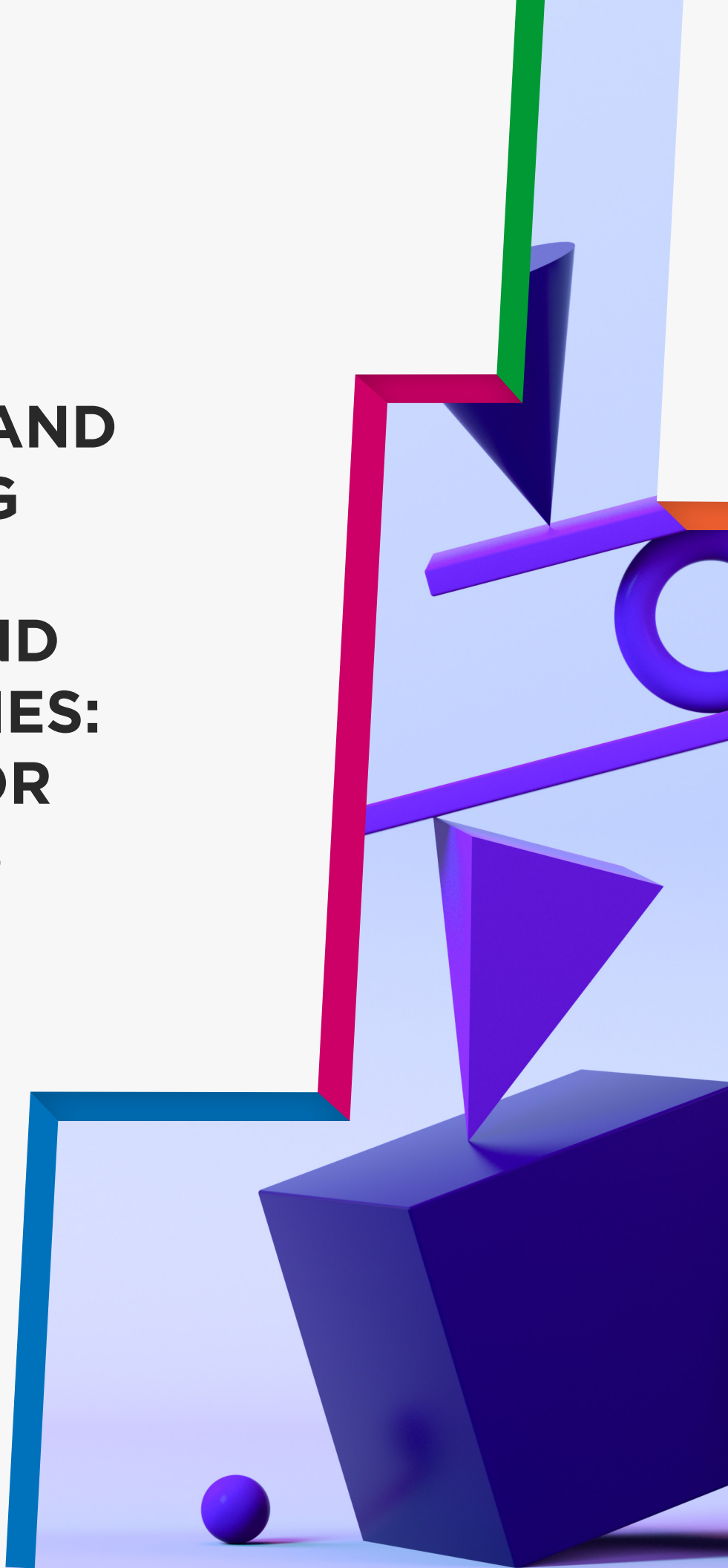
CREATING AND SUSTAINING LEARNING GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES: A GUIDE FOR BEGINNERS

Jane Bozarth, PhD



THE LEARNING GUILD RESEARCH

www.learningguild.com

The Learning Guild
120 Stony Point Rd., Suite 210
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
+1.707.566.8990

Written by: Jane Bozarth, PhD
Publications Editor: Susan Jacobs
Publication Design: Tiffany Le Brun

Disclaimer

The ratings, information, and opinions set forth on the Guild Research section of The Learning Guild website, and in the Guild Research charts and graphs found in this report, are those of the members of The Learning Guild. The Learning Guild, Focuszone Media, Inc., and its officers, employees, directors, and shareholders have no liability for any loss, damage, action, causes of action, expense, cost, or liability including attorney fees, arising out of any statements, ratings, information, opinions, or claims set forth in the Guild Research section. See the "**Website Content**" section of the Privacy, Membership, and Terms of Use Agreement.

