

# Communities of Practice

a brief overview of the concept and its uses

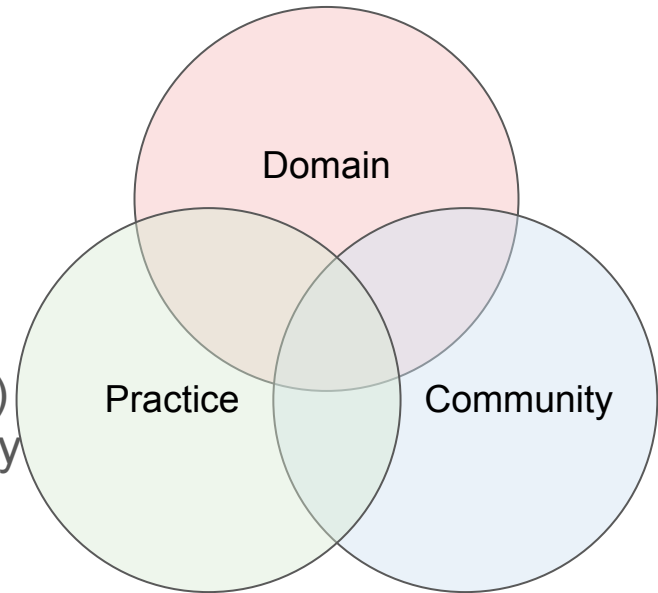
(adapted from <https://www.wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/>)

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# What are communities of practice?

- Communities of practice are **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.**
  - The Domain: what do we care about?
  - The Community: who cares about it?
  - The Practice: what do we do about it?
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- Pedagogy, active learning,
  - molecular viz, why concept imp (contexts)
  - Protein viz - drugs - design, interpret/apply



# What do communities of practice look like?

- Share case writing/piloting experiences
  - Problem-solving, brainstorming, etc.
  - Discussions, sharing resources (on forum)
  - Creating/documenting
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- Present at meetings - NSTA
  - Coming to meetings, studying case studies, using common resources (e.g., PDB, viz tools)

Problem solving	"Can we work on this design and brainstorm some ideas; I'm stuck."
Request for information	"Where can I find the code to connect to the server?"
Seeking experience	"Has anyone dealt with a customer in this situation?"
Reusing assets	"I have a proposal for a local area network I wrote for a client last year. I can send it to you and you can easily tweak it for this new client."
Coordination and synergy	"Can we combine our purchases of solvent to achieve bulk discounts?"
Building an argument	"How do people in other countries do this? Armed with this information it will be easier to convince my Ministry to make some changes."
Growing confidence	"Before I do it, I'll run it through my community first to see what they think."
Discussing new developments	"What do you think of the new CAD system? Does it really help?"
Documenting projects	"We have faced this problem five times now. Let us write it down once and for all!"
Visits	"Can we come and see your after-school program? We need to establish one in our city."
Identifying gaps in competence	"Who knows what, and what are we missing? What other groups should we connect with?"

# Developing and Maintaining a Community of Practice

- Needs **cultivation** to make sure that members get high value for their time
- Needs some **organization** to be productive
- Needs someone to **take decisions**, coordinate, etc. SD happy to play this role now - Welcome others to take on this role
- Needs to be a **safe space for all members** so all interactions (even disagreements) should be presented respectfully
- Needs to **share knowledge AND create new projects, knowledge, solutions**
- Needs **human interest and participation** - otherwise it is just a forum
- Need to **measure impact** of CoP to keep participants engaged and motivated to participate.
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