Communities of Practice: An Introduction

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Session Outline

- Intro to Communities of Practice
- Connecting to the MTWC CoP
- Posting Content

What is a Community of Practice?

"**Group of people** who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly"

- Etienne Wenger, HBR 2000

MTWC CoP is how we will continue to build the community after the Summit.

CoP Compared to Other Work Groups

	Purpose	Members	What holds it together	Time line
Community of Practice	To develop members' capabilities; to build and exchange knowledge	Members select themselves	Passion, commitment and identification with groups' expertise	As long as it makes business sense or there is interest in maintaining the group
Formal work group	To deliver a product or service	Everyone who reports to the group's manager	Job requirements and common goals	Until next reorganization
Project team	To accomplish a specified task	Employees assigned by senior management	The project's milestone and goals	Until the project has been completed
Informal network	To collect and pass on business information	Friends and business acquaintances	Mutual needs	As long as people have a reason to connect

From **Communities of Practice: The Organizational Frontier by Etienne Wenger and William Snyder**, Harvard Business Review, February 2000
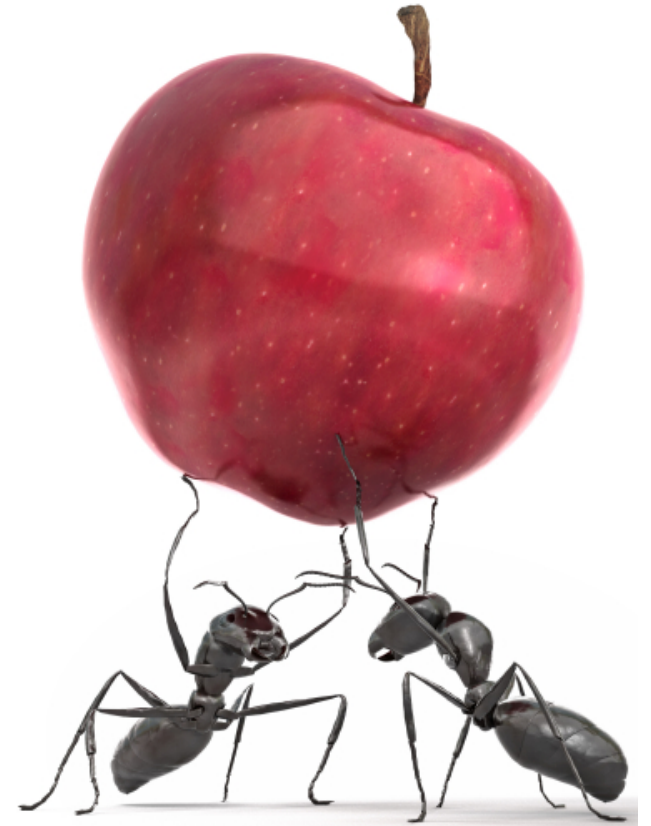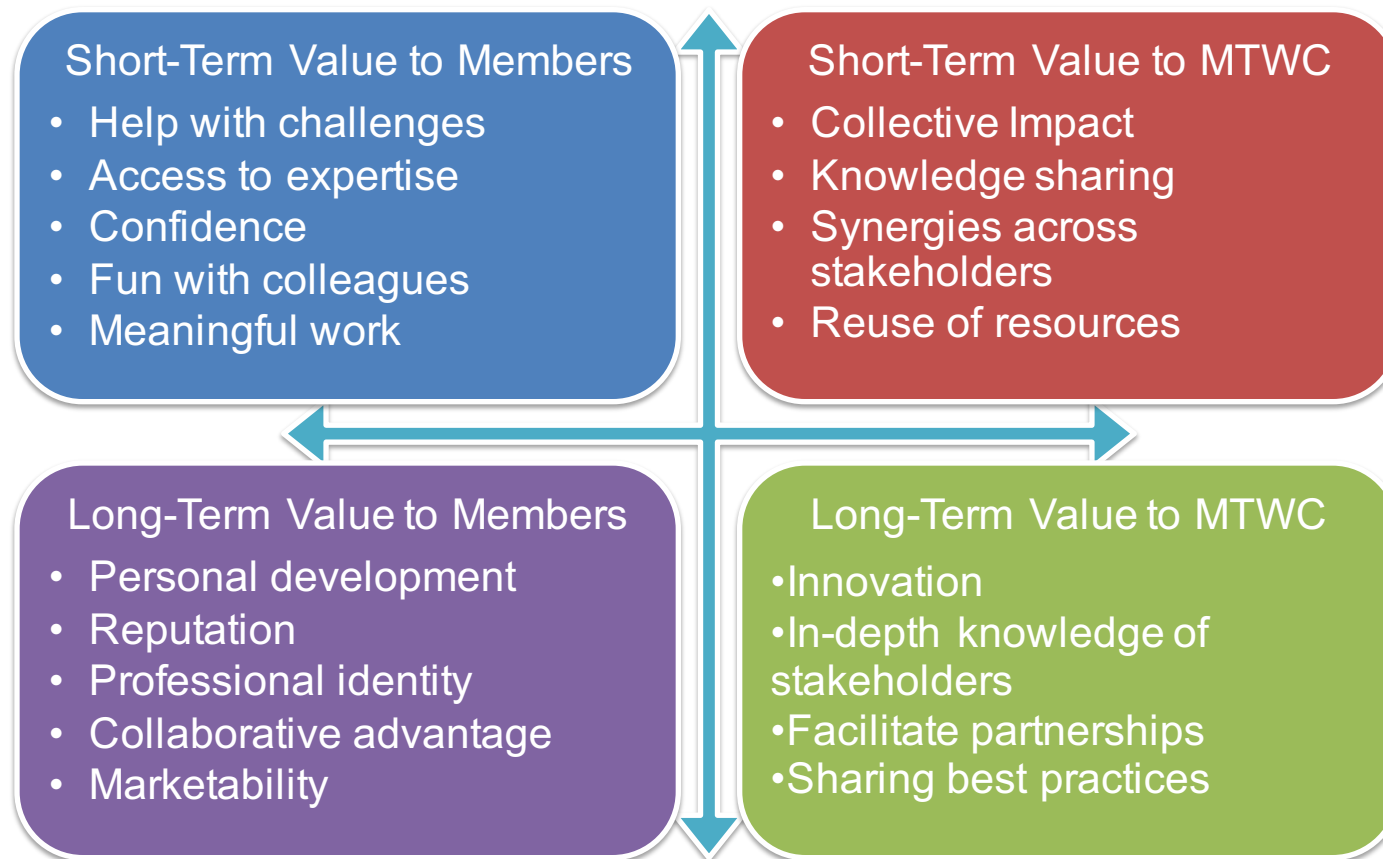
Why have a Community of Practice?

CoPs are not about bringing knowledge into the community but about helping to grow the internal knowledge of the community.

The value of Communities of Practice

Short-Term Value to Members
- Help with challenges
- Access to expertise
- Confidence
- Fun with colleagues
- Meaningful work

Short-Term Value to MTWC
- Collective Impact
- Knowledge sharing
- Synergies across stakeholders
- Reuse of resources

Long-Term Value to Members
- Personal development
- Reputation
- Professional identity
- Collaborative advantage
- Marketability

Long-Term Value to MTWC
- Innovation
- In-depth knowledge of stakeholders
- Facilitate partnerships
- Sharing best practices

The MTWC Community of Practice

MTWC Role

- Seed participation
- Encourage participation
- Monitor activity metrics
- Monitor success criteria and impact
- Facilitate CoP events

Members' Role

- Check the Google+ community regularly
- Suggest topics and participate in discussions
- Post content
- Answer questions from other members