Cultivating networks and communities of practice

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A community of practice is...

... a self-governed learning partnership among people who

- share challenges, passion or interest
- interact regularly
- learn from and with each other

Together they...

- improve their ability to do what they care about
- define in practice what competence means in their context

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Practitioners need a community to:

...help each other solve problems

...hear each other's stories and avoid local blindness

...reflect on their practice and improve it

...build shared understanding

...keep up with change

...cooperate on innovation

...find synergy across structures

...find a voice and gain strategic influence

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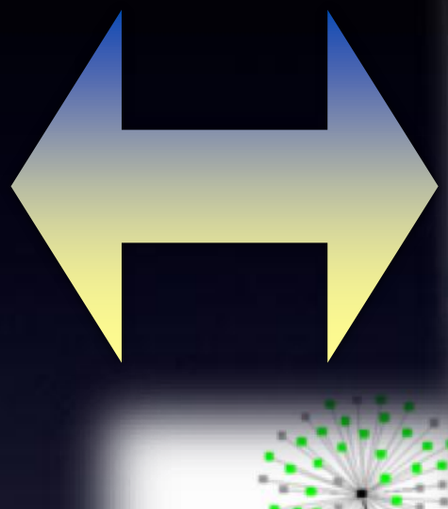
Communities and networks



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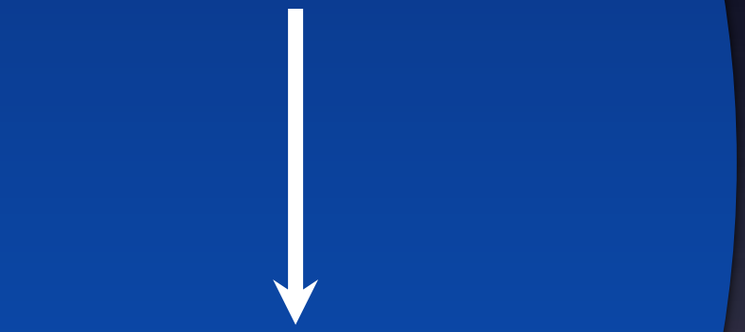
Different from training

Provider



Recipient

negotiation of mutual relevance

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Matching needs and structures

Product or service	Department
Task or single problem	Team or task force
Context free knowledge	Training
Make connections	Network
Expert service	Center of excellence
Strategic capability	Community of practice

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Learning activities
from and with

