

Strategic Knowledge Solutions

Collaborate... Educate... Innovate...

Communities of Practice

Communities of Practice are groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.

– Etienne Wenger, *Cultivating Communities of Practice*, 2002

Communities of Practice have been called the “killer app” of knowledge management. Implemented correctly, they are one of today’s best tools for improving productivity, encouraging professional development, and creating a culture of continuous learning in an organization.

Communities of Practice exist in every organization—virtual and face-to-face, deliberately created and ad hoc. The challenge for leaders is to support these communities in such a way that they make a positive contribution to creating and sharing organizational knowledge—a positive contribution that engages people and leads to a competitive advantage in today’s business environment.

SKS Knows Communities

We are the source for state-of-the-practice community solutions. Our principals started both the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force professional forum initiatives—now with over 250,000 users worldwide. Whether you are looking to start a community of practice, grow an existing community, improve community leader skills, or assess community health and value, SKS can help meet your needs.

Our Approach

We follow a proven approach, developed through creating, managing, and supporting more than 100 live and virtual communities since 2002. SKS can help you:

- Analyze your community needs, identify resources, and explain the benefits of communities to corporate leadership.
- Plan your community project and develop community policies and guidelines.
- Build a high-performing community team, design an effective work environment, and conduct initial leader and user training.
- Deploy your community and foster a culture of collaboration.
- Sustain the community through its natural lifecycle.



Strategic Knowledge Solutions

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Community of Practice Workshops

Community of Practice Start-Up Workshop

The Community of Practice is the cornerstone approach for connecting your people in vibrant and dynamic conversation around relevant and timely content in the professional context we need to do our jobs successfully. This 2-day workshop helps your organization conduct the strategic planning necessary to effectively develop and start a community of practice.

Community of Practice Sponsor Workshop

The community sponsor is the most overlooked player in the world of organizational social learning, often to the detriment of community performance. This half-day workshop introduces community sponsors to the key elements of communities of practice and highlights how they can encourage adoption within an organization.

Facilitating Virtual Communities Workshop

The common thread among all effective virtual communities is people. While the technology provides a place to meet and talk, the people who facilitate the conversations, connect members to expertise, organize and steward knowledge, and make knowledge useful must understand both the system and processes for managing effective conversations. This 4- or 5-day workshop prepares designated facilitators, topic leaders, and content managers with the skills necessary to make organizational communities of practice active and valuable.

Developing a Highly Effective Community Team Workshop

A highly-effective core team is critical to the design, launch, and enduring success of a community of practice. This 2-day workshop creates the conditions for success with your core team using the SKS Teams of Leaders approach, proven to create highly-effective collocated or distributed groups focused on the mission.

Community of Practice Users' Workshop – Level I

This half-day workshop is designed to train your users on the 12 fundamentals they will need to operate as a member of a professional community of practice. It increases the speed at which new workers develop a sense of organizational community and become valuable contributors. This workshop can be run routinely to ensure new personnel are acculturated to the community.

Community of Practice Users' Workshop – Level II

This half-day workshop is designed to develop advanced user skills required to lead conversations, manage topics, and facilitate the conversations in a professional community of practice. This workshop can be run routinely to ensure new personnel are acculturated to the community and increases the frequency and speed at which novice workers are connected with corporate expertise and knowledge to improve organizational learning.

Consulting and Coaching

SKS offers a full range of community consulting and coaching services, including:

- Strategic Planning
- Community Assessment
- Leader Coaching and Mentoring

Master Classes and Webinars

We can customize our Master Classes and webinars to your organization!

Sample Topics:

- Facilitating Virtual Meetings
- Community Governance
- Community Management
- Building a Community Culture
- Motivation, Recognition, and Rewards
- Standard Processes
- Best Practices for Engagement
- Community Sponsorship

Services

Do you need help implementing your complete community program? We can manage your entire community portfolio and facilitate your communities. Contact us for a custom consultation.



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SKS is a consulting firm focused on expertise development, organizational learning, and knowledge management practices and application. Our proven learning approaches produce immediate benefits by applying key experiential learning and knowledge-based strategies to improve individual, team, and organizational learning and performance.

 **Contract Holder**
Contract GS-02F-0093X