



Foundations of Communities of Practice Workshop

Participant Handbook

January 19th to March 7th 2004

Contents

This handbook was designed with several purposes in mind. First it is meant to allow you to prepare yourself for the workshop. Second, it is a way to share explicitly the design of the workshop and its rationale. Finally it should serve as a reference as you become involved in various activities and conversations. We suggest that you look through it before the start date for the workshop.

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	This section provides an overall schedule for the workshop, some information about what to do before, during, and after, as well as a description of each week. On each week's page, you will find explanations of any new space and processes that may arise as we move through our cycle of community, domain and practice foci. The goals and related activities for each week are listed in a box at the top of each page. To support your ongoing activity, even in personally busy times we have also proposed a minimum level of activity that will keep you engaged in the main discourse for that week of the workshop.	
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PART 1: Workshop overview

Welcome to the Foundations of Communities of Practice Workshop!

This workshop does not easily fall into familiar categories. It has been described by participants as a unique combination of "Communities of Practice 101 and advanced graduate work." But it is also a hands-on workshop for practicing professionals. Most participants talk from experience. We are equally interested in theory and in practice. We are a group learning together. There is a faculty but everyone has something to contribute. There are no prerequisites for participating and no exam at the end. We use a web-based learning space as well as teleconferences. The idea is to closely simulate the creation of a community. Some of us are still in contact years after the workshop.

What are the learning goals for the workshop?

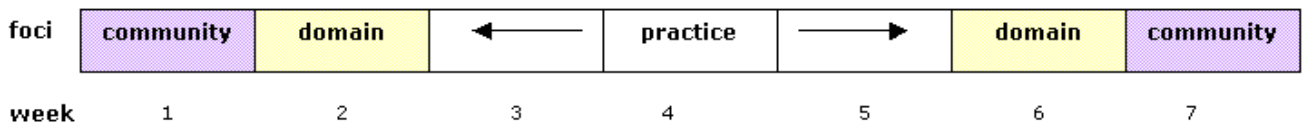
This workshop is primarily focused on experiential learning. There is no traditional curriculum in the sense of a series of modules that all students are supposed to go through individually in order to absorb a preset body of codified knowledge. Rather, you are invited into a learning space with various activity areas. The faculty participate in activities rather than "teach" in a traditional way. You learn to the extent that you engage in conversations, projects, tasks, and social interactions.

It is useful to think about what you expect to learn so you can direct your own activities, ask productive questions, and propose relevant issues for consideration by the group. It is also important to join with an open mind so you can be surprised by what you learn as the experience unfolds.

What is the overall activity structure for the seven weeks?

We interact over seven weeks, with each week having a different focus that corresponds to a structural element of communities of practice. We start with the "community" element to get to know each other, then move on to the "domain" element to discuss communities of practice. The next three weeks are spent on "practice" as we engage in projects and discussions with fellow practitioners. Then we come back to "domain" to reflect on our learning, and finally to "community" to explore how we can continue what we have started.

Here is the overall rhythm of activities for the workshop:



Focus	Date	Activity
Community (A)	Jan 19 - Jan 25	Begin community activities while you get to know the people and the tools
Domain (A)	Jan 26 – Feb 1	First formal discussions about the domain of communities of practice
Practice	Feb 2 – Feb 8	Start practical activities (projects, stories and cases) and meet the 1 st online guest
	Feb 9 – Feb 15	Project teams formed and individual cases and stories continue with 2 nd online guest
	Feb 16 – Feb 22	Finalise practical activities, summarise and report results, meet 3 rd online guest
Domain (B)	Feb 23 – Feb 29	Second formal discussions about the domain after project and other practice-oriented experiences
Community (B)	Mar 1 – Mar 7	Reflecting on our experience and transitions into new ways of being together

Who is in this workshop?

An important aspect of participating in the workshop is the opportunity to meet and get to know people from all over the world involved with communities of practice in various sectors and activities. You will find that a variety of people are involved in the workshop. As you would expect, there is a **faculty** and other **participants** like you who bring their own experience to the table. But there are others as well. Because the Foundations workshop is more of an open laboratory than a classroom, a community has formed around it as participants from earlier workshops keep in touch with each other, collaborate on projects launched in the workshop, and get involved with each other and with the workshop in new roles. We make this rich periphery visible and try to leverage its richness by inviting “**guest speakers**” and “**mentors**” to augment the conversation in the workshop, to extend the personal networks available to participants and to deepen the workshop’s connection with actual practice.

Participants

The workshop participants are a key learning resource. They represent a variety of backgrounds, both culturally and professionally. They are concerned with learning and knowledge in organizational, educational, and community settings

In the past the group of participants has included:

- Community builders and leaders concerned with the learning capacity of their communities
- Knowledge officers and knowledge managers
- Internal and external consultants implementing knowledge-management programs
- University faculty, learning designers, instructional designers, graduate students
- Human resources, training and development professionals
- Change agents in enterprise, not-for-profit groups, NGO’s and community organisations.

