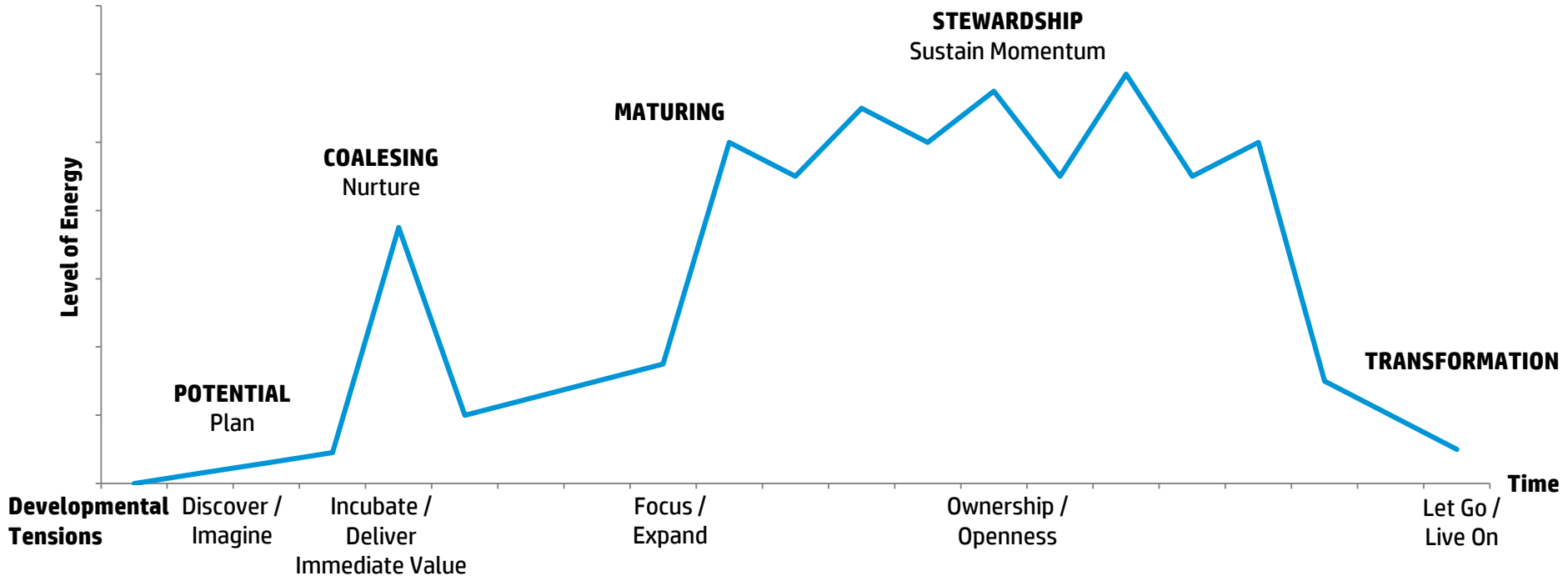


Stages of Community Development

Stages of Community Development



Stage 1: Potential

Stage 1: Potential

Planning Communities



Passion and Value

Find enough common ground among members for them to feel connected and see the value of sharing insights, stories, and techniques.



Define the scope of the domain in a way that elicits the heartfelt interests of members and aligns with important issues for the organization as a whole



Find people who already network on the topic and helping them to imagine how increased networking and knowledge sharing could be valuable



Identifying common knowledge needs



Discover and Imagine

Discover what you can build on

- Who talks with whom about the topic?
- What issues do they discuss?
- What are the strengths of their relationships?
- What are the obstacles that impede knowledge sharing and collaboration?

If you ignore the networks that currently share knowledge about the topic, you will fail to enlist the participation of the most likely early contributors.

Imagine where this potential can lead

- How a community can be more than just a personal network?
- Imagine a wider, more fully developed community

If you focus only on current networks, you will not cross enough personal boundaries to bring new ideas into the community.

Stage 1: Potential

Planning Communities



Determine the Primary Intent of the Community

Helping communities

Communities that focus on helping typically create forums for people to connect across teams, geography, or business units and decide for themselves what knowledge to share, how to assess its value, and how to disseminate good ideas to the rest of the community

Best-practice communities

These focus on developing, validating, and disseminating specific practices. Whereas helping communities rely on members' knowledge of each other to verify new practices, best-practice communities have a specific process to verify the effectiveness and benefits of practices.

