



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.

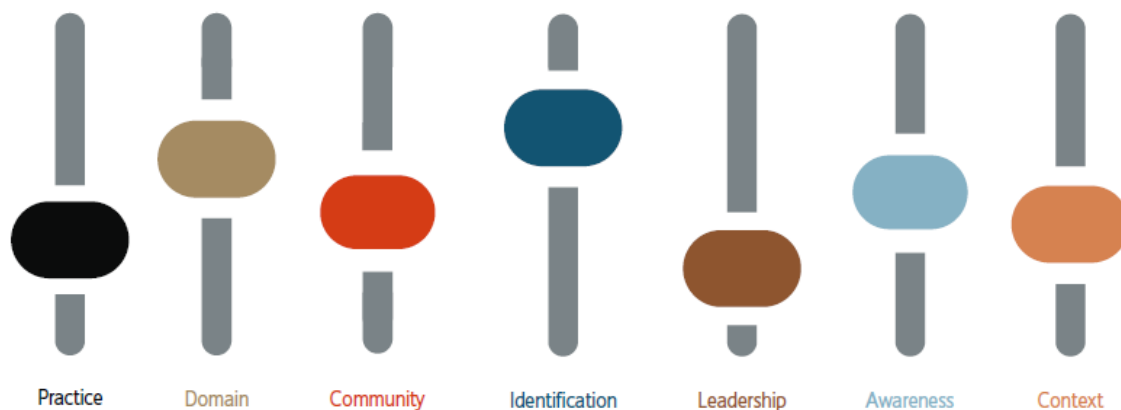
Start small, create the conducive environment to convene and network people.

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.

Nurturing Identification

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 4: Identification

Some communities mature by deepening the personal dimensions of membership. They build strong bonds. They value friendship and relationships. They embrace the whole person. They cultivate identity—both for members and for the community. They do all that, not just as a social club might, but as a foundation for learning.

WHY

Nurturing identification with the community includes:

- **Building relationships.** The community is an invitation for members to bring in who they are in personal ways. It embraces a broader part of their identity than the part defined strictly within the domain. They consider this depth of personal engagement and relationships a key to their ability to learn together. In their attempt to become better learning partners, they touch each other's humanity; and that becomes a key strength of their learning partnership.
- **Promoting an identity for the community.** When the community builds a shared memory, it includes souvenirs of events, such as photos and videos from memorable moments. Capturing the highlights of this shared history contributes to a sense of identity for the community.
- **Fostering an experience of agency.** The community is strengthened by the identification members feel toward it from all the personal experience of agency.

HOW

Intentional developmental efforts in this direction include:

- **Building relationships.** Members take an interest in each other's background and experience. Because they value knowing each other, they take time to hear each other's personal stories. They may celebrate each other's accomplishments or birthdays. They empathize with struggles or loss.
- **Promoting an identity for the community.** Moves in this direction include rituals such as dinners or outings, and community artefacts such as songs, mascots, t-shirts, or other signs of membership.
- **Fostering an experience of agency.** A community of practice can become something special when it is a space for expressing individual identities. This can be especially precious when a large part of members' experience is working on projects where they are told what to do and where what matters is only that part of their professional identity that serves the project directly. Then their community is different because their full professional identity matters; their perspective matters; their experience matters; what they think matters. There is room for them as a practitioner interested in the future of the craft. They are invited to follow their personal interests and steer the community that way. They can take action towards a difference they personally care to make.

Potential upsides	Possible downsides
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal relationships enable deeper learning • The inquiry is richer from including the whole person • Identification with the community strengthens member commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group becomes a friendship clique • Outsiders are excluded • Belonging and identity become more important than learning