Faculty

The workshop is taught in a seminar format by **Etienne Wenger**, a leading thinker and practitioner in the field, in collaboration with **John Smith**, a community builder and technologist, and **Bronwyn Stuckey**, an educational researcher and online facilitator.

Guest speakers

The workshop invites three guest speakers to join the conversation for a brief period over Weeks 3-5. These guests are people working with communities of practice in the field and bring a depth and richness to our discussion that is almost unparalleled. Guests variously engage in on-line discussion, chat sessions and teleconference activity and during their few days with us. Some workshop participants serve as hosts for each of the guest speakers, which are an opportunity to connect with the guest, to co-design the event, and to practice a critical aspect of community leadership.

Mentors

Past participants with practical working knowledge in the field of community of practice development join the workshop for several weeks as mentors. They can be called upon for support as they bring experience in the workshop processes along with a wealth of practical experience. These mentor practitioners come to the fore in the Practice Lab activities where we develop projects, cases and stories. They often bring an important voice to the reflections at the end of the workshop in Domain Inquiry and the Community weeks (6 and 7).

Network Analyzers

This is a group of workshop alumnae who, after their workshop got to thinking about Discourse and Social Network Analysis and what there was to be learned by community members and facilitators in exploring these areas. They formed a study group and are on a journey to understand through continued involvement in this workshop how social networks support information flow and learning. It came to pass that social network analysis became one of the workshop instruments and this group stayed on to facilitate interests in that area.

PART 2: A learning space

This workshop is designed as a "community learning space." Its various "learning areas" correspond to aspects of community life. The design of the learning space is itself a central part of the curriculum. Exploring the space and using it is part of the learning.

Entering such a space requires a certain amount of playfulness. Enough playfulness to really get into it and pretend it is real, yet enough playfulness to remain light about it, about the roles we choose to try, about the projects we undertake, and about the outputs we produce.

The space has a lot going. There will not be time to do everything or be everywhere, so relax. But there will be time to do something somewhere, so don't sit on the fence. In building a community of practice, there are no substitutes for doing things together. Community building requires initiative and engagement on the part of members.

Above all, this learning space is an offering. It is made for you; and it is made by you. Participate. Be inventive. Take initiative. This is your learning space. Make it what you want.










This graphic shows the full learning space of the workshop as seen on the homepage starting week 2.

Note that we begin Week 1 with a limited version of the full learning space to allow you to focus on the community activities and to familiarise yourself with the tools in the *Web Crossing* on-line environment. The full workshop space is revealed in the start of **Week 2** and you should spend a little time familiarising yourself with the new spaces and their functions.


Note also that the graphic learning space map on the homepage is clickable. It is an easy way to get where you want to go (See PART 6 for more information on navigation and software features).

What activity spaces are made available during the workshop?

Each area of the learning space is meant to support a different set of activities:

<p>Community Circle</p>  <p><i>Being together</i></p>	<p>The main social area of the workshop. It serves as the focal area during Weeks 1 & 7. Here participants share introductions, games as well as notices, feedback and updates.</p>
<p>Private Spaces</p>  <p><i>Forging relationships</i></p>	<p>Individual pages and households are found here. These spaces serve variously throughout the workshop for friendship and support groups, leadership planning and private discussions. Individual pages are available from Week 1 and households form for a Week 2 launch.</p>
<p>Domain Inquiry</p>  <p><i>Sharing a learning journey</i></p>	<p>The main domain discussion area of the workshop. Participants discuss readings, experiences and burning issues in Weeks 2 & 6 of the workshop.</p>
<p>Leadership Lounge</p>  <p><i>Taking charge</i></p>	<p>Households which form at the close of Week 1 will sign up for the tasks listed here. Support for the leadership tasks is offered in this area Weeks 2 to 7.</p>
<p>Practice Lab</p>  <p><i>Rolling up our sleeves</i></p>	<p>This is the practical workspace for projects, cases and stories. The area supports team and individual activities over Weeks 3 to 5 of the workshop.</p>
<p>Connections</p>  <p><i>Opening up to the world</i></p>	<p>This area is the for our three distinguished guest speakers. Here guests will post relevant resources, introductions and hold discussions and chat sessions over Weeks 3 to 5.</p>
<p>Cybrary</p>  <p><i>Keeping records</i></p>	<p>Resources, references and publications are shared here, along with the artefacts developed by project teams in previous workshops. This space is available from Week 2.</p>

A special word about contextualized instructions and support

<p> The about files</p>	<p>In each activity space XYZ on the Web site you will find a file named “... about XYZ”, which is usually the last item on the list. It explains the primary activity in that area. It offers guidance and in several cases step-by-step instructions for initiating, expediting and reaching closure in activity. When visiting each area for the first time, review the about file.</p>
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PART 3: Groups to join

In the course of the workshop, you will join a number of different groups for different purposes. Here are the main groups you will be joining:

Households

The first group that you will join starting on week 2 is your “household.” A household is a group of around four participants who share an area in the private space of the workshop. The purpose of the household is to provide for general companionship, support, and reflection throughout the workshop.