LICENSE AGREEMENT FOR GUILD RESEARCH

The Learning Guild (the "Guild") provides charts, graphs, studies, reports, and other research materials in the field of eLearning on its website and in printed form (the "Materials") for use by persons engaged in advancing research and study in eLearning. Except as provided herein, none of the Materials may be duplicated, copied, re-published, or reused without written permission from the Guild. The Materials reflect the research and opinion of the Guild's members, as well as the opinions of certain subject matter experts contracted by the Guild. The Guild grants a limited, non-exclusive, non-transferable license to each user permitted under the particular license category he/they have purchased to use the Materials in accordance with the following terms and conditions:

1. Except as otherwise restricted in this License Agreement, Licensee may read, download, and print the Materials for Licensee's personal use for purposes of research, evaluation, development, and testing in order to advance knowledge in the field of eLearning.

2. Licensee may cite, reproduce, or copy up to four statistics, tables, graphs, or charts in any 12-month period, but may not reproduce images that show product comparisons without written permission from the Guild. Additional citations, reproductions, or copies may be made only with written permission from the Guild.

3. The Guild must be cited as the source of any original statistics, tables, graphs, charts, or any other Materials copied or reproduced by Licensee. The citation to the Guild as the source must be in eight-point font or larger, and be placed immediately following the portion of the Materials used by Licensee.

4. Licensee may not use or distribute the materials for commercial purposes, directly or indirectly. Commercial use or distribution of the Materials is permitted only pursuant to a separate reprint/redistribution commercial license agreement between Licensee and the Guild. The Guild retains all commercial rights in the Materials.

5. This License Agreement grants to Licensee no right, title, or interest in or to the Guild's copyrights or other intellectual property in the Materials. Other than the specific rights granted by this License Agree¬ment, the Guild retains all right, title, and interest in and to the Materials.

6. The Guild makes no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, with regard to the Materials. The Guild makes no express or implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose with regard to the Materials, and no warranty that the use of the Materials will not infringe any patent, copyright, trademark, or other intellectual or proprietary rights.

7. Licensee agrees to use the materials in compliance with all applicable laws.

8. In any use of the Materials by Licensee, Licensee may not, in any way, indicate or imply that the Guild has endorsed Licensee or its products.

9. Neither the Guild, nor its employees, agents, or representatives, will be liable or responsible to Licensee in any manner whatsoever for damages of any nature, incidental, consequential, or punitive, arising from the termination of this License Agreement or the use of the Materials by Licensee.

10. The provisions of the Privacy, Membership, and Terms of Use Agreement between Licensee and the Guild, including specifically but without limitation the Guild Research section of such agreement, are incorporated in this License Agreement by reference, and are a part of this License Agreement.

11. This License Agreement is to be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the state of California. The parties consent to the exclusive jurisdiction of the state and federal courts located in Sonoma County, California.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHY THIS PAPER?

A quick LinkedIn search for "instructional design" groups showed 428 results.

- Several groups have upwards of 30,000 members
- Some groups focus on "instructional design" with no other parameters or foci
- Some have several dozen posts a day; I belong to one that has 15,000 members but no new posts in seven months
- Some focus on software or another design/development product, some on selling or supporting an ID academy or book
- Some are sorted by geography, a specific organization, a professional association, or work unit; some focus on job searches
- Some seem redundant or appear to be rivals: freelancers, independent, contractors

(**Note:** I am in 18 groups. I participate in two. One of the 18 groups is my own. I started it years ago after a book launch and forgot about it.)

Group membership satisfies social and psychological needs for connection and belonging. (McMillan & Chavis 1986, Wenger 1998, Williams 2001.) We want to meet and interact with others who have similar interests, who have connections, news, or information that we desire or value, perhaps with the added benefit of being people with

whom we enjoy interacting. We may be looking to work with others to solve a problem we can't solve alone. We may explicitly join groups out of an interest in learning or developing our practice. And group membership ties to and helps inform our identity in regard to others, providing a common sense of self (Wenger 1998, Reicher 1982).