Knowledge-stewarding communities

Their main intent is to organize, upgrade, and distribute the knowledge their members use every day.

Innovation communities

Similar to helping communities, but they intentionally cross boundaries to mix members who have different perspectives

Stage 1: Potential

Planning Communities



Define the Domain and Identify Engaging Issues

- Focus on dimensions of the domain that are particularly important to the business
- Focus on aspects of the domain community members will be passionate about
- Define the scope wide enough to bring in new people and new ideas, but narrow enough that most members will be interested in the topics discussed

Stage 1: Potential

Planning Communities



Build a Case for Action

	Short-term value	Long-term value
Benefits to Organization	Improve Business Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arena for problem solving• Quick answers to questions• Reduced time and costs• Improved quality of decisions• More perspectives on problems• Coordination, standardization, and synergies across units• Resources for implementing strategies• Strengthened quality assurance• Ability to take risks with backing of the community	Develop Organizational Capabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to execute a strategic plan• Authority with clients• Increased retention of talent• Capacity for knowledge-development projects• Forum for "benchmarking" against rest of industry• Knowledge-based alliances• Emergence of unplanned capabilities• Capacity to develop new strategic options• Ability to foresee technological developments• Ability to take advantage of emerging market opportunities

Stage 1: Potential

Planning Communities



Build a Case for Action

	Short-term value	Long-term value
Benefits to Community Members	Improve Experience of Work <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help with challenges• Access to expertise• Better able to contribute to team• Confidence in one's approach to problems• Fun of being with colleagues• More meaningful participation• Sense of belonging	Foster Professional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forum for expanding skills and expertise• Network for keeping abreast of a field• Enhanced professional reputation• Increased marketability and employability• Strong sense of professional identity

Stage 1: Potential

Planning Communities



Identify Potential Coordinators and Thought Leaders

Responsibilities

- Identify important issues in their domain.
- Plan and facilitate community events.
- Informally link community members, crossing boundaries between organizational units and brokering knowledge assets.
- Foster the development of community members.
- Manage the boundary between the community and the formal organization, such as teams and other organizational units.
- Help build the practice—including the knowledge base, lessons learned, best practices, tools and methods, and learning events.
- Assess the health of the community and evaluate its contribution to members and the organization.

Qualifications

- Well respected, knowledgeable about the community's domain but they are generally not leading experts in their field. Since a coordinator's primary role is to link people, not give answers, being a leading expert can be a handicap.
- Well connected to other community members (they know who's who)
- Keen to help develop the community's practice
- Good communicators
- Personally interested in community leadership
- Good interpersonal skills for networking and the ability to recognize the development needs of individuals.
- Understand group dynamics well enough to see when the community is moving toward a factional split or becoming dominated by a subgroup with a limited perspective.
- Must have the strategic and political savvy to create a bridge between the community and the formal organization.

Stage 1: Potential

Planning Communities



Interview Potential Members

- Conduct discussions (vs traditional Q&As) to discover the issues potential members share and the opportunities to leverage knowledge
- Initiates the 1-on-1 networking between the core group and it's members
- Whenever someone mentions a problem that you know others share or might be able to solve, try to link them together.

Complete the sentence...

I need to find an expert on...

I talk to these functions in TD...

I am an expert in...

I find experts using...

Share your thoughts...

Would you want to promote your expertise? ☐ Yes. Why?
☐ No. Why?

How much time do you spend finding...

Complete the sentence...

I need to collaborate on...

I collaborate with...

I collaborate using...

Share your thoughts...

Do you need to collaborate outside of your working / physical boundaries? ☐ Yes. Give some examples.
☐ No. Why not? e.g., Do you have all the information already?

Stage 1: Potential

Planning Communities



Create a Preliminary Design for the Community

- Create ideas and models of how the community might work
 - Domain: description of its scope, hot topics
 - Structure
 - Roles
 - Knowledge-sharing processes
 - Names of key members
- The straw model should be detailed enough to initiate community activity, but not so detailed that it leaves little room for improvisation and new ideas.



Planning Toolkit

- Workshop/Brainstorming Guide
- Interview/Survey Questionnaire



Target: June

Stage 2: Coalescing

Stage 2: Coalescing

Nurturing Communities



Energy and Trust

Conduct activities that allow members to build relationships, trust, and an awareness of their common interests and needs.



Establish the value of sharing knowledge about that domain



Develop relationships and sufficient trust to discuss genuinely sticky practice problems



Discover specifically what knowledge should be shared and how



Incubate and Deliver Immediate Value

Let the members develop relationships and trust

Members need to develop the habit of consulting each other for help.

