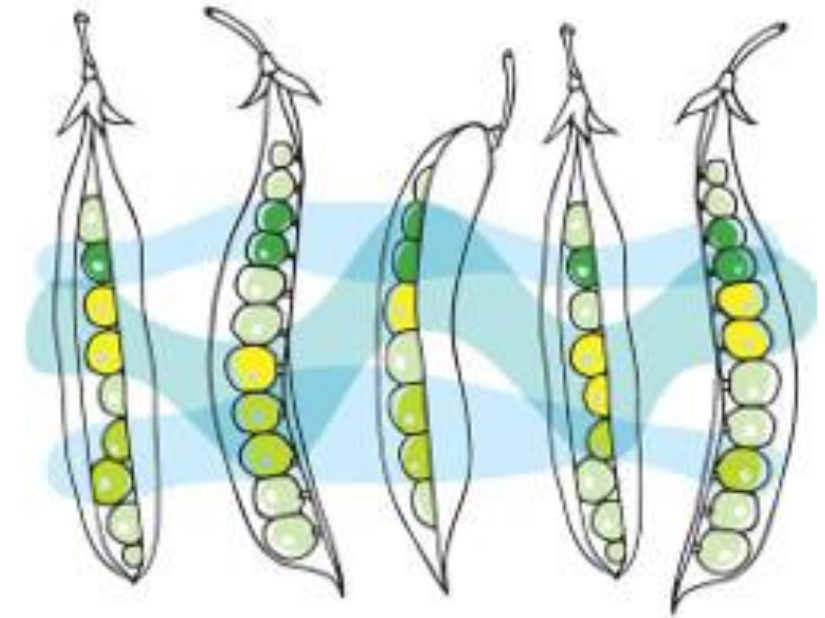
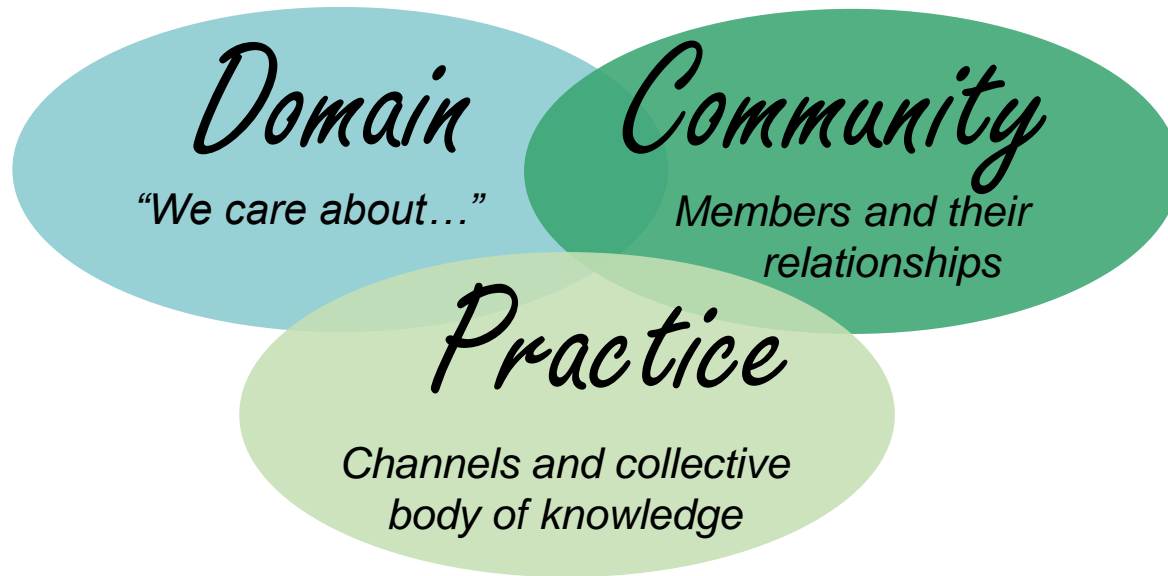




# Orchestrating self-managing product teams through self-managing CoPs

by Darja Smite

# What are Communities of Practice?



Groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. “Knowledge systems” aiming at improving practice building on the collective experience of members