The pandemic shone a light on our social needs: We need social connection. We sorely missed face-to-face gatherings and found ways to satisfy the craving for human connection—from virtual baby showers and ukulele jams to remote family movie nights. We want spaces to connect, where we feel we belong. The need to organize ourselves into groupings according to interests, needs, or genetic connections is universal: We are social creatures (Beer, 2021; McMillan & Chavis 1986; Wenger et al., 2002).

This paper offers an overview of groups, networks, communities, and communities of practice, with food for thought about goals and some tips for nurturing and sustaining them.

As the world is, we hope, finally "opening up" and live meetings again become possible, if not again the norm, it seems a good time to take a look at our need to gather. This paper offers an overview of groups, networks, communities, and communities of practice, with food for thought about goals and some tips for nurturing and sustaining them. While much is aimed at those who consider themselves group moderators or community managers, the content is meant to be informative for participants and members as well. This paper is meant for those starting and leading some collection of humans and the humans who participate, and is meant to help them define their objectives, choose tools, and nurture and sustain their groups.

WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO?

Scanning through the group offerings on most social sites gives the impression that many were driven by someone saying, "Hey, let's start a group!"

If you are thinking of starting, or currently working to retool groups you're a part of, what do you want to do?

- Do you want a group with a similar broad interest like "instructional design", or something more focused like "evidence-based practices for instructional design" or more specific, like "evidence-based practices for the virtual classroom"?

Do you want a group with a similar broad interest like "instructional design", or something more focused like "evidence-based practices for instructional design" or more specific, like "evidence-based practices for the virtual classroom"?

- Are you marketing something (even implicitly)? Do you want a group to provide conversation for people who use your product, bought your book, or attended your certificate program? Do you want to support those customers or bring in new ones? Or both?

- Are you interested in conversation—people building relationships and engaging with each other? Or something more like a call-and-response setup where people may comment on individual items but otherwise not engage much? Or in posting content and getting "likes"? Do you primarily want a platform for distributing information? Or are you hoping to support others as they build skills?

- Who do you want in the group? Anyone involved in ID or only those specializing in creating eLearning courses? People involved in corporate/workplace organizations, education, or both? Do you want experienced practitioners, novices, or both? What about jobseekers or vendors?

- Where do your members live? If your group is virtual, will membership be limited to your city, North America, elsewhere? This can matter in discussing cultural norms and engaging with people who may not be fluent in English.

- What kind of content and conversation do you want? Sharing of expertise? Commiseration? Quick answers to real-world problems from experienced practitioners? To sell more books or certifications? To encourage adoption of products or ideas? All of the above?

Finally: Take a look and see what's already out there. How is your group different from others? What can you do to set it apart?

> *"An interesting pandemic-era phenomenon in many ID groups in which I'm a member is the shift of focus from general conversation among practitioners to a flood of input from educators seeking to leave teaching… Leaders deciding whether to let them in, whether to let the focus shift. Desire to gain members means moving from a closed to open forum. I watched several ID-focused groups, formerly an avenue for some discussion among practitioners, turn to nearly all conversation from teachers joining to ask how to become IDs. The admins had to decide what to do with this."*
>
> *—Jane Bozarth*

GROUPS, COMMUNITIES, AND COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (COPS)

The word "community" is a warm, appealing word, but much like "team" can be overused. All communities are groups but not all groups are communities. While it may seem just a matter of semantics there are some distinctions that can help make the goals and strategies clearer for both leaders and members.

Ospina 2017, citing Reicher 1982, defines a **group** as "a collection of individuals who consider themselves to be a group". He further says a group is "defined by the sense of belonging from its members. In this sense, groups are psychologically opted-in by individuals who at a given point take on a set of shared beliefs and behaviors." Focus may be on conversation, sharing information, enjoying each other's company, and debate. In its simplest form, within the group there is no interdependence or accountability.

A **community** is a group that builds ties, deeper connections with one another, and commitment to the community. "[The] sense of community is a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (McMillan, 1976). Communities imply members have a shared sense of responsibility and accountability to the community and to each other.

WHAT IS A NETWORK?

A **network** is a web of interconnected personal relationships that may have overlapping members but (as noted by Ospina 2017) no boundaries. Per Krainer 2003, networks tend to be loose and informal; their primary purpose is to collect and pass along information, with relationships "always shifting and changing as people have the need to connect" (Krainer, p.95).