- Deepens their relationships
- Uncovers common needs
- Discovers collective ways of thinking, approaching a problem, and developing a solution.

By focusing solely on relationship building, the community risks being dismissed by both the organization and its members before it ever provides value.

Demonstrate the value of the community quickly

Members need to first understand each other's work, dilemmas, and way of thinking or approaching a problem before they can provide really useful advice.

- Sharing
- Small hints and tips
- Get feedback

By focusing on delivering immediate value, the community risks a superficial treatment of the practice.

Stage 2: Coalescing

Nurturing Communities



Build a Case for Membership

- Build a two-pronged case for membership: the benefits of contributing and the value of learning from others' experience
 - When you start contributing more, the quality and quantity of responses to your requests rise
 - Contributing adds to an individual's visibility and reputation
 - Gain visibility to become known to senior members, thus increasing their chances of being chosen for important consulting projects
 - The simple satisfaction of helping their peers and making their mark on the field is a significant benefit

Stage 2: Coalescing

Nurturing Communities



Launch the Community

- Hold a highly visible and dramatic kickoff
 - Ensure to involve senior management. This will increase the likelihood of attracting broader and more active participation at the outset.
 - Ensure people are aware of the community, its focus, and their own possible roles
 - The Core Group can write position papers and give talks on various topics (e.g. the potential of the community, latest technology trends, innovations, success stories, etc.)



Target: Early July

Stage 2: Coalescing

Nurturing Communities



Initiate Community Events and Spaces

- Immediately after the launch, most communities start to implement knowledge-sharing events, such as weekly meetings, teleconferences, or Web events.
- Regular events help to "anchor" communities.
- They need to be frequent enough to become familiar and routine, while respecting the time availability of members.
- Create small rituals to establish a routine
 - E.g. asking each member to describe in less than two minutes the biggest technical issue at their site / end every meeting by asking members to rate the value of the current meeting and what they could do to improve the next.

Stage 2: Coalescing

Nurturing Communities



Recognize Community Coordinators

- Recognize and reward coordinators early in the community's life.
 - E.g. one company held a high-status annual meeting for community coordinators and contributors that demonstrated the value the organization placed on their contributions

Stage 2: Coalescing

Nurturing Communities



Build Connections Between Core Group Members

- The incubation period is a critical time for building the core group.
- During the coalescing stage, building membership is actually much less important than developing the core group.
- It is through the collaboration of the core group that the
- Community discovers its value; making connections between core group members is the most important networking the coordinator can do. When the core group is cohesive, the community can withstand

Stage 2: Coalescing

Nurturing Communities



Find Value

- Find the Ideas, Insights, and Practices That Are Worth Sharing
 - Commission teams to develop technical procedures and standards
 - Post material from their personal/team files in the common space
 - Begin helping each other solve everyday work problems that fall within their domain
- Identify Opportunities to Provide Value
 - Link people who have problems with others who might have solutions
 - Focus meetings on topics relevant to members' everyday work
 - Link with outside experts
 - Develop material that community members need
 - Collect anecdotes that illustrate the value the community provides both to individuals and to the organization

Stage 3: Maturing

Stage 3: Maturing

Maturing the Community



Clarify and Redefine

Clarify the community's focus, role, and boundaries



Define its role in the organization and its relationship to other domains



Manage the boundary of the community. Ensure that it is not distracted from its core purpose.



Organize the community's knowledge and take stewardship seriously



Focus and Expand

Focus on interest in cutting-edge topics and expert interactions

Maturing communities often develop a sort of "craft intimacy." Members become familiar with

- Each other's style and approach to technical problems
- Each other's strengths and weaknesses, energy, interest, perspectives, and individual styles
- Whom to contact for what

This intimacy makes community discussions considerably richer.

Welcome new members

When a community grows rapidly, it often shifts tone.

- New members disrupt the pattern of interaction the core community has developed.
- They ask different questions, have different needs, and have not established the relationships and trust that the core group enjoys.

Growth can be more than a disruption. It threatens the intimacy and sense of identity that make the community attractive.

Stage 3: Maturing

Maturing the Community



Identify Gaps in Knowledge and Develop a Learning Agenda

- Continue to refine your domain. However, the emphasis changes from defining to developing
- The domain itself, rather than individual needs, becomes the primary driver of activities
- Finds areas where it collectively needs to develop more knowledge
- Some communities systematically develop their learning agenda by mapping out what they already know, what they need to know, and the projects and resources they will need to fill the gaps.
- The focus of the community shifts from simply sharing tips and advice toward the broader goal of stewarding knowledge.

