Growing, leading and measuring online Communities of Practice

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Hazel Owen is an education consultant with an interest in all aspects of ICT Enhanced Learning and Teaching, especially when underpinned by social learning and communities of practice. In addition, Hazel is keen to develop creative ways of scaffolding and empowering learners, and to foster learner-led, culturally responsive, contextualised approaches.

Intended audience and degree of expertise/past experience required

This workshop is suitable for leaders of learning who are considering establishing online learning communities in their organisations. Some experience with social networking would be an advantage but not necessary.

Statement of objectives for the workshop

By the end of the workshop the participants will:

Knowledge: Understand the key concepts, principles and terminology of leading online learning communities.
Skills: Identified the key skills of facilitating and leading an online community of practice.
Values: Appreciate the value of learning and sharing together to enhance learning opportunities and enhanced performance in the workplace.
People: Have strategies to connect, and collaborate with others to build and lead an online community
Learn: Locate, evaluate and share resources for building online learning communities.
Integrate: Integrate an online learning community into their existing practice and a learning leader.

Detailed description

The workshop participants in groups will plan, create and develop an online community of learners. The facilitators will share strategies and approaches they have learned from the experience of establishing and facilitating two growing, vibrant online communities of practice that are specifically focussed on professional development within education contexts. There will also be guidelines on how to grow an online community of practice from scratch, as well as ideas that will help manage expectations, and manage risks.

The participants, during this workshop will 'learn by doing' as they become part of a live community. The aim is to create a live learning community that supports the facilitators and developers of other online communities as workshop participants establish them.