COLLABORATE

Bring people to work together as a practice.
Identify key challenges for people to resolve collectively and co-create meaningful value together.

Diverse groups within CoPs don't just add value individually; they amplify it collectively as a practice. They form a powerful nexus of knowledge, insights, and experiences. The dynamic interaction results in outcomes that transcend individual contributions.

The more a community creates something concrete together, the more engaged it is. This co-creation of a tangible community asset / qualitative deliverable requires effective coordination of different cooperation and collaboration processes.

Engaging our community in delivering a concrete outcome implies carrying out effective collaboration, cooperation, coordination and co-creation practices and activities.

Activities oriented to developing the practice – Project Review or Post-Mortem

WHAT

Project Review or Post-Mortem
Sometimes a member would like to engage the community in an overall review of a project. This can be in preparation for a new phase, at the completion of a project, or as a post-mortem for a project that did not go as planned.

WHY

Using the complexity of a full project to learn together by reflecting on the whole thing.

HOW

This activity has many of the characteristics of case clinics, but it is driven by a request for an informed opinion on the state of a project rather than specific challenge with which a member needs help. This requires more time in presenting and inspecting the project, interspersed with moments of reflection in whole or breakout groups.

Adapted from Communities of Practice within and across organization 2023, Etiene Wenger, Beverly Wenger, Phil Reid and Claude Bruderlein.

Taking reference to the process for Case Clinic below:

Steps	Action	Time	Hints
1. Context	Presenter gives just enough context to frame the challenge, then poses a specific question to the group.	5–10	A simple visual can be helpful, but avoid slide presentation or lengthy descriptions at this stage.
2. Understanding	Group asks clarification questions to get a better understanding of the context and the nature of the challenge. Responding to these questions, not the initial introduction, is the main vehicle to convey the nature of the challenge.	15	Refrain from offering advice at this stage. But good clarification questions often shed a new light on the challenge.
3. Sharing related experience	Group members share related experiences and stories.	0–15	This timing depends on the number of members with related experiences.
4. Advice	Group members give advice and discuss each other's advice from the perspective of their own experience.	15	To keep things grounded in experience, encourage members to provide their advice in the form of stories, saying what they did when in a similar position.
5. Summary	Presenter summarizes insights and advice they are taking away.	5	This is something to follow up on at a later meeting.

Variations

Mock review. Many technical communities exist in organizations that have a formal process of reviews, with gates at which projects must receive approval before proceeding. A good way to increase the chances of a successful review is to present a dry run of your project review to your community, followed by a discussion of what you did well and what should be improved. As for case clinics, it can make the discussion easier to give people explicit reflection roles, like appreciating the positive, being critical friends, and suggesting out-of-the-box ideas.

Actual project reviews. In addition to helping each other prepare for project reviews, some communities make it a habit to attend each other's actual project reviews, if it is allowed. They find that it provides a good way to learn about the process, to understand what help is needed or what issues they share, as well as to build commitment to each other.