The idea of the **Community of Practice (CoP)** is a popular one, and it describes a positive, attractive concept. Per Etienne Wenger, the preeminent researcher on CoPs, members share a passion for what they do and work together to get better at it, and do this by interacting regularly. The focus is on community and learning. Per Krainer (2003, p. 96): A "community of practice" is more about autonomous and joint learning by its members than about the teaching of others. Per Gilley & Kerno 2010, "The purpose is to create shared learning; the critical ingredients for an effective CoP include knowledge exchange and growth along with fulfillment of individual curiosity (Nickols, 2007; Wenger et al., 2002), not work products, measurable and quantifiable results, or external management of membership" (Stamps, 1997). Individuals who participate choose to do so, and skill levels ranging from novice to expert are frequently encountered.

A "community of practice" is more about autonomous and joint learning by its members than about the teaching of others.

It is common in organizations to see "bootlegged" CoPs arise– people with similar functions seek each other out and informally work together, under the radar, to get better at what they do. In her research on CoPs, Pastoors 2007 found that motivation to participate in bootlegged CoPs was high, that the bootlegged CoPs allowed for sharing of tacit knowledge and provided a welcome arena for those who shared common interests and "passions" (p. 29), and that those involved in bootlegged CoPs were willing to expend time and energy in its activities.

The institutionalized [formally organized, with assigned participation] CoP was, by contrast, viewed as the organization's means of imposing additional workload and expecting work outside of regular working hours. Strict communication plans and procedures were viewed as inhibiting effective activity. By their own report, members felt no ownership of the institutionalized CoP. Thompson's (2005) study, among others—peer-reviewed, sound inquiries—proves that too much oversight and too many attempts to control a community of practice will destroy it.

A distinguishing feature of CoPs is the presence of a **joint enterprise,** with members working toward a common goal. This differs from a group of, say, instructional designers occasionally talking, sharing a new bit of research, commiserating about a common problem, or answering a question.

Ultimately, in considering differences: Is the group focused on common definition and interests, or working together toward common goal? (Carter, 2009, p.4).

HOW ABOUT LARGE SOCIAL SITES?

In regard to large social sites, it's very easy to create huge groups of people who may not even care about the group, not be aware that they're in them (until they get a notification or see a post), or who join just to see what the fuss is about. This is completely opposite from the very definition of a community.

PARTICIPATION AND MEMBERSHIP

What is "participation"? Who is a "member"?

Most of us belong to multiple groups in which we participate to different degrees. We may or may not consider ourselves "members" depending on our own level of interest, the extent to which we identify with others as sharing in membership, whether and how extensively membership ties to identity, and commitment to participating.

What constitutes "participation" in groups depends on how the leaders and members define it. Is "participation" occasionally posting content, or also engaging with the comments that others offer on it? Is it frequently joining in conversation or occasionally offering a "like" or a vote on a poll? Is it daily checking in and chatting? This matters as you consider how to engage members and nurture and sustain the group/community.

When considering the extent to which members are actively participating, an idea from the literature worth mentioning is the concept of legitimate peripheral participation. Lave and Wenger's (1991) focus built on Lave's earlier work on apprenticeship and was grounded in the concept of learning as a result of what they called "*legitimate peripheral participation*": As a newcomer learns from others, he or she gradually achieves the competence necessary to participate as a full member of the community. Note that is not

POPULARITY OF ONLINE COMMUNITIES

"More than 1.8 billion Facebook users engage with online communities monthly: according to Facebook data in 2020. It's almost a quarter of the whole population of the planet Earth."
https://peerboard.com/resources/online-community-statistics

just learning *from* talk about work but learning how *to* talk that supports becoming a full member in the CoP. Some regard lurking—watching a group but not participating—as legitimate participation, with the assumption that the person will eventually begin to contribute. But the very idea that some peripheral participation is regarded as "legitimate" suggests that some is not. While some view lurking as a positive or neutral term, it can carry a negative connotation: For instance, the member who never participates but continually reports others for violating a guideline, the person only interested in gathering contact information, or the person who takes information to share elsewhere without participating in the group.

