Chapter XI

Creating a Multi-Company Community of Practice for Chief Information Officers

John Moran
Global Gateways, Inc., USA

Lee Weimer
Weimer Collaborative, USA

ABSTRACT

This chapter presents a case study of the creation and evolution of a fee-based, multi-company Community of Practice (CoP) for Chief Information Officers (CIOs) in the San Francisco Bay Area over a six-year period. It describes the principles, processes and practices required to form and maintain a trust-based, face-to-face learning organization where members share accumulated knowledge. Additionally, it states some of the individual, collective and Information Technology industry benefits and results that have accrued from member participation in the CIO Community of Practice. The authors hope that the description of this CoP will foster the same sense of excitement for would-be practitioners that they feel.

TODAY AT A CoP MEETING

It is early 2003 and you have just finished dinner as a guest of the Silicon Valley Chief Information Officers' (CIO) Community of Practice (CoP). On the way home, you reflect on the meeting and the day's activities. Several points strike you as interesting. There seemed to be a genuine level of trust and respect among the more than 20 members, each from a different company, participating in the lunch discussions about their soon to be published book, *CIO Wisdom* (Lane et al., 2003). They had different ideas on how the book royalties should be distributed from the scholarship fund they had established, but that high level of respect never waned.

As they moved into the presentation part of the meeting, you soon realized how much experience, depth and interest the members had in their profession. The members' questions probed the presenters for information and several members willingly shared their own experiences with the subject matter. The interchanges were rich and fascinating and it was evident that both presenters and members were learning from each other. This learning/sharing environment continued throughout the afternoon as progress on a joint project was updated. Additionally, a departing member, whose division had fallen victim to reorganization, shared the resumes of his best and brightest with the hope his colleagues and friends could both benefit and help. Later in the day, the members chose the topics and suggested potential presenters for future meetings.

As they broke to head for the dinner part of the meeting, you began to notice a mood shift to a much lighter tone. At dinner, there was a combination of personal, professional and jovial conversations. You noticed that some of the more experienced members were having mentoring sessions with one or two of the newer members, while others at the table were discussing their latest high tech product purchase. A thought occurred: here over good food and wine, there continued to be learning, trust and community building—what a great resource this CIO Community of Practice (CoP) would be.

IN THE BEGINNING

The authors had been working with CIOs from a few different companies through having monthly lunch discussions. These CIOs are responsible for an organization's entire Information Technology and infrastructure, including computer hardware, software, and networks. They are responsible for recommending strategic technology initiatives, and once the decision is made, the CIO is charged with making the implementation successful. In order to recommend technology strategies, they have to keep current with the changes and products in the global IT industry. They are employed in multiple companies involved in the design, marketing and manufacturing of high technology products and services in an area south of San Francisco, California, known as Silicon Valley.

Related Content

What Drives Citizens to Engage in ICT-Enabled Citizen Science?: Case Study of Online Amateur Weather Networks
Mohammad Gharesifardand Uta Wehn (2017). *Analyzing the Role of Citizen Science in Modern Research (pp. 62-88).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/what-drives-citizens-to-engage-in-ict-enabled-citizen-science/170185

Operational Knowledge Management
Fons Wijnhoven (2011). *Encyclopedia of Knowledge Management, Second Edition (pp. 1237-1249).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/operational-knowledge-management/49069

Implementing Knowledge-Enabled CRM Strategy in a Large Company: A Case Study from a Developing Country
Minwir Al-Shammari (2005). *Case Studies in Knowledge Management (pp. 249-278).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/implementing-knowledge-enabled-crm-strategy/6175

Toward a Theoretical Model of Learning Organization and Knowledge Management Processes
Said Abdullah Al Saifi (2019). *International Journal of Knowledge Management (pp. 55-80).*
www.irma-international.org/article/toward-a-theoretical-model-of-learning-organization-and-knowledge-management-processes/225477

Improving Dynamic Knowledge Movements with a Knowledge-Based Framework during Conceptual Design of a Green Building Project
Zohreh Pourzolfaghar, Rahinah Ibrahim, Rusli Abdullah, Nor Mariah Adamand Abang Abdullah Abang Ali (2013). *International Journal of Knowledge Management (pp. 62-79).*
www.irma-international.org/article/improving-dynamic-knowledge-movements-with-a-knowledge-based-framework-during-conceptual-design-of-a-green-building-project/83612