One of the first things for housemates to chat about is the Leadership task the household will take on. These tasks include summarizing discussions, hosting guest speakers, running the “community barometer,” facilitating a teleconference, or collecting nuggets. We invite households, rather than individuals, to take these one because it is more fun and more instructive to do this as a group.

On the site, each household has its own workspace, which consists of:

- a public front porch for visitors to drop by and chat or leave a message regarding the household’s leadership responsibilities
- a private kitchen available only to the members of that household
- individual folders where you can keep a learning journal and open pages to use at your discretion.

You have host rights over any pages in your personal folder within your household. You can add pages and can make pages totally private or open and public as you need.

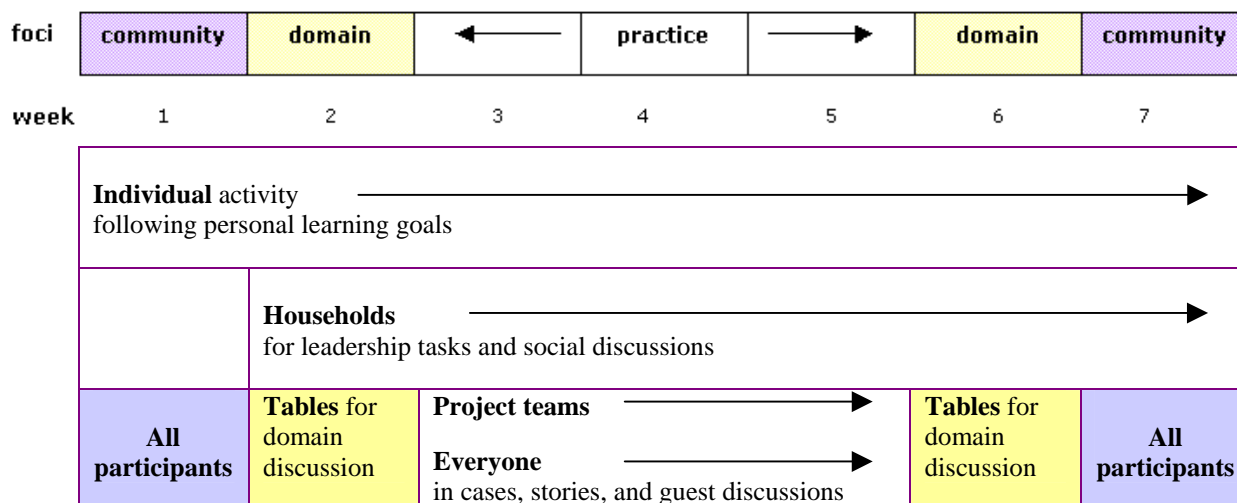
Conversation tables

For our discussions of general issues and questions on communities of practice, we will separate into conversation tables that will enable us to participate more actively without being overwhelmed by the quantity of material that a large group can produce.

Project teams

During the three practice weeks, you will be invited to join one or more project(s) of interest to you. Each project team will have its own space in the practice lab, which can be read by everyone, but to which only project team members can contribute. There are two ways to join a project team. You can start of project on a topic of interest to you as project leader and then recruit others to join you. Or you can join an existing project as a team member.

What groups will I work in as the workshop progresses?



PART 4: Week by week schedule of activities

This section gives the detailed schedule of activities for each week of the workshop. First, a few general questions about how the workshop unfolds:

What should I do before the workshop?

There are three main tasks for this preliminary time:

1. Familiarise yourself with the information in this handbook
2. You will receive by email two chapters introducing the concept of communities of practice, from a recent book by Etienne, with Richard McDermott and William Snyder. They will be the topic of our “root” discussion in the “domain inquiry” space. If there are specific topics from these chapters you want to discuss, you will also be able to open and lead a discussion yourself when the domain discussion starts.
3. You will receive by email login and password instructions. Login to the workshop as soon as you receive these and check that the details for your personal profile are correct (Profile is linked off the Community Directory in the left navigation bar). You will need to check your; Email Address, Organization/Title, Phone Number, Greenwich Mean Time Offset.

What am I to do on my first day?

We begin the workshop with a one-hour **Orientation Teleconference**. This gives you a chance to get to know the facilitators, thought leaders and participants in this workshop and put a voice behind the typing. To accommodate all time zones we usually offer this teleconference twice. Choose a call time that suits your location and availability (though there are no rule against participating in both calls).

You will receive an email with the details for the times and Dial-in Number: and the Participant Access Code for each call, so look out for this and save it. This information also appears on the online schedule in the workshop space (reachable directly from the nav bar), which is the best place to check on the up-to-date scheduling logistics.

What does a typical visit look like as the workshop evolves?