Stage 3: Maturing

Maturing the Community



Define the Community's Role in the Organization

- During this maturing stage, a community often assumes a more important role in the organization.
- Sometimes, however, managers and other outsiders expect a community to take on more responsibilities than it thinks appropriate.
- The community needs to be clear about the responsibilities it can assume.

Stage 3: Maturing

Maturing the Community



Redefine Community Boundaries

- Be more intentional about involving everyone with an appropriate relationship to the domain
 - E.g. by linking across departments and geographical areas or by connecting practitioners in related disciplines
- Restructuring the community may be needed

Stage 3: Maturing

Maturing the Community



Routinize Entry Requirements and Processes

- Create a well-defined entry process to alleviate the burden for current members
- E.g. new members should be sponsored by a current member and sit down with that member before attending their first meeting to get the background on the community's purpose, history, scope of activities, and norms of interaction.

Stage 3: Maturing

Maturing the Community



Measure the Value of the Community

- As more newcomers join a community, it becomes even more important for the community to measure its value.
- Uninvolved stakeholders generally need more traditional and clear demonstrations of value.
- By the time the community is in the maturing stage, there are usually sufficient examples of value to make a convincing case for its existence and potential members' involvement.

Stage 3: Maturing

Maturing the Community



Maintain a Cutting-Edge Focus

- A growing community's focus can easily shift from cutting-edge to more basic issues.
- Coordinators need to keep well connected with core members to ensure that their needs continue to be met.
- Frequently what draws newcomers at this stage is the stature and activity of the core members. If they withdraw their time and attention, they reduce the appeal of the community overall.

Stage 3: Maturing

Maturing the Community



Build and Organize a Knowledge Repository

- As the community exchanges information, it often creates a body of knowledge through meeting notes or threaded discussions. Organizing the repository appropriately is a crucial objective.

Community Librarian

- Scans for relevant articles, books, cases, and other resources
- Reviews and selects material; writes summaries, reviews, or annotations
- Organizes materials into the community's taxonomy
- Provides on-call research services for practitioners about what resources may be most helpful
- Takes and editing notes at community meetings
- Connects community members with others experts in the field

Stage 4: Stewardship

Stage 4: Stewardship

Sustaining Momentum



Sustain momentum

Sustain momentum through the natural shifts in its practice, members, technology, and relationship to the organization



Maintain the relevance of the domain and to find a voice in the organization



Keep the tone and intellectual focus of the community lively and engaging



Keep the community on the cutting edge



Ownership and Openness

Develop own tools, methods and approaches

- Communities often develop a strong sense of ownership of their domain.
- They take pride in the ideas they have developed, the guidelines they have written, the direction in which they have pushed their domain, and the efficacy of their collective voice.

The community can feel not only a desire to be influential, but an obligation to influence the company's strategy.

Be open to new ideas and members

- To maintain the relevance of their domain, communities need an influx of new ideas, approaches, and relationships.
- It involves actively soliciting new ideas, new members, and new leadership to bring fresh vitality into the community.

Communities need to shift topics along with the market, invite new members, forge new alliances, and constantly redefine their boundaries.

Stage 4: Stewardship

Sustaining Momentum



Institutionalizing the Voice of the Community

- When communities reach their maturity, they often feel a need to become a recognized part of the organization and to have a voice in the organization's strategy and direction
- As keepers of the organization's core competencies, communities can be critical to the organization's long-term success
- Once they have attained a capacity for reliable stewardship, they are often seen as such
- Many organizations integrate these communities into their ongoing budgeting and planning activities, allocating resources such as staff time to community activities.

Stage 4: Stewardship

Sustaining Momentum



Rejuvenate the Community

- Because communities naturally go through cycles of high and low energy, most regularly need to rejuvenate their ideas, members, and practices.
- Introduce new topics, controversial speakers, or joint meetings with other communities or with teams that draw on the community's knowledge all help to spur interest during the low periods.
- Sessions with vendors and suppliers can make the community aware of new technology or new practices.
- Sometimes the rhythm itself becomes too predictable. Changing the community's rhythm can also rejuvenate the community.