Groups are living things, and Wenger's 1998 description of five "trajectories of membership" in regard to CoPs can be helpful in thinking about ways membership changes and participation may wax and wane.

Groups are living things. Membership changes and participation may wax and wane.

1. Peripheral: Those working parallel to the community but distant to the center. Peripheral involvement does not lead to full participation.

2. Insider: Those who are parallel and close to the center, and continue to evolve their practice.

3. Inbound: Moving towards the center, becoming full participants.

4. Outbound: Leaving the center, by choice or by maturation.

5. Boundary: Perpendicular, spanning boundaries, linking other communities.

Take a good look at groups to which you belong. Why do you participate? What pulls you in? What has made you lose interest? What kinds of connections have you formed there?

REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

It's not unusual to see an "if I build it, they will come" belief kick in when imagining a new group or community. But it takes time and nurturing. Overseeing a robust community of content, engaged participants, and user-generated content like, for instance, **Articulate's E-Learning Heroes**, requires a great deal of time, support, and management, with people in full-time job roles for that. It's likely much more than most of us are willing to take on when we think of starting a group.

Some guidelines for setting your own expectations:

- **Don't expect 100% participation.** The "1% rule" is a general guideline, not carved in stone, but those who have participated in many online groups will likely find it familiar: As a rule of thumb when considering internet communities, it's not unusual to see that for every 100 participants, 90 are mostly inactive, nine provide most of the engagement and interaction, and one provides most of the content. It's not hard and fast—the right topic might generate much more participation, for instance—but understanding this can help to set expectations. As discussed above with CoPs, the humans in a group are not necessarily fixed—people come and go. Some of the 9% may lose interest, some of the 99% may move from the periphery to more participation. But it's rare that you'll see full participation from every member, even in small groups.

- **Don't expect perpetual harmony.** Groups and communities have dark sides: There are power struggles, hidden agendas, and personal differences. Dynamics at play can affect who is included or excluded, and members can—intentionally or not—be marginalized. Understanding that where there are humans there will be conflict can be helpful in setting realistic expectations.

- **Plan for evolution.** Groups and communities are organic, breathing things. People will come and go, engage and retreat, move in and out. Jobs and interests and life situations change. Don't expect membership to remain stable forever.

NURTURING AND SUSTAINING GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES

What causes dropout?

We've probably all seen, and likely been part of, the launch of a new group that starts with a bang but drops off quickly. As discussed above, groups and communities meet psychological and social needs: In looking at your group, are those being met? Do people engage with the content, provide answers or ask questions, perhaps start new conversations? Why not? How can group leaders better help meet those needs?

We've probably all seen, and likely been part of, the launch of a new group that starts with a bang but drops off quickly.

People lose interest and drop out of groups, or out of sight of groups, for a number of reasons. Interests and job or life circumstances change. Another group proves more valuable to them personally. Possibly they got the answers or help they needed. Or they may have found that the group just takes too much time, or they find discussion is no longer productive.

There can be trust issues: Members don't feel safe participating in discussions, worrying that they will be ignored, ridiculed, or met with an argument. Trolling and inappropriate advertising happen. In borrowing from the gardening metaphor popular in conversation about groups, sometimes a moderator might need to do a bit of weeding. Determining practices for this in advance can help keep awkward situations manageable. Will you give a warning before removing members? Will you explain why a bit of content was deleted?

Where the topic is work-related, even if not connected to a particular organization, feeling that participation is compulsory has a tendency to dampen enthusiasm, particularly with communities and CoPs. As previously noted, Pastoors' 2007 study offers

evidence that forcing workers to participate in CoPs tends to have a negative effect on the employees (who see mandated CoP participation not as a growth opportunity but just as more work).

Recruit helpers, ambassadors, others. It seems many group leaders feel the role of leadership is all on them. Invite others to elaborate on a comment or idea. Ask a few people to post new content, even an article.

SOME IDEAS FOR NURTURING & SUSTAINING A COMMUNITY

- Communities can become too insular, end up perpetuating bad practice, and fall into groupthink. Work to include diverse voices and freshen the member pool from time to time.

- Choose tools carefully. Many people have come to dislike Facebook. Some hate Slack. Do you need a space with side areas for "benches"? Do you want a robust search function? If you use the social tools in your LMS, it will likely be hard to bring in outside members or even guests.

- Ask for help: We need resources for... Who knows about...? Has anyone ever used ....? Who understands how to interpret data?