This workshop rapidly builds content and resources. On a typical day, you will not go everywhere. Your visits would go something like:

1. login and review the front page banner for this week’s highlight activities
2. check “What’s happening?” for any news and updates
3. visit the focal area for the schedule week that you are in
4. go to your household and contribute to the current issues and leadership plans

What will happen after the workshop ends?

The end of the class is not the end of the world (unless there is something that we do not know about):

- The Community Circle will remain active for two weeks after the workshop.
- The workshop space will remain open in read-only mode for a month after the workshop.
- You will receive a CD of the workshop.
- We will point to other communities in which you can participate.

Week-by-week description of activities

The following pages describe the main themes and activities of each week. The description includes a “Time poor” section with suggestions for what to do that week if you are pressed for time.

Workshop Schedule at a glance

This is the overall schedule for the seven weeks. In the following pages, each week is described in further detail.

<p>Week 1 January 19 to January 25</p>	<p>Community Focus A Focus on community activities for the week with John:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One hour <i>Orientation</i> teleconference • Opening of the Community circle for introductions • Personal challenge - a fun task to help find like minds and interests • Household sign-up and naming your household (by Friday week 1) • Start thinking about projects • Take the IKNOW social network survey
<p>Week 2 January 26 to February 1</p>	<p>Domain Focus A Focus on domain issues and activities for the week working with Etienne:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One hour <i>Introduction to Communities of practice</i> teleconference • Stay after for a short guided tour of full site • Opening of the Domain inquiry tables of discussion (based on relevant chapters) • Household leadership task - carry out tasks • Rate your time on the barometer.
<p>Week 3 February 2 to February 8</p>	<p>Practice Focus A The foci are the Practice lab activity with Bronwyn and the first online guest speaker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice lab opens - story, case and project activity • Project decisions and initial advertising start with opening of the week • Guest speaker 1 • Household leadership task - carry out tasks
<p>Week 4 February 9 to February 15</p>	<p>Practice Focus B Continuing practice activities with Bronwyn and the second online guest speaker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One hour <i>Project organisation and promotion</i> teleconference • Practice lab continues - story, case and project activity • Guest speaker 2 • Field trip • Household leadership task - carry out tasks.
<p>Week 5 February 16 to February 22</p>	<p>Practice Focus C Completion of practice activities with Bronwyn and the third online guest speaker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice lab wrap up- story, case and project activity • Guest speaker 3 • Household leadership task - carry out tasks • Prepare project leader reports to share in the domain inquiry • Rate your time on the barometer
<p>Week 6 February 23 to February 29</p>	<p>Domain Focus B The focus is in the Domain inquiry activities in the domain with Etienne:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One hour <i>Synthesising learning for projects</i> teleconference • Continuation Domain inquiry tables of discussion (based on epilogue chapter 10) • Household leadership task - carry out closing tasks.
<p>Week 7 March 1 to March 7</p>	<p>Community Focus B Reflecting on our experience and the community transitions with John:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close of community activities, reflections, Closing circle postings and discussions of where to from here. • Household Leadership Task - carry out final tasks. • One hour Teleconference Friday Nov 21st time to be negotiated. • Take the IKNOW social network survey.

Week 1	January 19 th to 25 th					
community	domain	←	practice	→	domain	community
<p>Community Focus A</p> <p>The goals are both social and technical this week. You need to familiarize yourself with elements of the workshop interface, find out who is in the workshop, and locate like-minded peers. This will help you decide on building or joining a household group for leadership activities in the following weeks. Get a sense of how diverse and yet connected a global community of practice can be!</p>						
<p>Main anchor: John</p>						
<p>Main activities in the first community week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> One hour Orientation teleconference Take the Web Crossing tour <input type="checkbox"/> Visit the Community circle for Opening Circle Introductions <input type="checkbox"/> Take the Personal challenge - a fun task to help find like minds and interests <input type="checkbox"/> Select a household, housemates, and name your Household (by the end of Friday week 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Start thinking about projects <input type="checkbox"/> Take the IKNOW social network survey 						

Main areas used in this week

This week we work in a simplified version of the full workshop site. Only two of the areas used in the full workshop will be open this week: **Community circle** and **Personal spaces**. If you have not yet done so, spend a bit of time exploring the space.

Community circle: Introduce yourself in the *Opening Circle*. Don't be long-winded here. There are many of us and we all want to read about everyone. One, perhaps two short paragraphs will do. Consider:

- What should we know about you?
- Why are you interested in this topic?
- What are your personal passions in this area?
- What do you hope to gain from this course?
- What kinds of problems or opportunities do you face in your own work that are relevant here?

If you do have more to say about yourself, continue in your Personal Space, as explained in the next section. Keep your introduction brief but guide people to your personal space. After a number of introductions are in place you will be able to start your personal challenge to link through 5 other members of the workshop to a challenge partner. You can answer your challenge in *6 Degrees Solutions* area in the Community Circle.