Stage 4: Stewardship

Sustaining Momentum



Hold a Renewal Workshop

- A renewal workshop is like a launch meeting, but it is used to re-affirm the commitment to the community and to set new directions.
- The community needs to decide whether
 - To become a full part of the organization or remain somewhat underground
 - To remain informal or become more systematic in their approach to their domain
 - To keep their current boundaries or shift to include a dramatically new group of people
 - Sometimes they must decide whether to continue at all.

Stage 4: Stewardship

Sustaining Momentum



Actively Recruit New People to the Core Group

- Core group members also experience turnover.
- Besides watching for people who are obvious potential core group members, such as thought leaders and expert practitioners, look for people who are midcareer, or involved in emerging topic areas, who would appreciate an opportunity to take a more active role in the development of their discipline.

Stage 4: Stewardship

Sustaining Momentum



Develop New Leadership

- Coordinators should regularly look for successors.
- When a community's energy wanes significantly, replacing the leadership can give it a new lease on life.
- Rather than develop new leaders, some communities regularly rotate leadership to distribute the "burden" of coordination among core members.

Stage 4: Stewardship

Sustaining Momentum



Mentor New Members

- As communities mature, they often realize the importance of systematically mentoring new members.
- To spread this more equitably among senior community members, the community took responsibility for mentoring, identified topic areas in which other community members could serve as mentors, and assigned newer members.
- Establishing a mentorship program helps them keep the focus of community events on cutting-edge issues by providing an outlet for newcomers' questions.

Stage 4: Stewardship

Sustaining Momentum



Seek Relationships and Benchmarks Outside the Organization

- Input from outside the organization is one of the most effective ways to refresh a community's focus.
- This could involve benchmarking a current practice or using ideas from other companies, associations, and universities to build new knowledge and approaches.
- Active, mature communities often form ongoing relationships with other companies to compare and refine their practices or develop new ones.
 - These associations are powerful development mechanisms because different organizations bring different perspectives, and often new ideas, to the practice.
- Benchmarking other world-class practices helps keep an established community from getting complacent about its own tools and approaches.

Stage 5: Transformation

Stage 5: Transformation



Deciding whether the community is truly dying or is simply in need of rejuvenation is always a judgment call.

Officially closing a community gives its members an opportunity to decide what parts of the community to let go of and how to let other parts live on.

Even the healthiest communities come to a natural end

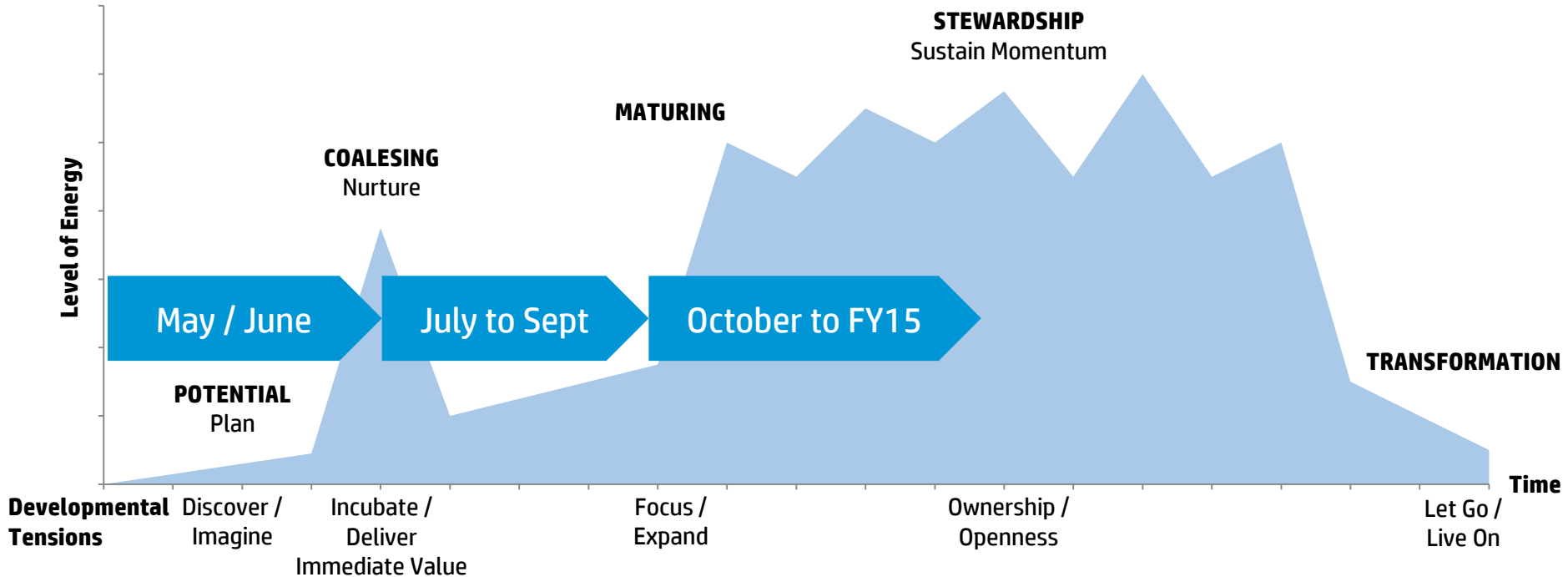
- Changing markets, organizational structures, and technology can render the community's domain irrelevant.
- The issues that spawned the community may get resolved.
- The community's practices can become so rote and commonplace that they no longer require a distinct community.
- Members may develop such different interests over time that there is no longer enough commonality to hold the community together.