/Etienne Wenger

**Did anyone **succeed** with CoP implementation?**

**Did anyone **fail** with CoP implementation?**

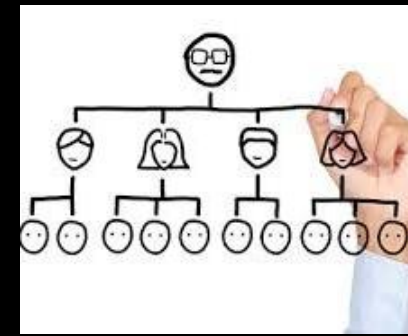
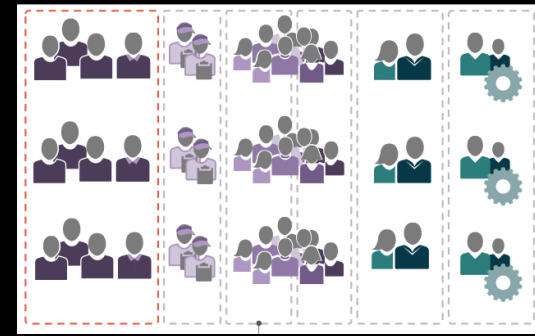
# Quite a typical scenario

MANAGERS DECIDES TO START  
AN AGILE TRANSFORMATION

A SAFe<sup>®</sup> EXPERT IS INVITED  
AND ASKED FOR A PLAN

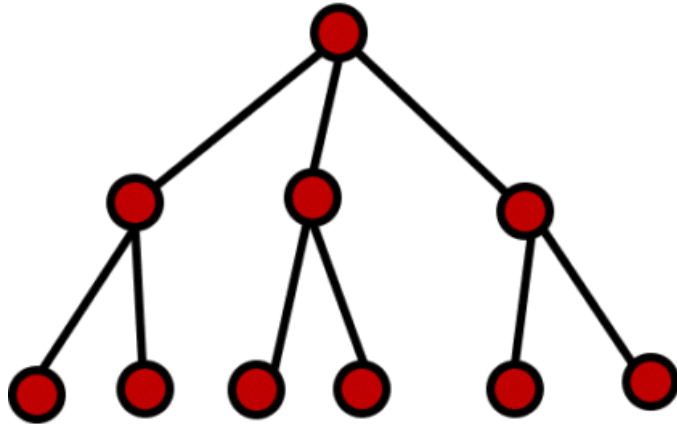
ONE OF THE PLAN  
STEPS IS CoPs

MANAGER  
"CREATES" CoPs



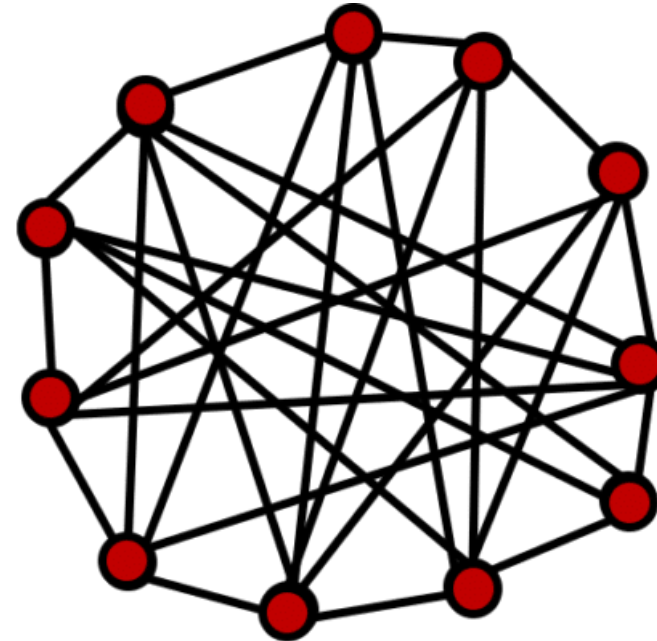
# CoPs are parallel org structure, acts like a team

## Formal organization



“Top-down”