Personal space: Meet one another, engage in personal conversation, and put together a household. This is your own personal (but still public, i.e., visible and visitable) space. Furnish it and use it as you please, for instance, by writing reflections and notes and copying over things that struck a chord. You might also like to copy your brief introduction from the Opening Circle to the first item of your personal page. You can also link from your introduction in the Opening Circle to the next item in your personal page. To do this, follow the instructions in "Exploring the learning space" item 9. Then continue your introduction there. Try to put something in this area each day this week. Visiting others' personal pages is another great way to discover those links required for the 6 Degrees of Separation Challenge.

Time poor? Join the call, introduce yourself on-line, poke about on the Web site and leave 1 message for your challenge partner (named on your personal page)

Week 2		January 26 th to February 1 st				
community	domain	←	practice	→	domain	community
<p>Domain Focus A</p> <p>The goal for this week is general discussion and sharing on the topic of communities of practice. Here we ask our questions about communities of practice, share our insights and agree on the meaning of terms.</p>						
<p>Main anchor: Etienne</p>						
<p>Main activities in the first domain week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> One hour teleconference: Introduction to communities of practice (Stay after for a short guided tour of full site) <input type="checkbox"/> Opening of the Domain inquiry tables of discussion (based on but not limited to relevant chapters of the reading) <input type="checkbox"/> Household leadership task - carry out tasks relevant to this week. <input type="checkbox"/> Rate your experience so far on the barometer survey. 						

A community of practice is brought and held together by a joint interest in a **domain of knowledge**, such as designing a product, carrying out a social or organizational function, bringing services to city slums, or surviving on the street. This domain may be well defined, like an established discipline, or rather diffuse, like an emerging concern, but it is a matter of personal passion to all participants and all want to pursue a joint inquiry into it.

Domain discussion tables: This space includes a fixed set of discussion tables (seating 8 to 10 people). Each participant is assigned to a specific discussion or "table".

- **Activity:** Each table discusses the topic of the week and any subtopics members are interested in.
- **Households:** Two members of each household are assigned to each table and you are encourage to cross-pollinate the conversations with other members of your household
- **Membership:** Only table members and Etienne can post, though everyone can read

To participate: Find out which table you belong to (in the header of the Domain Inquiry) and join the discussion there. Come, listen, share your experience, ask questions, propose answers, and contribute your insights.

Households: Your households are now formed and you are invited to interact and organize your life as roommates.

Leadership tasks: Household groups will sign up this week for one of the leadership tasks offered during the course of the workshop. These tasks cover community activities such as Organizing and facilitating one of the teleconferences, hosting one of the guest speakers, summarizing discussion in one of the Domain Inquiry weeks, facilitating the social network analysis and reporting for week 1 and facilitating the barometer data collection and reporting for weeks 2 and 5.

Time poor? Concentrate on and subscribe to the domain inquiry discussion and as a courtesy let your housemates know that you are pressed this week for time.

Week 3		February 2nd to 8th				
community	domain	←	practice	→	domain	community
<p>Practice Focus A The goal of the Practice lab activity is to initiate practical discussions, activities and collaborations. Activities started here will be our focus for next three weeks.</p>						
<p>Main anchor: Bronwyn</p>						
<p>Main activities in the first practice week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Practice lab opens - story, case and project activity <input type="checkbox"/> Project decisions and initial advertising start with opening of the week <input type="checkbox"/> First guest speaker <input type="checkbox"/> Household leadership task – continue to carry out tasks 						

Communities of practice engage in joint activities to build shared knowledge in their domain. In our practice lab, we will focus on three types of activities commonly used by communities: **STORIES** - story telling, **CASES** - case-based problem solving, and **PROJECTS** - collaborative tasks to ward an outcome.

Stories: Stories are central to the lives of communities of practice. They convey knowledge in a concrete form. They create a sense of belonging. And they provide recognition to the authors/actors as contributors to the community’s stock of knowledge. Examples of stories include your personal experience of belonging to a community of practice, a successful community or a failure.

Cases: Another common practice-building activity is case-based problem solving. Members help each other with actual problems they face in their own work. This is a very important community- and knowledge-building activity. It builds the community because it makes participation valuable to members in a very tangible fashion. And it builds shared knowledge because participants can share what they know in a concrete situation. Authenticity is the key here! Present a real situation and let us explore the issues and directions that they might take us, as we get "hands-on" with the community of practice. Examples of stories include a problem faced by a community you are working with, objections you are facing from management or a situation in which you wonder whether a community would be a good idea.

Projects: The learning agenda of a community of practice often spawns projects to address specific burning issues: scoping the issues, benchmarking the competition, evaluating a tool, building a generic design or tool, or developing a standard for an established procedure. These projects are much smaller in scope than the life of a community, but they serve its enterprise. Projects have set outcomes (not necessarily end-products). The project should have personal meaning for you and should reflect your own learning goals. If one such project does not exist you might initiate it and invite others to join. Project teams should check the Cybrary for past project reports and artefacts before initiating a project. You may well be able to build on or field-test a product already past first phase of development. Examples of past projects include determining basic guidelines in cultural issues for global communities, drawing up a list of organizational enablers and barriers or drafting a value proposition for a community.

