

Communities of Practice and Technology

Please join us for a discussion about the use of technology for facilitating communities of practice. No comment or reply is to small!



by Jonathan Green, NPDCI/CONNECT

Blog Challenge: *Link and Exchange*

1 Share your comments, questions, ideas and challenges related to the use of technology for facilitating communities of practice. What's worked? What hasn't worked? What's your favorite tool?

2 Reply to others. Share tips, resources, or your own similar challenges.

Tech Tip:

If you have web links [URLs], feel free to paste them in your comments and replies. They will become hot links once you select "save".

Add Comment

Related content

- TIP SHEET: Blog and Online Discussion Facilitation
- Communities of Practice Indicators Worksheet
- Examples of Social Media in Early Childhood

Add Comment

Blogging

what is a good way to start one and use it effectively?

Reply

Blogging

Hi Max! :) If you are interested in starting a blog checkout the tip sheet over in right hand column. In it there are tips on facilitation, promotion and netiquette as well as links to some additional resources. I know you have some communities going in New York, so I wanted to share something I stumbled on last year. It's a CoP kit put together by the CDC. Good stuff. <http://www.cdc.gov/phn/communities/index.html>

Reply

Blogging

Jonathon,

Thanks for sharing this and your ideas and enthusiasm at the conference yesterday. I really got a lot out of it. The sharing was great and made the time away from the day job very worthwhile. I will try to start using some of the ideas and share them from time to time. Hope you had a safe trip back. I heard there were tornadoes in Wash today. We just got lots of snow, but that's no big deal for us.

Cheers!

Max

Reply

Blogging

I like the tip sheets and other info in the Related Content box. I agree on the CoP Resource Kit that the CDC put together - very good.

Reply

use of technology to support communities of practice

As a regional parent TA center, we are tasked with providing TA to federally-funded parent centers in Region 1 (NE US). A key strategy we use is virtual peer-to-peer communities of practice within our region. We support and help facilitate connections between parent center staff who are interested in different topics (content or strategies). One exciting development that came out of this approach was the development of a new, easy-to-navigate, "intuitive" website model for parent centers which was developed by two parent centers working together using technology to work long-distance on developing and piloting the website which is now being implemented by most of the parent centers in our region. So far most of the centers that are going to use this website have included a feature on their website that supports "virtual" communities of practice with families and professionals within their state.

Reply

use of technology to support communities of practice

I would like to know more about the "new, easy-to-navigate, "intuitive" website model for parent centers which was developed by two parent centers working together using technology to work long-distance on developing and piloting the website which is now being implemented by most of the parent centers in our region." Is it something someone could do a web tour on sometime?

Reply

use of technology to support communities of practice

Yes, we now have about 5 parent centers in Region 1 using this "Starting Points for Parents" Drupal framework for their website (either their entire website or their PTI website), and another 3-4 who are working on it (like us in NJ).

Reply

Valuable Content

How do you make sure that those in the CoP are finding value in the content? :)

What do you do if you find that the audience drops off or if people don't post comments?

Reply

Valuable Content

It's a really good question. Creating and evaluating discussion value is tough. We try to keep blogs/discussions simple and hope they compliment activity we have going on in the field. We do a lot of listening and often invite guest bloggers in. No one discussion is ever going to have appeal to the full community, so we try not to think that way. We look at online discussions as like small conferences. Folks measure and evaluate conferences on multiple indicators. So, we use a variety of measures (beyond comments) to evaluate discussions. /Jonathan

Reply

Using technology in the Creating Agreement COP

The Creating Agreement COP folk are all over the country so we used an on-line document collaboration tool to work on the powerpoint presentation and resources for our community.

Reply

Using technology in the Creating Agreement COP

But for resolution of difficult issues we still had to have conference calls and some of the most difficult issues were resolved through in-person meetings!

Reply

Using technology in the Creating Agreement COP

What tool did you use for powerpoint collaboration? Sounds neat.

Reply

Blogging

I think it would help to get people to use focused/targeted blogging on a recent and relevant topic. But, it's hard to get people into blogging when they are constantly inundated with information throughout the day. Maybe, asking only a brief sentence on an issue of topic.

Reply

Blogging

Our Family Voices (health) does a blog for Hopeful Parents (parents of children with special needs) and her blog always contains a combination of her personal experience with resources that are hyperlinked in the blog.

Reply

Blogging

Yes, and that's probably why Twitter (micro-blogging) came to be. The flip side is, how little is too little? It's hard for any of us to create and mobilize knowledge and value in one line bursts with our thumbs on our Blackberry's. Maybe it's like you say, "focused"; trying to get everyone to collapse on one issue at various intervals. <powering down thumb now>

Reply

Blogging

Thanks for the invitation Jonathan. I describe blogging as a stream that you put content into. Every now and again, we pull something out for our own purposes but it remains available to everyone else. Today I posted in my blog, a conversation from an email listserv for a community of practice. Someone asked a great question about the use of social media in knowledge transfer strategy. I felt the collection of comments was a substantial piece of "collective intelligence".

<http://www.knowledgemobilization.net/archives/273>

Knowledge remains powerful, sharing is also powerful, imagination is more so! Blogging is like my public filing cabinet that collects my thoughts, events, ideas, etc. I leave it unlocked so others can use it but it is also a record that I can consult easily. I am less worried about organization than the ability to search - use tags and keywords and make titles descriptive. The full value of what goes into my blog is not defined by me but by others who use it in all sorts of mash-ups and recombination for their own purposes.

Twitter - which is micro-blogging is my stream of idea and content that I collect during the day. I post to Twitter in the same way that I pick up pebbles on the beach. "I like that one." "That is interesting." "Oh, what a pretty idea." Then I want to show them with others. Except with Twitter, I can search and find connections between what I shared and what others have too.

Reply

Blogging

I have become a fan of Twitter - not as the only way of getting information out but an effective way for TA&D Centers to let others in the Network (and beyond) know about the great work that has been done.

Reply

Google sites has worked

Hi all. Thanks for getting this started, Jonathan! This might become a 'go-to' site, in and of itself, for me! You know I like Google sites as a repository for the push/pull/link/exchange functions you talked about. You can set them up to notify your email of activity, so it prompts members about recent activity. You can create public or private profiles, so this allows users to control the amount of 'social networking' that they want to engage in. For web conferencing, I still like Adobe Connect and I've been impressed with Nefsis (esp for use with those who use sign as their primary form of communication). For document sharing (including Powerpoints) Adobe Acrobat has worked well (acrobat.com)

Look forward to learning and sharing more! :)

Reply

askonline

Wondered if anyone had experience with a site called "askonline" (askonline.net)

We're exploring it as a platform for Intervener practicums that are part of our Intervener CoP. It may be similar to a 'Blackboard' environment, but with features more geared to tutoring/mentoring. I have scheduled a trial, so will post reactions here soon. If others have experience, I'd appreciate hearing from you! Thanks!

Reply

Behavioral Health Software

Thanks so much for the tip sheet. And everything is very easy to navigate.

Sam

<http://www.qualifacts.com>

Reply