

**TECH3022-17 Advanced Social Media Production**

**Workshop Fourteen: Development Communities**

	<b>This session raises questions about the style of learning and knowledge development that is suited to social and collaborative forms of media, such as YouTube and social media.</b>
001	<p><b>Compartmentalised Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The skills factory approach is killing learning by enforcing conformity.</li> <li>• The continual focus on the ‘next steps’ is undermining thinking about the ‘movement of understanding’.</li> <li>• The lack of dialogue and continuous conversation, in an open and risk free form, is stifling innovation.</li> <li>• The lack of intellectual challenge is self-reinforcing.</li> </ul> <p>“Creativity is a subtle and delicate process that does not respond well to the heavy hand of traditional bureaucratic controls or market mechanisms” (William Q. Judge, Gerald E. Fryxell, and Robert S. Dooley in Lesser, Fontaine, &amp; Slusher, 2000, p. 38).</p>
002	<p>“The problem of attaining correct habits of reflection would be much easier than it is, did not the different modes of thinking blend insensibly into one another” (Dewey, 1910 p.6).</p>
003	<p>“So far as a mind is disciplined, control of method in a given subject has been attained so that the mind is able to manage itself independently without external tutelage. The aim of education is precisely to develop intelligence of this independent and effective type – a disciplined mind. Discipline is positive and constructive” (Dewey, 1910 p.63).</p>
004	<p>“The great trap in knowledge management is using management tools and concepts to design knowledge management systems”(Richard McDermott in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 22).</p> <p>“Knowledge is different from information and sharing it requires different set of concepts and tools. Six characteristics of knowledge distinguish it from information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing is a human act</li> <li>• Knowledge is the residue of thinking</li> <li>• Knowledge is created in the present moment</li> <li>• Knowledge belongs to communities</li> <li>• Knowledge circulates through communities in many ways</li> <li>• New knowledge is created at the boundaries of old” (Richard McDermott in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 23).</li> </ul> <p>“Knowledge always involves a person who knows” (Richard McDermott in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 23).</p> <p>“The art of professional practice is to turn information into solutions” (Richard McDermott in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 24).</p>
005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What creates differences between different users and contributors?</li> <li>• What creates alliances between different users and contributors?</li> <li>• Task orientation? What type of responsibilities do different people have and how are they perceived?</li> <li>• What’s it like to get started? What creates a sense of empowerment?</li> </ul>
006	<b>Development Communities</b>

007	<p>“Implications for Leveraging Knowledge:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To leverage knowledge, develop communities.</li> <li>2. Focus on knowledge important to both the business and the people.</li> <li>3. Create forums for thinking as well as systems for sharing information.</li> <li>4. Let the community decide what to share and hoe to share it.</li> <li>5. Create a community support structure.</li> <li>6. Use the community’s terms for organising knowledge.</li> <li>7. Integrate sharing knowledge into the natural flow of work.</li> <li>8. Treat culture change as community issue” (Richard McDermott in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 29).</li> </ol>
008	<p>“At the core of the new thinking is the notion that work and learning are social activities... As people work together, they not only learn from doing, they develop a shared sense of what has to happen to get the job done. They develop a common way of thinking and talking about their work. Eventually they come to share a sort of mutual identity – a single understanding of what they are and what their relationship to the larger organisation is. It is in these groups where some of the most valuable and most innovative work-related learning occurs” (David Stamps in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 56).</p>
009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “What is shared by a community of practice – what makes it a community – is its practice.</li> <li>• The concept of practice connotes doing, but not just doing in and of itself. It is doing in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do.</li> <li>• When I talk about practice, I am talking about social practice.</li> <li>• Such a concept of practice includes both the explicit and the tacit. It includes what is said and what is left unsaid; what is represented and what is assumed. It includes the language, the tools, the documents, the images, the symbols, the well-defined roles, the specific criteria, the codified procedures, the regulations, and the contracts that various practices make explicit for a variety of purposes.</li> <li>• But it also includes all the implicit relations, the tacit conventions, the subtle cues, the untold rules of thumb, the recognisable intuitions, the specific perceptions, the well-tuned sensitivities, the embodied understandings, the underlying assumptions, the shared worldviews, which may never be articulated, though they are unmistakable signs of membership in communities of practice and are crucial to the success of their enterprises” (Etienne Wenger quoted by David Stamps in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 58).</li> </ul>

010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do ‘newbies’ to a project know that they are ‘fitting in’ or ‘standing out’?</li> <li>• What are the things that tell a participant they have been successful?</li> <li>• What are the things that tell a participant they have not been successful?</li> <li>• To what extent are participants working alone and/or collaborating?</li> <li>• What are the main issues when working with other people?</li> <li>• How do we participants negotiate with one another?</li> <li>• What do participants think of the products they produce?</li> </ul>
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**011 Communities of Practice**  
 “Since the beginning of history, human beings have formed communities that accumulate collective learning into social practices – communities of practice” (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 4).