Guests

Field trips

Practice fairs

Demonstrations

Documenting practice

Case studies

Problem solving

Reading group

Joint response

Learning projects

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Learning activities

informal to formal

Exchange tips

Point to resources

Follow the leader

Hot topic discussions

Explore ideas

Review projects

Case clinics

Help desk

Mutual benchmarking

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Learning activities

each other and outside sources

Peer assist

Q&A

Role play

Share documents

Training and workshops

Joint events

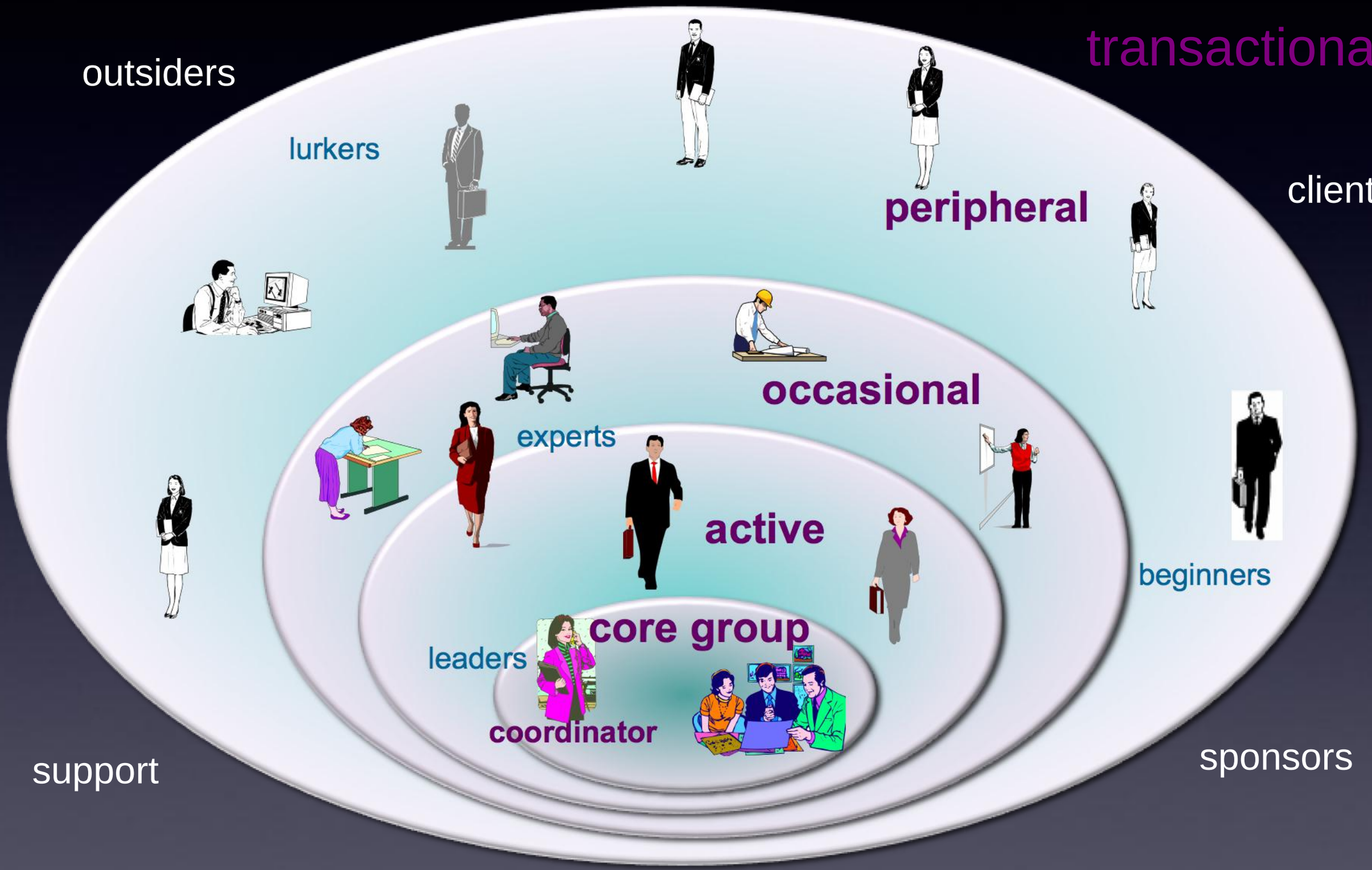
Invite speakers

Systematic scans

External benchmarks

Boundary collaboration

Levels of participation
a common picture



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Making a case for membership
questions from a potential member

Why

- Why should I care?
- How will my participation in this community benefit me? My institution? My country?

What

- What new connections will I make?
- What will we be doing together?
- What special capability is the community developing?

How

- How does the community operate?
- How can I contribute? What role do you want me to play?

Community of practice
a social discipline of learning

Domain

Community

Practice

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Cultivating a community of practice

Sponsorship

Domain

High value for time

Nurturing

Learning partnership

Community

Practice

Support

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A social discipline of learning

key processes

Reflect and self-design

Interface with organization

Bring practice in

Drive the learning agenda

Learning partnership

Manage community memory

Get the message out

A social discipline of learning

leadership processes

Critical friends
reflect and self-design

Organizational brokers
interface with organization

Community keepers
bring practice in

Learning partnership

Agenda activists
drive the learning agenda

Social reporters
manage community memory

External messengers
get the message out

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Different types of value created

Ground narrative: community/network activities

Cycle 1
Immediate value:

- Level of participation
- Quality of interaction
- Level of engagement
- Having fun
- Level of reflection

Cycle 2
Potential value:

- Skills acquired
- Inspiration
- Social connections
- Tools and documents
- New views of learning

Cycle 3
Applied value:

- Implementation of advice
- Innovation In practice
- Reuse of products
- Use of social connections
- New learning approaches

Cycle 4
Realized value:

- Personal performance
- Organizational performance
- Organizational reputation

Cycle 5
Reframing value:

- Change in strategy
- New metrics
- New expectations
- Institutional changes

Aspirational narrative: framing success

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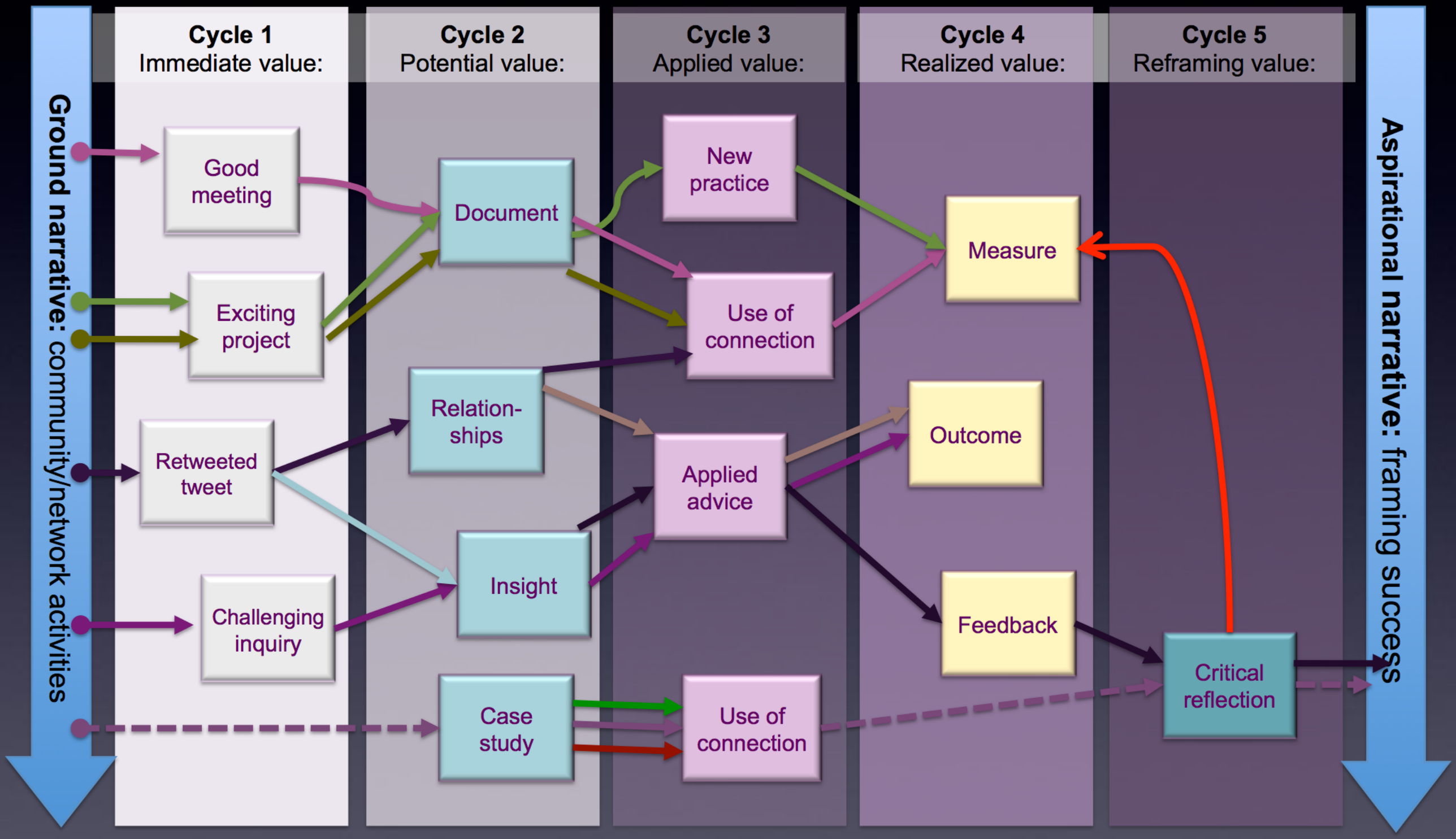
Monitoring the value created



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Success factors

Engaged sponsorship

Learning agenda

Identification with domain

Personal passion

Sense of ownership

High expectations

Practice-driven trajectory

Social learning process

High value for time

Horizontal interactions

Generative activity design

Attention to different voices

Learning trumps power

Candid inquiry

distributed

dynamic

Internal leadership

Technology

In the service of learning

Multiple tools and devices

Integration, integration, integration

Different entry points

Persistence

Value creation

Driving community development

Articulate value proposition

Strategic relevance

Memory and messages

Continuity over time

Continuity across boundaries

Shared memory

Awareness of stakeholders

Intentional communication

Social learning team

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Thank you!

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