Community-Driven Change

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HELLO
MY NAME IS
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We LOVE to develop and be part of communities.
“A community is a social unit that comes together through self-selection, and self-organizes to satisfy shared needs.”
- Shahin and Shawn
A network is a number of people connected so that information flows throughout the network through social interaction.

There is no clear boundary for a network. Not all people in a network necessarily even know each other. Some people have many connections, and some have few.
A group is a number of people or things that are **located close** together or are considered or classed together.
A common goal defines them, they are working together and helping each other.

A group with a common goal
A community is a social unit that comes together through self-selection, and self-organizes to satisfy shared needs.
Exercise: Problem Solving with a Community

- With your table
- Read through the scenarios, and order them by how easily they could be solved using a community-based approach.
- Top: the easiest to tackle by a community
- Bottom: the hardest to apply a community approach
- You have 5 minutes
Lifecycle of a Community
How To Start A Community?
Exercise: How Do We Start?

- With your table
- Pick a scenario from the list
- Discuss with your table “How to Start a Community?”
- As a group collect your ideas for later debrief
- Consider the perspective of an individual, manager and organization
- **You have ten minutes**
How To Start A Community

Individual
- Find people with shared interests, and schedule a meeting!
- Find the early adopters in particular
- Start conversations in the hallway
- Expect to have to sell it
- If you can't sell it, bribe them! (buy lunch or coffee)
- Keep it informal; Make it fun
- Get some quick wins to demonstrate that it works
- Do it on your own time (lunches, after hours)
- Once you have the community started it's easier to get leadership support

Manager / Leader
- Be clear with what you hope to get from communities
- Communicate the importance and your support for people’s involvement
- Include communities as part of incentives
- Realize that involvement in a community means people will have less time for their “regular” work.

Organization
- Don't introduce hierarchy! See if you can provide what is missing with a community first!
How To Support A Community?
Exercise: How Do We Support It?

- With your table
- Pick a scenario from the list (might be the same as last time)
- Discuss with your table “How to Support a Community?
- As a group collect your ideas for later debrief
- Consider the perspective of an individual, manager and organization
- You have ten minutes
How To Support The Community?

As a Community Initiator / Member
● Bring in your whole self
● Be open to letting the community evolve - don’t try to push your agenda
● Help shape it or evolve it for better
● Keep it simple and informal
● Try for quick wins

As a Manager/Leader
● Communicate value of communities
● Highlight success stories
● Acknowledge & appreciate community leaders
● Create a safe environment where people are free to question and propose alternatives
● Let it live, no interventions
● Do not ask for outcomes/outputs
● **Make time for your people to participate**

As an Organization
● Build an environment that allows communities to grow and flourish
● Help with Logistics - meeting spaces, funding, Tooling, Communications etc.
● Create “slack” time
● Help shape it or evolve it for better
● Intra-community building promotion
● Helping with external communities. Host meetups, sponsor conferences
● **Avoid solving problems with hierarchies that could be solved with communities**

As a Community Catalyst
● Create inter-community connections
● Promote communities
Let’s Pause!
How A Community Evolves?
Signs Of Evolution

- Decline in participation
- Reduced collaborative activities and input from community
- Change of Focus
  - Discussions about mainly a different topic/interest/need than original one
- Irrelevant discussions
  - turns into a complaint session
- People not motivated to tackle new issues
Help it Evolve Into Another Community

- Facilitate the evolution! Find out if people want to satisfy a different need.
- Let others lead the evolution!
- Be part of the new!
Letting The Community Go
Signs Of End of Life

- Decline in participation
- Reduced collaborative activities and input from community
- Change of Focus
  - Discussions about mainly a different topic than original one
- Irrelevant discussions - turns into a complaint session
- People not motivated to tackle new issues
Let it Go

Every good thing comes to an end.

- Have a positive end of life event. A Community wake!
- Thank members, guests, leaders, managers and anyone involved.
- Share learnings on building communities
  - Encourage others to do so
  - Offer help to others to become the next community initiator
Lifecycle of a Community

Stage

Birth
Maturity
End Of Life

Motion
Support
Nurture
Evolution

Initiation
Start

Conclusion

People

Community Initiator
Community Member
Community Members
Community Members
Community Leader
Leader
Community Catalyst
Organization
Community and Change
Hierarchies are traditionally organized around disciplines.

It's better to organize around the value stream (i.e. work). Teams are cross-functional.

But people in the same role in different teams have less interaction with each other.

A community will fill the gap!

This (theoretically) allows easy governance and transfer of information within that discipline.
The Three Problem Solving Strategies

**Authoritative**
Give the responsibility for solving the problem to a small number of people (for example, management).

**Competitive**
Have two or more groups work on a solution and choose the best one.

**Collaborative**
Engage all stakeholders in order to find the best possible solution for all.

Roberts, N.C. "Wicked Problems and Network Approaches to Resolution".
The Three Problem Solving Strategies

**Authoritative**
Easy to facilitate. The solution might not include all the perspectives required to tackle the problem. Solution will be biased to the needs of the deciders.

**Competitive**
Takes advantage of human competitive urge. Can undermine cohesiveness of the group.

**Collaborative**
Can be difficult to facilitate shared understanding and commitment to the problem solving.

Roberts, N.C. "Wicked Problems and Network Approaches to Resolution".
The Three Problem Solving Strategies

Collaborative

Agile principles state that we should use collaborative solutions for one class of complex problems. We use teams to deliver value to our business.

There are a lot of other types of problems where we should consider using collaborative solutions.

Communities are that tool.

Roberts, N.C. "Wicked Problems and Network Approaches to Resolution".
"Using a simple tool to solve a complex problem does not result in a simple solution."

- Larry Wall
Acceptance of Change

Transformations are not easily accepted in organizations.

People will be more bought in to the change if they feel included.

“People don't resist change. They resist being changed.” - Peter Senge

A community leading the transformation means the people doing the changing are the same ones decided what needs to change!
Community is a Change Catalyst

The point is there are many ways to build a community, support it, and grow it.

The greatness is the strength of it, if you build a community around something, it will be there for many years, the power is very strong. We encourage you to use a community approach when possible, and if not, think twice to make it possible. However, it is not for all problems.

Let us share some of the interesting things about change and communities with you. Resistance to change, ...
Let’s Pause!
Communities And the Growth of Agile

Salt Lake City Agile Roundtable

The C2 Wiki

London Xtreme Tuesdays Club
Communities And the Growth of Agile

Your Company?
Communities & Change Key Takeaways

- Its definition is vague, meaning it’s **Flexible**!
- It can take **Many Forms and Types**
- It is relatively **Easy to Start**
- People with autonomy are **More Motivated**
- There is usually **Little Resistance** for it
- It **Addresses Many Different Needs**
- It should **Evolve** to meet other needs
- It naturally **Dies Down** when the need is met
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