Guest speaker 1: A team of your peers will be hosting the first on-line guest this week. Watch out for details of this activity as events may employ on-line discussion, chat or teleconference communications. Do take advantage of this opportunity to engage with a leading practitioner in the field.

Time poor? Be sure to join the discussions with the first guest speaker. Maybe you won’t join a project but prefer to pose or contribute to a case or story.

Week 4		February 9th to 15th			
community	domain	←	practice	→	domain community
<p>Practice Focus B The goal for this week is to continue and initiate further sharing and to reflect on how each of our personal needs and learning goals are being served by this activity.</p>					
<p>Main anchor: Bronwyn</p>					
<p>Continuing practice activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> One hour teleconference: Project organisation and promotion <input type="checkbox"/> Practice Lab continues - story, case and project activity <input type="checkbox"/> Project teams consult with Etienne <input type="checkbox"/> Guest speaker 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Field trip: Social Network Analysis and Barometer reports <input type="checkbox"/> Household leadership task - carry out tasks 					

Project activity: This week is the second of our Practice lab weeks. Project leaders will have the opportunity to advertise projects and seek further members or canvass ideas. This is the main week for collaborative activity and projects leaders should move towards dividing the required tasks between the team members.

As early as possible project teams should negotiate a consultation teleconference meeting time with Etienne. This consultation session can be used in a formative or summative phase of the project's development. If this opportunity is sought early it can be a chance to talk through plans, if later it can be used to seek advice on the project goal or product.

Cases and Stories: continue to be initiated and discussed. It is not too late to pose a case or story and steer the discussion to a burning need or part of your personal learning goals.

Field trip: This is lead by our SNA and Barometer teams to share the data they have collected and what it tells us about our burgeoning little community. The IKNOW SNA tool and the Barometer are much more than assessment tools, they both have very formative roles in community building and part of the field trip will be discuss how we can use such tool to the communities advantage. What out for an invitation!

Guest speaker 2: A team of your peers will be hosting this second on-line guest this week. Watch out for details of this activity as events may employ on-line discussion, chat or teleconference communications. Do take advantage of this opportunity to engage with a leading practitioner in the field.

Time poor? Be sure to join the discussions with the second guest speaker. You can still to pose or contribute to a case or story and join the Field Trip.

Week 5		February 16th to 22nd				
community	domain	←	practice	→	domain	community
<p>Practice Focus C The goals for this week is wind down and closure on each of our activities and collaborations. It is a week for summarizing, reporting and publishing.</p>						
<p>Main anchor: Bronwyn</p>						
<p>Work on completion of practice activities with Bronwyn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Practice lab wrap up- story, case and project activity <input type="checkbox"/> Guest speaker 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Household leadership task - carry out tasks <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare project leader reports to share in the domain inquiry <input type="checkbox"/> Rate your time on the barometer 						

This week wraps up the Practice Lab activity.

Projects: should move towards completion and reporting and publishing of the final product in the Cybrary area. An allowance is made in week 7 for any further editing or consultation on the products before the workshop closes. Project leaders will prepare a brief report to accompany the product. This entails giving a description of the team, context, goal/s, stage of development, final product and its possible use and value.

Cases and stories: will be summarised by the close of the week, with some comments from the initiator to responses made by peers.

Guest speaker 3: A team of your peers will be hosting this third on-line guest this week. Watch out for details of this activity as events may employ on-line discussion, chat or teleconference communications. Do take advantage of this opportunity to engage with a leading practitioner in the field.

Time poor? Be sure to join the discussions with the third guest speaker. Read, pose and/or contribute to a case or story in the Practice Lab.

Week 6		February 23rd to 29th				
community	domain	←	practice	→	domain	community
<p>Domain Focus B</p> <p>The goal of this week is to come back together as a whole group after our activities in the Practice lab and our conversation with guest speakers. Rich with our experience, we discuss what we have been learning to date, concerning both the topic of communities of practice and the process of working together.</p>						
<p>Main anchor: Etienne</p>						
<p>Main activities in the second domain week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> One hour teleconference: <i>Synthesising learning for projects</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Resume the Domain inquiry discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Household leadership task - carry out closing tasks 						

Domain discussion: This is a week of reflection and synthesis. The online medium is generally better for divergent conversations than for convergent synthesis, and this will be a challenge. We will try to reflect on, combine, and assess what we have learned so as to create a collective sense of achievement.