- Acknowledge expertise. How did you_____? Can you show us how?

- Offer events: A book chat, a Zoom gathering, a halfway-through-the-year party. Have a schedule for choosing and discussing one research article.

- Invite people to share their stories. "Lucy, you had such a long career in law enforcement. What was that like for a woman 30 years ago? How did you break through the glass ceilings you encountered?"

Build Benches

If you are working to move from group to community, design activities that allow participants at all levels to feel like full members. Rather than force participation, successful communities "build benches" for those on the sidelines. They make opportunities for semiprivate interaction, whether through private discussion rooms on the community's website, at a community event, or in a one-on-one conversation.

They invite others to help in some way: “Do you want to work with me on choosing a book, researching degree programs for IDs, finding a TED talk that might be of interest, help plan questions for the book chat?”

Rather than force participation, successful communities "build benches" for those on the sidelines.

The idea of building benches illustrates the importance of choosing tools. As Cohen 2018 notes, many popular channels do not offer good functionality for this. There is a main group feed and usually options for side conversations via private messaging, which can require connecting with others more closely than members may desire.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

Look inward: Why do YOU participate in groups–or not?
Are you engaged in your own community HOA?
Book clubs? Why or why not? What draws you in?
What do you find distasteful or uninteresting?

MANANGING GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES

It's a fact that the moderator will likely be called upon to make a decision, confront a challenging member, mediate a disagreement, or make decisions about things like closing discussions or removing problematic content. It's the role of the moderator(s) to nurture, provide safety, draw lines, and express rules of engagement (Coulson & Shaw 2013).

Who is in/out? It is common in L&D related groups to see some tension between those working in education and those working in corporate/workplace settings. Will your group be inclusive for both, or only one? Your decision will affect not only the eventual group size but also content.

Will you allow anonymity? What will you do about comments on subjects that can become challenging, like politics or religion? Can vendors tout their services or products? Starting with ideas for ground rules can help forestall challenges later.

Will you allow anonymity? What will you do about comments on subjects that can become challenging, like politics or religion? Can vendors tout their services or products? Starting with ideas for ground rules can help forestall challenges later.

FOSTERING ENGAGEMENT

Former Community Roundtable Director Rachel Happe offers these suggestions for creating and sustaining engagement:

1. Welcome new members and ask them a few questions.

2. Use graphics, and ask for people to respond with graphics, which is easy and emotive.

3. Create regular routines: Scheduled chats, Monday morning greetings, etc.

Tips for moderation:

- Be honest about your intentions. If you are building a mailing list or representing a product, say so. Trust is important.
- What's your niche (if you have one)? Experience design, learner journey, AR for certification training?
- Have a personality. Is your group fun? Earnest? Deadly serious about evidence-based practice? If you have other moderators, you'll probably want to work out a fairly uniform "voice" for the group.
- Explain how notifications work so people don't miss new content.
- Create a calendar of content so you aren't suddenly caught in a dry spell of few or no posts.
- Be responsive: Answer questions and respond to messages.
- Offer something different–what sets your ID group apart from the other 479? Have you spent much time in them to better understand what seems to attract and engage? Unless the focus of your group is very specific, you may have a lot of, for lack of a better word, competition. Why would people want to be in your group versus others?
- Listen. Pay attention to what content gets no response. Is there a pattern?

FIND A BALANCE

Kristen Hayden-Safdie: "I think a good balance of people asking questions and people answering questions is key. You can't just have a bunch of experts sitting around pretending to know everything already, and you also can't have a lot of new folks without the experience to provide support."

TIPS FOR ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION

- Welcome people and invite introductions.
- Offer questions that invite reflection: "What's the most unhelpful feedback you've ever received?"
- Showcase a member of the week or month.
- Use graphics and images.
- Ask for feedback.
- Ask, "What would you like to know more about?" and solicit answers from those who can answer.
- Involve users: Ask them to help with content. Appoint an author of the week.
- Use polling tools to vote on favorite articles, tools, etc.
- Share a story and ask, "What do you think about my solution? What would you have done differently?"
- Define your audience and manage it. Groups that have shifted from general instructional design talk to "How do I get a job?" will draw different people and push others away.
- Invite information from someone with a specialty.
- Offer polls or ask open-ended questions to find out what people want to talk about.
- Deputize helpers to help generate fresh content.
- Host a "peripheral participant" week from time to time.
- Share decision making when you can.