## Informal organization



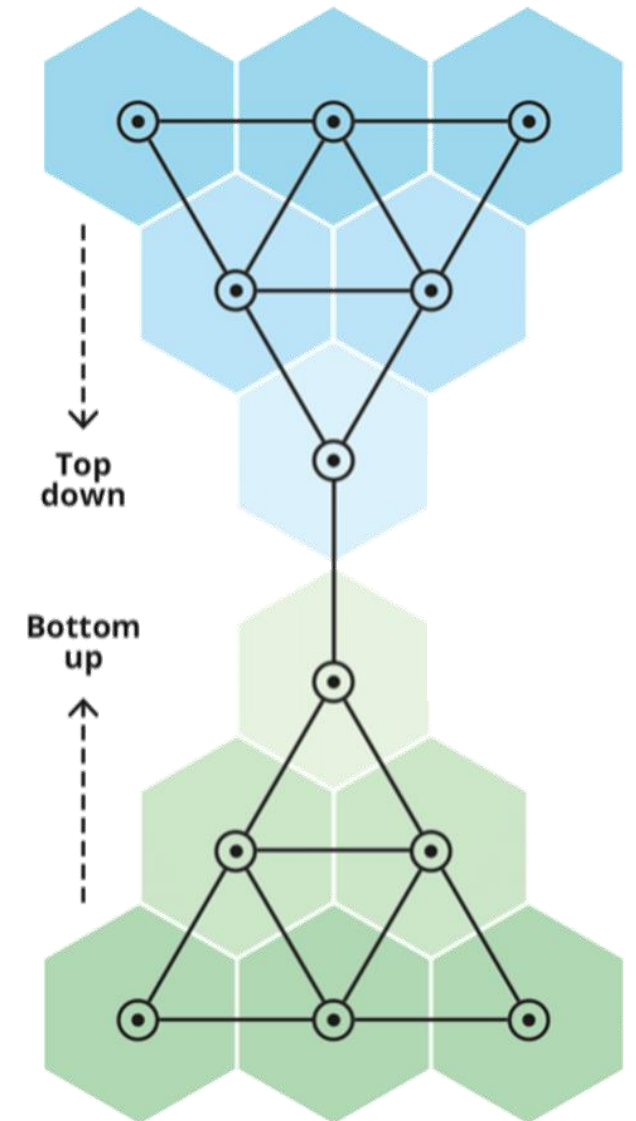
“Bottom-up”

# How to ensure that CoPs are truly self-managing?



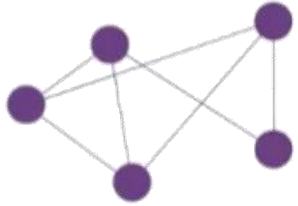
# Alternative way to implement CoPs

- ❑ Implement CoPs to supplement the regular organization by performing functions that it does not perform or is ill-suited to perform well
- ❑ Combine the top-down trigger with the bottom-up interest. Management support is important
- ❑ When setting up CoPs, ensure:
  - ❑ Clear purpose
  - ❑ Expected value and results
  - ❑ Sufficient level of granted authority





# Ideas for introducing CoPs



## Arenas for networking

foster professional connections, help to share knowledge and establish strategic alliances



## Arenas for growth

help to learn new skills, and get better at what we do, together



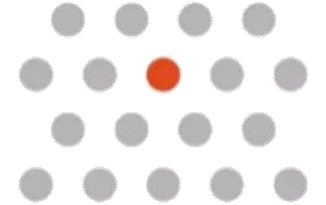
## Arenas for decision-making

help with adjusting and scaling ways of working and sharing common approaches that suit the company



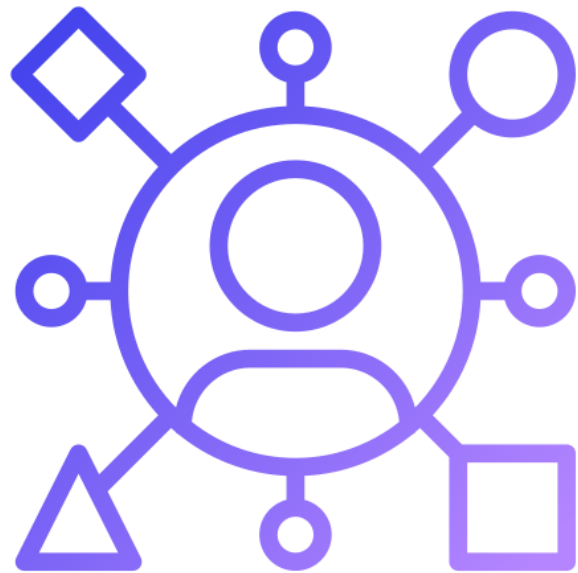
## Arenas for collaboration

facilitate frequent interactions and creation of better practices for everyone in the company and the customers