Communities also die before their time

- Senior managers fail to acknowledge their importance
- Factions within the community make participating more trouble than it is worth
- Coordinators and key members attend to other priorities

Stages of Community Development

Our timings



Distributed Communities

The Challenge of Distributed Communities



Spend more time up front creating agreement, reconciling the priorities and needs of local groups, and deal explicitly with competing pressures.



Be more intentional about connecting people, finding opportunities to interact beyond local circles, and building interpersonal relationships. Address issues of norms and openness more explicitly; they cannot assume that norms are already shared



Give members a forum in which to solve problems together, and in the process find ways to learn from each other's perspectives and local conditions

Distance: Connections and Visibility

Distributed communities are generally less "present" to their members.

- Members are not visible unless they make a contribution or ask for help.
- Members cannot see how many other people are reading—and benefiting.
- No easy opportunities for informal networking.

Affiliation: Priorities and Intellectual Property

- Each has its own goals and priorities, which sometimes conflict.
- Should all ideas and material developed in the community belong to all members?
- Does a convening group hold greater property rights?
- Are individual units free to do whatever they will with ideas and material they develop with the community's input?

Size: Knowing People

It is not possible to know that many people personally, even in a face-to-face meeting, let alone with the mediation of technology

Culture: Communication and Values

- People from different cultural backgrounds can have very different ways of relating to one another and to the community.
- People's willingness to ask questions that reveal their "ignorance," disagree with others in public, contradict known experts, discuss their problems, follow others in the thread of conversation—all these behaviors vary greatly across cultures.

Designing Distributed Communities



Achieve stakeholder alignment



Create a structure that promotes both local variations and global connections



Build a rhythm strong enough to maintain community visibility



Develop the private space of the community more systematically

- Overcoming differences in geography, affiliation, and culture generally requires more time and effort to define the domain and develop commitment from business unit managers.
- Engaging all players is key to getting a good start for any community.
- Have a "hungry" business unit act as host. It is useful to have a business unit act as a host for a global community. Hosting builds commitment and sets an example.
- Increasing connections between business units and demonstrating the value of sharing knowledge, the communities themselves became an incentive to further minimize those obstacles.

Designing Distributed Communities



Achieve stakeholder alignment



Create a structure that promotes both local variations and global connections



Build a rhythm strong enough to maintain community visibility



Develop the private space of the community more systematically

- Create a design that allows for variations in culture, language, organization, and work without sacrificing the development of trust and connection between global community members.
- Avoid treating a global community as a massive monolith. Build it out of local subcommunities or "cells"—a fractal structure.
 - Create a "hub-and-spoke" network of community coordinators.
 - Topic-focused cells
 - Combine Diversity and Connection—allow the local communities substantial freedom
 - Connect People
 - Avoid Hierarchy