CONCLUSION

This paper is meant to provide an overview for those new to managing groups and communities, or those finding they are having trouble sustaining participation. Along with myriad online resources there are excellent books available for those wanting a deeper dive, among them Amy Jo Kim's *Community Building on the Web* and Wenger, Snyder & McDermott's *Cultivating Communities of Practice*, both still applicable to today's challenges.

RESOURCES

Beer, Chris. (2021). **The rise of online communities**. January 7.

Bozarth, J. (2014). **Nuts & Bolts: Building community**. *Learning Solutions Magazine*. February 4.

Britz, M. & Tyer, J. (2021). *Social by Design: How to create and scale a collaborative company*. Social by Design Ltd.

Carter, M. (2009). Unique team enhancement: All about team building and how to build a great team. Dorrance Publishing.

Cohen, E. (2018). **Fun fact: Facebook groups are NOT communities, and you are not necessarily a community manager.** February 4.

Coulson, N. & Shaw, R. (2013). Nurturing health-related online support groups: Exploring the experiences of patient moderators. *Computers in human behavior* 29 (4),1695-1701.

Gilley, A. & Kerno, S. J. (2010). Groups, teams, and communities of practice: A Comparison. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 12(1), 46–60.

Hu, Y., Chen,H., Zhang, P., Li, M., Di, Z. & Fan, Y. (2008). Comparative definition of community and corresponding identifying algorithm. *Physical Review E*. 78(2).

Kim, A. (2000). *Community building on the web*. Peachpit press.

Kim, J. (2022). **We're building a social+ world, but how will we moderate it?** February 4.

Krainer, K. (2003). Teams, communities & networks. *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education*, 6(2), 93-105.

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge University Press.

McEvily, B., Perrone, V. & Zaheer, A. (2003). Trust as an organizing principle. *Organization Science* 14(1). 91-103.

McMillan, D.W. & Chavis, D.M. (1986). Sense of community: A definition and theory. *Journal of Community Psychology* 14, 6-23.

Nickols, F. (2007). **Communities of practice: Definition, indicators & identifying characteristics**.

Ospina, D. (2017). **The difference between communities, groups, and networks**. February 10.

Ouchi (1980). Markets, bureaucracies, and clans for an analysis on social forms according to congruence of goals and ambiguity/lack of ambiguity on performance. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 25(1), 129-141.

Palla, G., Derényi, I., Farkas, I. & Vicsek, T. (2005). Uncovering the overlapping community structure of complex networks in nature and society. *Nature* 435 (7043), 814-818.

Pastoors, K. (2007). Consultants: Love-hate relationships with communities of practice. *The Learning Organization: The International Journal of Knowledge and Organizational Learning Management* 14(1), 21-33.

Reicher, S.D. (1982). The determination of collective behaviour (pp. 41–83). In H. Tajfel (ed.), *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sonn, C. and Fisher, A. (1996). Psychological sense of community in a politically constructed group, *Journal of Community Psychology* 24 (1).

Stamps, D. (1997). Communities of practice. *Training*, 34(2), 34-42.

Tartaglia, S. A preliminary study for a new model of sense of community, *Community Psychology* 34(1), 25–36.

Thompson, M. (2005). Structural and epistemic parameters in communities of practice. *Organization Science* 16(2), 151–64.

Wenger, E. (1999). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity.* Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, E., McDermott, R. & Snyder, W. M. (2002). *Cultivating communities of practice*. Harvard Business School Press.

Williams, M. (2001). In whom we trust: Group membership as an affective context for trust development. *Academy of Management Review* 26, 377–396.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jane Bozarth, the director of research for The Learning Guild, is a veteran classroom trainer who transitioned to eLearning in the late 1990s and has never looked back. In her previous job as leader of the State of North Carolina's award-winning eLearning program, Jane specialized in finding low-cost ways of providing online training solutions. She is the author of several books, including *eLearning Solutions on a Shoestring*, *Social Media for Trainers*, and *Show Your Work: The Payoffs and How-To's of Working Out Loud*. Jane holds a doctorate in training and development and was awarded the Guild Master Award in 2013 for her accomplishments and contributions to the eLearning community.