“Communities of practice are everywhere. They exist within businesses and across business units and company boundaries. Even though they are informally constituted and reside within a specific area of practice, these self-organising systems share the capacity to create and use organisational knowledge through informal learning and mutual engagement” (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 3).

012 “But what about the ownership of knowledge? Where should it be located? What was going to be the new structure to take on this responsibility” (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 4).

013	Type of Organisation	Dominant Structure	Distinctive Advantage	Disadvantage
	Functional	Functional division	Concentration of expertise under hierarchical control	Functional silos with internal focus on specialities rather than on market needs and opportunities
	Multi-divisional	Business unit	Integrates functional expertise to focus on business lines and market segments	Divisional boundaries impede learning and knowledge transfer
	Project-based	Project team	Market agility and individual customer focus	Short-term focus on tasks, much learning is lost or localised
	Knowledge-based	Communities of practice	Integrates the stewarding of key competencies into the very fabric of the	Competing priorities for people who belong to multiple structures at once (business unit,

			organisation	team, communities of practice)
	Figure 1.1 Four Waves in Organisational Design (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 5).			
014	<p>"If communities of practice are the natural stewards of knowledge in an organisation, what does a knowledge strategy look like that takes this as its foundation? What is its overall shape? A knowledge strategy based on communities of practice consist of seven basic steps grouped into four streams of activity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understood strategic knowledge needs: what knowledge is critical to success?</li> <li>2. Engage practice domains (find communities): where will people form communities around practice they can engage in and identify with?</li> <li>3. Develop communities: how to help key communities reach their full potential?</li> <li>4. Work the boundaries: how to link communities into broader learning systems?</li> <li>5. Foster belonging: how to engage people's identities and sense of meaning?</li> <li>6. Run the business: how to integrate communities of practice into running the business of the organisation?</li> <li>7. Apply, assess, reflect, and renew; how to deploy a knowledge strategy through waves of organisational transformation" (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 5).</li> </ol>			
015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do these products have a sense of excitement about them r is making them routinely more important?</li> <li>• How do participants respond to new ideas and proposals?</li> <li>• Who wins-out, the 'high-fliers' or the 'grounded' students?</li> <li>• How do participants know that they have made a difference?</li> <li>• Does collaboration help or hinder? Is it easier to get on with things by oneself?</li> <li>• What do participants feel are risks in producing content?</li> </ul>			
016	<p><b>Communities of Learning</b></p>			
017	<p>"The work of developing the organisational capabilities needed for success has two aspects. On the one hand, it requires the analytical work of translating a strategy into a description of the knowledge required. On the other hand, a capability must be realised in the form of practices that people can engage in and develop by investing</p>			

	their personal interests. This requires a social understanding of how communities can form to take responsibility for these practices” (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 7).
018	<p><b>Step 1. Map Key Knowledge Needs</b> (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 7).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “They will need to nurture communities of practice that grow and maintain these capabilities” (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 7).</li> </ul> <p><b>Step 2. Find Communities</b> (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 8).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Without personal engagement and passion for the topic, communities of practice will not thrive” (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 8).</li> <li>• “The way to perform this translation is to find or recognise existing or potential communities in key areas” (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 8).</li> <li>• “When it is not so clear what the domains of competence are, it is important to let communities of practice emerge in less predictable ways” (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 9).</li> <li>• “Unlike task-oriented teams, which can be pulled together and charted with a predefined goal, communities of practice must grow organically as their leaning unfolds. They are dynamic by definition. They will only work if people identify with the enterprise and the learning agenda that the community pursues. Only then will members keep coming together and investing themselves in pushing the community and its practice forward” (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 9).</li> </ul> <p><b>Step 3. Develop Communities</b> (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 10).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The ongoing mutual engagement makes the community real as an experience and weaves the social fabric necessary to support joint learning” (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 10).</li> </ul> <p><b>Step 4. Connect Across Boundaries</b> (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 11).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Communities of practice do not exist in isolation. Their effectiveness is not a matter of their internal development alone, but also a matter of how well they connect with other communities and constituencies inside and outside the organisation” (Etienne Wenger in Lesser et al., 2000, p. 11).</li> </ul>
019	“To be effective, communities need places for their members to gather. In conventional community environments, the place is often a physical space where members meet and exchange ideas and insights” (Lesser et al., 2000, p. viii).
020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are relationships maintained, progresses and secured?</li> <li>• What does it mean to play the role of the ‘media producer’, ‘community organiser’, etc.?</li> <li>• What are the rules that are played/acted out, and what differences do they make?</li> <li>• How quickly do people resort to predefined roles?</li> <li>• To what extent and in what way do participants confirm or resist conformity?</li> </ul>
	<b>References:</b>

Dewey, J. (1910). *How We Think*. New York: D.C. Heath.

Lesser, E. L., Fontaine, M. A., & Slusher, J. A. (Eds.). (2000). *Knowledge and Communities*. Boston: Butterworth Heinemann.