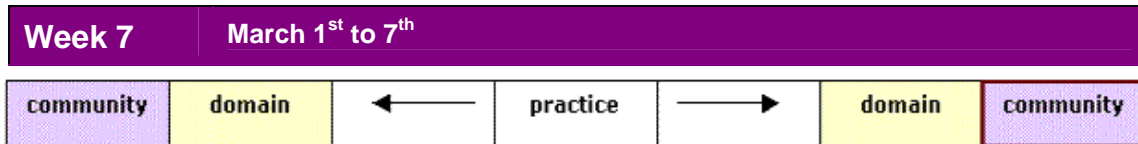
We return to a single domain café table to discuss what it is that we have been learning to date.

- What have we learned from our projects, guests and leadership tasks?
About the topic? About the process?
- What insights are we bringing back? What new questions have arisen?
- What patterns do we see across projects and activities?

Project leaders: Start a discussion thread on your project by giving a brief summary of what you tried to accomplish and what you did. Give a pointer to a document that you produced, and then invite participants to comments, add, ask questions, and discuss your topic.

Case presenters: Start a discussion thread to report on what you have learned from sharing a case with others and receiving their advice.

Time poor? Join the teleconference call if you can, and then post at least one insight or question that came up for you during the Practice period.



Community Focus B

The goal for this week is to return to our full group and reflect on the experiences we have shared, on the new associations and connections and on our new skills. We take the time to think about where we go from here, what projects are yet to be done, what impacts our work might have in a larger context.

Main anchor: John

Main activities in the second community week:

- ❑ Close of community activities, reflections, **Closing circle** postings and discussions of where to from here.
- ❑ **Household leadership task** - carry out final tasks.
- ❑ **Wrap up projects** – put finishing touches on projects and put them in the Cybrary to share with future workshop participants.
- ❑ One hour **Teleconference** Friday Nov 21st time to be negotiated
- ❑ Complete a final **workshop evaluation questionnaire** and leave your address for when the workshop CD is mailed out.

This is a transition week, where we gather our belongings, tidy up the space, offer some final reflections, say our good-byes and get ready to meet in another setting, in another time. We have developed many conceptual and social resources, as well as acquired many skills for “being together at a distance” that we can put to good use. Sharing our plans and intentions is a parting gift to everyone, in case it’s a little too long until we meet again.

Time poor? Put a farewell message in the **Closing Circle** and complete the **workshop evaluation questionnaire**.

PART 5: Advice, wisdom, and FAQ's

Even at a high level of engagement, you should probably not expect to be everywhere and read everything that is happening. You can look at other activities at your leisure later. In our experience, if you are short on time, it is better to get engaged deeply in a few things and contribute actively there. If you try to follow everything shallowly, you may never get to the point where you feel you can contribute something yourself.

Good advice from past participants

- *Be sure of your personal goals and keep them uppermost in your mind as you move through the workshop. It's really easy to get sidetracked in other juicy issues and activities and lose your own goals.*
- *Clear enough space - in the diary and in your head/heart - especially if this context is new, there's an emotional component to the learning that could take you by surprise! Find some ways to signal to colleagues that sitting at the computer and/or taking part in a teleconference is work! Enjoy - jump in - learn and have fun. This has been a tremendously valuable experience for me - and I can't imagine anyone who wouldn't learn lots and gain from it.*
- *Give the workshop a high priority -- find a way to put aside other tasks so that you can participate fully. Set some personal goals, but use the opportunity to see what emerges from interacting with others and from observing and reflecting. You will find that the workshop has unexpected impacts on you!*
- *Really reserve enough time to do the workshop justice. There is a tremendous amount to learn as well as great contacts to make.*
- *Don't be overwhelmed by the number of choices of activities open to you. Do as much as you can when you can. Submerge yourself in the process and simulation. Try on a hat you wouldn't normally wear...it may fit ...if not, you will be wiser from the experience!*
- *Make sure you have the time to dedicate to the workshop, jump in and communicate with others, be outgoing and supportive to the group. It's a valuable experience.*

Some frequently asked questions

How can I keep on top of all the discussions and activity here (week 3)?

Don't even try to read and engage in everything. Like a conference you cannot get to every session, the problem is that in on-line you are much more aware of every session. You have to be a little selfish and stick to your personal learning goals for the workshop. The rest you can read later and soak up over time but don't miss the opportunity in the areas and practice that are closest to your heart! Time to reflect on what it is you came in here for and stay on task with that! On many occasions groups that form here stay together long after the workshop so the workshop, the conversations and the learning lives on! (and yes you do see the site right up until the CD comes out)

What if I am away for a significant period of time during the workshop?

We recognise that over the course of the seven weeks of this workshop that your work and life experiences will place pressure on your level of involvement. To support your ongoing activity we have in each week proposed a minimum level of activity for the week that will keep you engaged in the main discourse of the workshop. We have found that total absence for a period of time can make re-entering the flow quite a hurdle. If you should be away for any period of time you should contact John or Bronwyn for some insider advice on where to best rejoin the workshop momentum.

Will this forum stay up after workshop ends?

