



Cultivating a community of practice

Val Regan, Annual Gathering 2013



Communities of Practice

- Groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better by **interacting regularly**.
- A community of practice is not a network of connections between people. It has a defined **identity** built around a common interest.
- **A shared competence** that distinguishes members from other people



They share:

- A concern
- A set of problems
- A passion



They may create:

- Tools
- Designs
- Standards
- Documents
- The personal satisfaction of knowing colleagues



Over time they develop:

- A unique perspective on their topic
- A body of common knowledge
- Practices
- Ways of interacting
- A common sense of identity



Structure

- Domain
 - The issue / passion in common
- Community
 - People who interact regularly and develop a shared understanding of their domain
 - A social fabric that fosters learning
 - If it is not clear how members will directly benefit, the community will not thrive



Structure

- Practices
 - The specific knowledge the community develops, shares and maintains
 - Ideas, tools, information, processes, documents
 - Stories, language, shared experiences, “embodied knowledge”

A Social Structure for developing and sharing knowledge