Designing Distributed Communities



Achieve stakeholder alignment



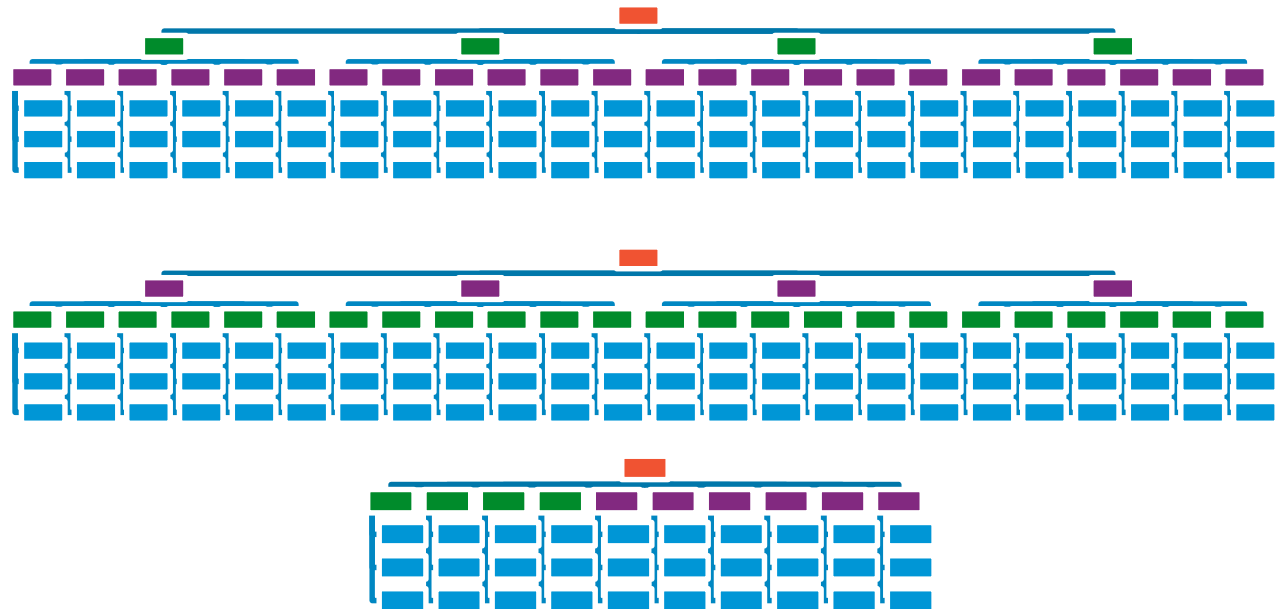
Create a structure that promotes both local variations and global connections



Build a rhythm strong enough to maintain community visibility



Develop the private space of the community more systematically



Community Lead / Coordinator Focus Area Lead / Coordinator Country Lead / Coordinator Member

Designing Distributed Communities



Achieve stakeholder alignment



Create a structure that promotes both local variations and global connections



Build a rhythm strong enough to maintain community visibility



Develop the private space of the community more systematically

- Regular events, such as teleconferences or meetings of local cells, regularly remind people of the community's presence.
- Asynchronous tools, such as threaded discussions, enable community members to participate in discussions in their own time.
- Special events, like global conferences, can give members a sense of connection in a way that threaded discussions cannot.
- Arrange teleconferences
- Organize face-to-face meetings
- Facilitate threaded discussions. You don't want days to pass between a request for help and responses.
- Link modes of interaction
- Make judicious use of broadcast technology—newsfeed, subscriptions, newsletters.

Designing Distributed Communities



Achieve stakeholder alignment



Create a structure that promotes both local variations and global connections



Build a rhythm strong enough to maintain community visibility



Develop the private space of the community more systematically

- Active networking by community coordinators increases the exposure of community members to each other.
- Coordinators bridge the boundaries between local communities. By connecting people, they not only build an information network, they also create a web of trust.
- Personalize membership—encourage members to post photos and personal details on their Profile Pages
- Small group projects and meetings
- Organized or impromptu site visits
- Be opportunistic about chances to interact (e.g. leverage business trips to connect people)

Measuring Value Creation

Measuring Value Creation

- Indicators such as patents, graduate degrees, training programs, and “hits” have all been used as elements of a measurement approach. But to really understand the value of knowledge, you cannot merely count “things.”
- Static measures—such as participation rates, documents produced, or cycle times—only become useful in the context of stories that explain the causal links between them.
- Our method relies on two complementary principles: demonstrate causality through **stories** and ensure **systematicity** through rigorous documentation.

Measuring Value Creation

Stories

- Stories are the best way to traverse the knowledge system in a way that explains the linkages between community activities, knowledge resources, and performance outcomes.
- Only a story can describe these complex causal relations while incorporating implicit contextual factors that may be crucial to appreciate but hard to codify or generalize.
- Such stories depend on practitioners' involvement, because only practitioners can tell how the knowledge was put into action. The best way to assess the value of a community of practice, therefore, is by collecting stories.

Measuring Value Creation

Stories

- The key elements of a good story describe how knowledge resources are produced and applied



The initial knowledge-development activity to innovate, learn a skill, or solve a problem

What did the community do to convert a brainstorm or an isolated technique into a documented approach or proven standard?