## Arenas of support

give confidence, motivation, sense of belonging and fun for being with colleagues



## The four community archetypes

# Purposes for CoPs



**Raise the level of knowledge and skills in the product development organization**



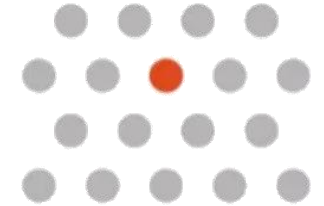
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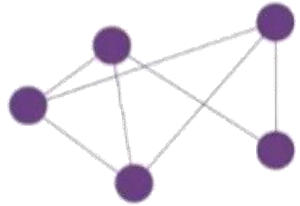


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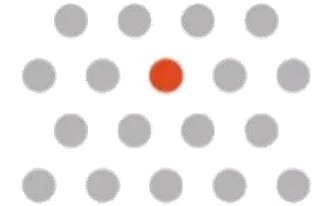
**Aligning architectural decisions across the product organization**

**Standardizing the user-experience in the whole product**



## Arenas for collaboration

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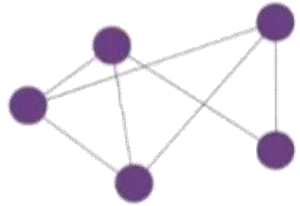


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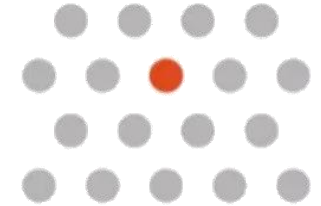


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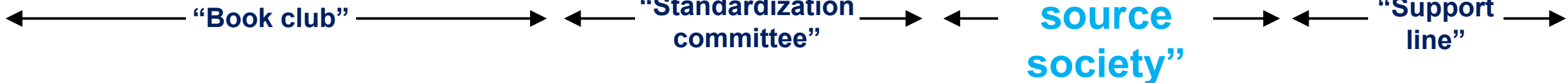


**Optimizing development efforts and facilitating reuse of components**

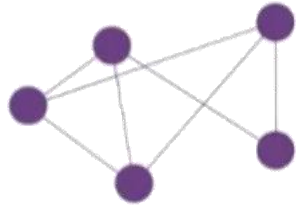


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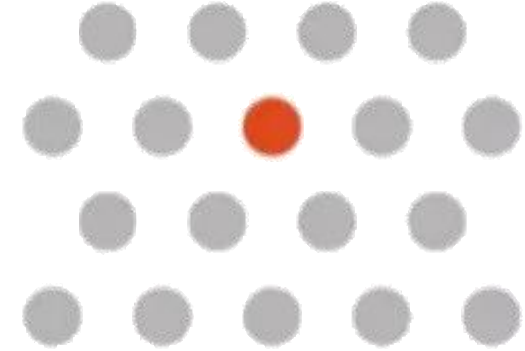
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**Providing expert support for joint problem resolution and unblocking junior developers who are stuck**

← “Book club” →

← “Standardization committee” →

← “Open-source society” →

← “Support line” →

# Success factors for implementing CoPs

1

Concerns a practice

Mission and scope

Clear purpose and direction

Interesting topic with concrete benefits for participants

Decision-making authority

2

Demonstrates signs of mutual engagement

Leadership

Passionate leader with dedicated time for community work

3

Interacts regularly

Activities and tools

Regular interaction, activities

Engaging agenda

Pre-booked or fixed schedule for meetings/activities

Supporting tools to create transparency

4

Improves practice

Outcomes

Creates value for the company

Recognized by the management



# Thank you for your attention!

## P.S. Why should you trust what I just said?



Experience from working with

- Company-wide communities of practice connected to key practices
- Engineering communities of practice
- CoPs connected to particular products

