Not only will your community members need access to the Internet, but they should also feel competent with common Web 2.0 technologies, such as blogs and wikis.

4. Is your committee committed to communicating actively and regularly?

Rationale: Communication is fundamental in the development of trust and community. Regular communication allows your community of practice to grow and fulfill its objectives.

5. Does your committee have a well-established culture and members have a sense of belonging?

Rationale: If your committee already has developed routines, expectations, language, etc, then communicating online will be easier.

6. Is your committee geographically dispersed?

Rationale: A committee in which some members are geographically close (ie, same library system) can undermine the development of the virtual aspect of the community of practice, since some members might choose to spend more time interacting amongst themselves instead of with the rest of the community.

**This questionnaire is adapted from Patricia Gannon-Leary and Elsa Fountainha'(2007), ["Communities of Practice and Virtual Learning Communities: Benefits, Barriers, and Success"](#).*

Migration: A Plan

Note: Taken from Wegner, Chapter Four: The Early Stages of Development. I don't know if we should even go into the mature stages or simply do a page on sustaining communities and their pitfalls.

Assessment and Foundation Building

1. Determine intent (primary roles include: helping; best-practice; knowledge-stewarding; innovation)
2. Determine the domain and make it interesting (find issues that are important, will inspire, encourage membership)
3. Encourage support by describing the community's potential for impact
4. Identify potential coordinators and leaders

5. Question potential members regarding their wants/needs
6. Make connections
7. Create a preliminary design

***"When a community is able to combine a good understanding of what already exists with a vision of where it can go, it is ready to move to the [next] coalescing stage." p.82

Building Momentum and Demonstrating Value

1. Make membership valuable to the individual
2. Launch the community--kickoff events can be dramatic or low-key, depending upon the community
3. Create regular events and comfortable spaces
4. Acknowledge the value of the community's coordinators
5. Develop the core group of members
6. Share--ideas, concerns, methods
7. Only document what is necessary and organize the documentation process early
8. Create value
9. Build buy-in from management or key administrators

Integrate

1. Honor the roots of the members personal commitment and passion
2. Integrate the community into the organization as a whole
3. Align key structural and cultural elements

Appendix

Community of Practice Selected Readings

1. What is a Community of Practice (CoP)? and What are the Benefits of a Community of Practice?

"Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Quick Start-Up Guide" by Etienne Wenger,
http://www.ewenger.com/theory/start-up_guide_PDF.pdf

"Communities of Practice: A Brief Introduction" by Etienne Wenger,
<http://www.ewenger.com/theory/>

"Communities of Practice: Learning as a Social System" by Etienne Wenger,
<http://www.co-i-l.com/coil/knowledge-garden/cop/lss.shtml>

Stamps, David. "Communities of Practice: Learning and Work as Social Activities."
Training 34.n2 (Feb 1997): 34(9)

Burk, Mike. "Communities of Practice." *Public Roads* 63.6 (May 2000): 18

2. How to start a CoP

"Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Quick Start-Up Guide" by Etienne Wenger,
http://www.ewenger.com/theory/start-up_guide_PDF.pdf

Blouin, Anne. "Creating an Environment for Collaborative Learning." *Association Management* 57.5 (May 2005): 14(1)

Stamps, David. "Communities of Practice: Learning and Work as Social Activities."
Training 34.n2 (Feb 1997): 34(9)

Burk, Mike. "Communities of Practice." *Public Roads* 63.6 (May 2000): 18

Powazek, Derek M. (2002). Design for Community. New Riders. Chapter 3 "Design Matters....Architectural and Visual Design for Successful Communities."

Wegner, E., McDermott, R., and Snyder, W. (2002). Cultivating Communities of Practice. Harvard Business School Press. Chapter 3 "Seven Principles for Cultivating Communities of Practice.", Chapter 4 "The Early Stages of Development."

3. Guidelines for maintenance of CoP

[Defense Acquisition University Community of Practice Implementation Guide](#), v3.0, October 2007, Published by the Defense Acquisition University Press.
<https://acc.dau.mil/copguide>

“Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Quick Start-Up Guide” by Etienne Wenger,
http://www.ewenger.com/theory/start-up_guide_PDF.pdf

Blouin, Anne. “Creating an Environment for Collaborative Learning.” *Association Management* 57.5 (May 2005): 14(1)

Vestal, Wesley. "Sustaining Communities of Practice." *KM World* 15.3 (March 2006): 8(4)

Burk, Mike. “Communities of Practice.” *Public Roads* 63.6 (May 2000): 18

Powazek, Derek M. (2002). Design for Community. New Riders. "Chapter 11: Killing Your Community" pp. 244 - 250

Wegner, E., McDermott, R., and Snyder, W. (2002). Cultivating Communities of Practice. Harvard Business School Press. Chapter 6 "The Challenge of Distributed Communities."

Wegner, E. Communities of Practice: Quick Start Up Guide,
http://www.ewenger.com/theory/start-up_guide_PDF.pdf.

[Sample Online Interaction Guidelines, Rules and Policies](#)
<http://www.fullcirc.com/community/sampleguidelines.htm>

4. Roles within a CoP

Blouin, Anne. “Creating an Environment for Collaborative Learning.” *Association Management* 57.5 (May 2005): 14(1)

Smith, M.K. (2003) "Communities of Practice", *The Encyclopedia of Informal Education*, www.infed.org/biblio/communities_of_practice.htm. Last updated: 23 October 2007