The knowledge resource generated by this activity—for example, a new insight, method, or relationship

How were these resources applied through business processes to get results?



How this resource was applied to create value

- To make the story more complete as a measure of value, describe the initial problem and to explain what would have happened without the community.

Measuring Value Creation

Systematicity

- A systematic effort captures the diversity and range of community activities.
- Whenever possible, incorporates quantitative indicators from surveys and reports to flesh out the story and corroborate it with established measures.



Bottom-up systematicity

Start at the community level by identifying all activities.

Discover the full value of community activities by following them rigorously through the knowledge system processes to understand their effect.

The risk is that it will not address important business outcomes because extant communities have not decided to focus on them.



Top-down systematicity

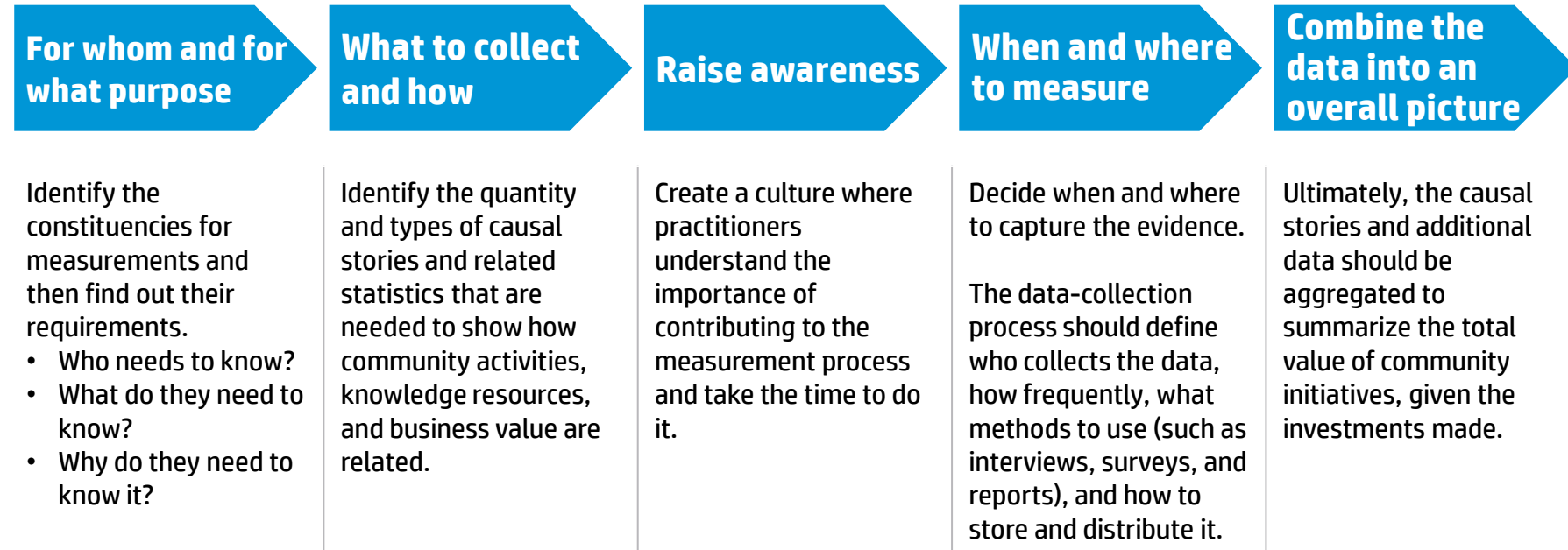
Begin at the business-strategy or business-process level.

Identify what knowledge the business needs in order to compete and then asks what communities are doing to help the firm build, share, and apply this knowledge.

The risk of this method is that the measures will be used as drivers of community activities, even if members are not convinced of their intrinsic interest or value.

Measuring Value Creation

Steps in a Measurement Process



Measuring Value Creation

Sample Measures

	Measures	Goals
Community Activities	Number of users connected	100% of population
	Percentage of unique visitors	20% of population
	Percentage of users posting weekly	10% of population
	Number of community-wide activities per quarter	2 per quarter
	Number of participants	20% of population
	Participant feedback	4.5/5
Knowledge Assets	Number of assets submitted by country	Tracking only, no target
	Number of days to validate solutions	80% validated in 21 days
Performance Outcomes	Number of customer problems resolved	300,000
	Percentage of reduction in service hours	5%
	Total dollars saved in cost of service and support	\$11.2 million