



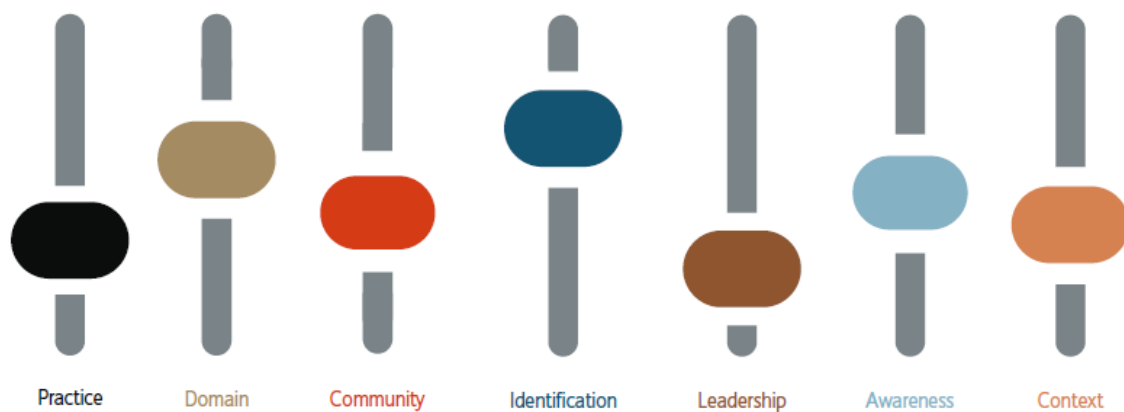
## OPERATION MODEL/GOVERNANCE

*Operation Model / Governance is about how we work together and take decisions. We will identify the community working practices and decision-making processes that fit best your community needs, purpose, and values.*

- Identify key roles among community members collectively
- Formalise the key roles and the working & decision making model collectively.
- Drive governance and commitment for the decision made for the community.

### Structuring the Community

Referencing to the 7 dimensions of intentional development, it more useful to consider a framework with multiple dimensions along which community maturing or some preferred to label as vibrancy can occur. Think of these dimensions as a set of distinct sliders increasing the brightness level of different settings, as illustrated in the figure below. Some communities may try and turn up some dimensions while ignoring others. Even in a given community, some members may be more interested in pushing some dimensions than others. Not everyone has the same view of the ideal setting.



#### WHAT

##### **Dimension 3: Community**

Some communities of practice develop by making sure that the community is well structured for the domain: who belongs and how belonging translates into good practice.

#### WHY

Structuring the **community** to support practice and domain includes:

- **Defining the community.** The membership of early-stage communities often reflects personal relationships, networks, geographical proximity, or word of mouth.
- **Shaping a regime of competence.** Over time, a community of practice gives rise to what we call a regime of competence. This refers to the behaviours through which members recognize each other because they share a sense of what it means to be a practitioner in good standing.

## HOW

Intentional developmental efforts in this direction include:

- **Defining the community.** This is fine to start with, but a maturing community is not a group of friends; it defines membership in terms of covering the domain and structures activities to enable participation by all concerned. Note that growth is not always easy for communities. It requires a balance between on the one hand, inviting all the people who can benefit from membership, and on the other, maintaining the learning intimacy that often spurs a community's initial development. Chapters and practice groups can often help in this regard, as can offering mentorship.
- **Shaping a regime of competence.** A regime of competence shapes the experience of community membership in subtle ways:
  - It is not a complete consensus about good practices, but it reflects a set of criteria—often tacit and sometimes explicit—for recognizing a legitimate practitioner, even in the face of serious disagreements.
  - It is not a fixed set of prescriptions or a conservative system of control, but it does create formal or informal standards to which members in good standing feel some accountability. Not adhering to the regime of competence, perhaps with a new insight or an innovative approach, requires an account, even if just to oneself, of why this deviation from established practice makes sense. And when a novelty seems promising, this accountability entails the need to negotiate with the community as to why the novelty should be integrated into the regime of competence.
  - It is not a simple hierarchy, but it defines a gradient for learning, by which competence ranges from novice to masterful, from acceptable to excellent. Some communities even recognize explicit levels of competence, for instance, by authorizing engagement in certain procedures or having designated experts in certain areas.

Maintaining a strong regime of competence requires a delicate balance as the practice evolves. On one side is the need to honour the history of learning of the community. For this, new ideas and proposals will have to pass a high bar before being integrated into the regime of competence. On the other side is the need to be open: you don't want this process to be so stilted that it kills innovation.

Potential upsides	Possible downsides
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a degree of clarity about learning paths toward improved competence</li> <li>• The community is committed to spreading excellence among all members</li> <li>• People know who is good at what and where to turn for advice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth in membership disrupts the initial experience of intimacy</li> <li>• The definition of competence becomes political and creates hierarchy</li> <li>• The community becomes a training service</li> <li>• Diverging voices are marginalized</li> <li>• Truly innovative ideas are ignored or rejected out of hand</li> </ul>