KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND SHARING

FORMS OF COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

The Communities of practice (CoP) takes different forms based on the way or the purpose for which CoP is formed.

As the CoPs are formed on an voluntary basis, the purpose for which the community has grouped together has an important purpose. The CoP has been applied in different areas/ sectors.

Organization: The concept has been adopted as knowledge is a critical asset that needs to be managed strategically. Communities of practice provides a new approach, which focused on people and on the social structures that enable them to learn with and from each other. It enables practitioners to take collective responsibility for managing the knowledge they need, recognizing that, given the proper structure, they are in the best position to do this. It helps to create a direct link between learning and performance, because the same people participate in communities of practice and in teams and business units. The practitioners can address the tacit and dynamic aspects of knowledge creation and sharing, as well as the more explicit aspects.

Government: The CoP is also applied to government organizations as they face knowledge challenges of increasing complexity and scale. Beyond internal communities, there are typical government problems such as education, health, and security that require coordination and knowledge sharing across levels of government. There also, communities of practice hold the promise of enabling connections among people across formal structures. And there also, there are substantial organizational issues to overcome.

Education: Schools and districts are organizations in their own right, and they too face increasing knowledge challenges. The first applications of communities of practice have been in teacher training and in providing isolated administrators with access to colleagues.

Internally: How to organize educational experiences that ground school learning in practice through participation in communities around subject matters?