The workshop space stays open for several weeks after the workshop is over. And at that time John makes a snapshot of the whole space to go out on a CD. It includes almost everything in the workshop (except the "who's here" and other interactive features). We do ask you to advise us of any third party copyright or confidential material before the close of the workshop so that we respect intellectual property laws when making reproductions. For example, anything you write in "your kitchen" won't appear in the CD. If you have real gems there, you might consider moving them elsewhere. ('Kitchens' are the private spaces for household groups).

PART 6: The Web Crossing platform

The Learning Space is designed on top of a web conferencing system called Web Crossing. Each area in the Learning Space is what is called a “folder” in Web Crossing. A folder can contain “discussions,” “links,” or other embedded “folders.”

What communication tools will be used in the workshop?

Each of the following communication tools plays a role in the workshop when appropriate to our needs and activity:

- Discussion spaces (asynchronous - threaded and unthreaded)
- Instant Messaging
- Chat (synchronous - meeting at the same time)
- Email (personal and group)
- Telephone numbers (personal and teleconference bridges).

We will explore the ways that each can be used in effective facilitation of communities of practice during our time together. Don't fret if any of these are new to you, as this workshop has in the past proven to be a very safe place to explore them and workshop alumni are remarkably competent in their use.

Main features of the web space

The following image of the workshop homepage shows you the features available to navigate the space and communicate with others. The grey navigation bar on the left remains constant as you move around.

The screenshot shows the workshop homepage with several callouts pointing to specific features:

- 1. Clickable image links to all areas:** Points to the central 'Communities of practice' graphic.
- 2. Pull down menu to jump to an area:** Points to the 'Jump to...' dropdown menu.
- 2. Pull down menu to visit other's personal spaces:** Points to the 'Go visit...' dropdown menu.
- Link to the community barometer and results:** Points to the 'Barometer' link.
- Link to send an instant message:** Points to the 'Send a live message' link.
- Listing of who's on-line now:** Points to the 'Who's here?' section.
- Message sign blinks to show new messages:** Points to the 'New Msg' icons in the table.
- Chat room link:** Points to the 'Chat Room' link.
- 3. Index to see full listing of site:** Points to the 'Index' link.
- Directory of class members:** Points to the 'Community Directory' link.
- Schedule of 7 weeks:** Points to the 'Schedule' link.
- Link to tech support:** Points to the 'Tech Support' link.
- 4. Text menu links showing new content:** Points to the 'New Msg' icons in the table.

The table below is a reproduction of the content shown in the screenshot:

Title	Author	Items	New Msg
DOMAIN INQUIRY		3	NEW
PERSONAL SPACE		14	NEW
PRACTICE LAB		7	NEW
CYBRARY		6	NEW
CONNECTIONS		6	NEW
LEADERSHIP LOUNGE		2	NEW
about the Communities of Practice Learning		1	
COMMUNITY CIRCLE			

Navigation

When a large number of people start interacting online over several weeks, the space does become complex and it is important to have good navigation tools to find our way to what is relevant.

There are a number of navigation tools available (numbers correspond to arrows in the graphic above):

1. The icons in the image are clickable links to areas in the workshop (easy to use for visual learners)
2. There are two pull down menus toward the top of the navigation bar that will take you directly to activity areas and to personal spaces.
3. The Index link found on the left navigation bar takes you to a page that shows the full listing of all discussions in the space and exactly how many new contributions are there that you have not seen. This index provides a very useful way to see where you want to go when you start your daily visit. All entries in the list are clickable links.
4. The textual links to each area found at the bottom of the opening screen (shows workshop areas and whether new material has been contributed)

Often a piece of text such as the workshop banner on the entry page will link you directly to an activity or discussion.

People usually settle into a preferred pattern and discover that each path does have has its advantage.

You might like to consider subscribing to discussions of greatest interest. What this does is that Web Crossing will send you an automatic message by e-mail every message or a digest of new messages posted to the discussion you subscribe to. The e-mail indicates who posted and the title of the posting. This in a way keeps you informed of any new developments in the discussion. At the end of the day or when convenient you can visit the Web site and check out the specifics. You'll find this handy for working on projects or for particular discussions.

All you have to do to subscribe is go to the discussion you are interested in and then check the button that says "Subscribe" (it's between "Check Subscripts" and "Message Center").

Help is available

For help with Web Crossing, click on "Tech Support" in the navigation bar. There you will find basic instructions and a tour of the features (e.g., subscriptions or preferences). You can also ask questions in the discussion called Questions & Answers in Tech Support.

If you run into real trouble, contact John at the address below.

Contact details

Workshop address: <http://conversations.cpsquare.org>

CPsquare Community of Practice: <http://www.cpsquare.org>

Workshop leaders:

Etienne Wenger <http://www.ewenger.com> & Etienne@cpsquare.org

John Smith: <http://www.LearningAlliances.net> & John.Smith@LearningAlliances.net

Bronwyn Stuckey: <http://rite.ed.qut.edu.au/papers.htm> & bstuckey@intraceptives.com.au