



CONVENE & CONNECT

Convening is the art of bringing the community (of practice) and relevant stakeholders together to connect members and engage them in meaningful conversations. The diversity of a community and a risk-free and inclusive environment help develop conversations and engage members.

Start small, create the conducive environment to convene and network people.

Proper community management to ensure diversity of views, prioritize equity for access to opportunities and resource and where everyone feels they belong and can actively participate.

Diversified, equity and inclusiveness environment where there is diverse representation, fairness and everyone feel valued and heard.

Activities oriented to developing the practice – Workshops and Training Sessions

WHAT

Workshop and Training Sessions

Workshops and training sessions are not a main staple of a community's activities, but some strategic, targeted training can give some members a useful boost or make the community useful to non-members.

WHY

Providing an entry into aspects of the practice to people who need it, whether they are members or outsiders.

We are often asked about how to expand a community of practice across an organization because the domain is potentially relevant to everyone, if tangentially. Domain like this may include things like digitalization, negotiation skills, or public relations. We usually recommend limiting the community of practice to people for whom the domain is key to their practice.

For others, even if the domain is at times relevant, it is often not worth the commitment of a community of practice. For them, the community of practice can organize informative sessions and trainings open to everyone. The community acts as the main steward of the capability and decides how to give others enough understanding and experience to weave the capability across the organization.

HOW

Organizing training sessions is a tricky role for communities of practice. On the one hand, they are in the best position to know what people should learn about their practice. On the other hand, time is always scarce, and what excites members is usually advanced conversations about what nobody knows rather than doing training about what is already known. When we have seen it work well, communities have received funding from their organization(s) to cover the time of members involved in training.

Variations

Outsourcing training. Some communities prepare training sessions in collaboration with a training unit, with the community providing the domain expertise and the training department taking care of the logistics. The community uses its learning over time to devise a training curriculum, but they hand it over to the training department to deliver.

Certification. Some communities have aligned with outside certification organizations so that membership includes a trajectory into becoming officially certified in their domain.