# Communities of Practice: Facilitation and Governance

1 – 12 August 2027
Online

Dubai - UAE: +971 4 450 5697
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Amman - Jordan: +962 79 712 3347

# Communities of Practice: Facilitation and Governance

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Communities of Practice: Facilitation and Governance is a two-week course for the people who lead, sponsor or steward practitioner networks inside an organization. You learn to run sessions that draw out expertise, write a charter with clear decision rights, operate digital and multi-site groups and report impact to sponsors. You leave with your own Charter and Facilitation Playbook. The course is delivered by Mercury Training Center.

## About This Course

Many practitioner groups start with energy and fade within months: nobody owns decisions, meetings drift, experts stop contributing and sponsors cannot see the value. You should already coordinate a cross-team group or own an expertise area. You practice on charter drafts, facilitation rehearsals, platform setups and impact reports.

## Who It Is For

- Staff who convene and facilitate a network of practitioners across teams or sites.
- Specialists who hold expertise in a field and steward its standards and lessons.
- Managers who sponsor a network, fund it and expect results from it.
- HR, talent and training staff who link peer networks to development and succession.
- Digital workplace staff who run the platforms where these groups meet online.

This course is not for newcomers who want a first introduction to what a community of practice is, who are better served by a shorter foundation course. It also does not suit project teams with a fixed deliverable and deadline, who need a team leadership or project management course instead.

## Competencies You Will Build

- Session Facilitation: you run a meeting where experts share cases, challenge each other and agree on a next step.
- Charter Design: you write purpose, scope, roles and decision rights that the sponsor signs.
- Role Clarity: you set out what sponsors, coordinators, core contributors and occasional participants each do.
- Digital Stewardship: you set up and moderate an online space so that answers are found and reused.
- Impact Reporting: you show sponsors value through stories, activity data and business indicators.
- Scaling Judgment: you decide when to split, merge, federate or close a group.

## What You Will Be Able to Do

By the end of the course you will be able to:

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- Given a silo problem between departments, define the domain, the target participants and the first three activities of a new network.
- From a declining group's activity record, diagnose why contribution dropped and plan a relaunch.
- Using a stakeholder map, secure a sponsor and agree what the network will report and when.
- Given a conflict between senior experts, run a structured conversation that ends with an agreed position or a recorded difference.
- From a set of tacit know-how held by retiring staff, select capture methods and a home for the results.
- Using a value-creation framework, build an impact report that a sponsor can act on.

## Course Content

### Day 1: Foundations and Types of Practitioner Networks

- Wenger's Domain, Community and Practice Model Applied to Workplace Groups
- History of the Concept and Its Use in Organizations
- Network Types: Helping, Best-Practice, Innovation and Knowledge-Stewarding
- Characteristics of Healthy Groups Versus Teams and Committees
- Role in Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning

### Day 2: Launching a Network

- Domain Definition and Problem Statement for a New Group
- Participant Mapping and Recruitment of Founding Contributors
- Sponsor Pitch and Securing Leadership Support
- First-Ninety-Days Activity Plan
- Launch Event Design and Early Wins

### Day 3: Charters and Decision Rights

- Charter Template: Purpose, Scope, Boundaries and Deliverables
- Decision Rights and Accountability Matrix
- Governance Models by Maturity Stage
- Alignment With Organizational Policy, Culture and Information Rules
- Charter Review and Sign-Off With the Sponsor

### Day 4: Roles and Responsibilities

- Sponsor, Coordinator, Core Group and Periphery Roles
- Facilitator Role Description and Time Allocation
- Subject Matter Expert Stewardship of Standards and Lessons
- Recognition of Contributions and Career Linkage
- Succession Planning for Coordinators

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## Day 5: Facilitation Techniques

- Peer Assist and After-Action Review Sessions
- Case Clinics and Structured Problem-Solving Rounds
- Psychological Safety and Inclusive Participation
- Handling Dominant Voices and Silent Participants
- Conflict Resolution Between Senior Experts

## Day 6: Leadership and Influence

- Leading Without Formal Authority
- Mentoring, Coaching and Peer Learning Pairs
- Trust Building Across Departments and Sites
- Stakeholder Communication and Newsletters
- Sustaining Engagement and Celebrating Results

## Day 7: Digital and Hybrid Networks

- Platform Selection for Discussion, Documents and Search
- Moderation Rules and Online Etiquette
- Tagging, Curation and Findability of Answers
- Hybrid Meeting Design for Distributed Members
- Engagement Problems in Online Spaces and Their Fixes

## Day 8: Change, Innovation and Tacit Know-How

- Linking Networks to Change and Transformation Initiatives
- Idea Pipelines and Continuous Improvement Through Peer Groups
- Tacit Know-How Capture From Retiring Experts
- Integration With Talent Management and Training Plans
- Readiness for Future Technology and Work Patterns

## Day 9: Measuring Value and Scaling

- Wenger-Trayner Value-Creation Framework for Impact Stories
- Activity Metrics, Feedback Surveys and Business Indicators
- Sponsor Reporting and Continuous Improvement Plans
- Scaling Across Regions, Units and Sites
- Deciding to Split, Merge, Federate or Close a Group

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## Day 10: Facilitation and Governance Practice

- Exercise: Drafting the Charter for Your Own Network
- Exercise: Facilitating a Peer Assist With Feedback
- Exercise: Building an Impact Report for a Sponsor
- Relaunch Plan for a Declining Group
- Completing Your Charter and Facilitation Playbook

## Case Studies and Exercises

The following are suggested activities.

- Case study: Engineers across several oil and gas sites solve the same equipment problems separately; you design the network that links them and decide its governance.
- Case study: A hospital nursing practice group has lost participation; you diagnose the cause and decide on a relaunch or closure.
- Exercise: For a public sector agency with many retiring specialists, you select methods to capture their know-how.
- Exercise: For a bank's risk analysts spread across branches, you set up a digital space and its moderation rules.

## What You Take Back

You return with your Charter and Facilitation Playbook, built for a network you lead or plan to start. In your first month back you use it to agree the charter with your sponsor, run the next session to a set format and send the first impact report.

- A charter ready for sponsor sign-off, with decision rights.
- Role descriptions for sponsor, coordinator and core group.
- Session formats for peer assists and case clinics.
- An impact report template with indicators.

## Quick Answers FAQ

### What do I need before Communities of Practice: Facilitation and Governance?

You need to coordinate, sponsor or support a group of practitioners, or be about to. Basic familiarity with what a community of practice is helps; the course moves quickly to charters, roles, facilitation and reporting.

### How does CoP facilitation and governance training differ from an introductory community of practice course?

An introductory course explains the idea and how to start a group. Facilitation and governance training covers running sessions, setting decision rights, operating digital and multi-site groups and proving value to sponsors over time.

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## Why do communities of practice fail after launch?

Most fade because nobody owns decisions, sessions lack a format, contributors get no recognition and sponsors see no evidence of value. A charter, clear roles, regular facilitated sessions and simple impact reporting address each cause.

## What do I take back from community of practice governance training?

You take back a Charter and Facilitation Playbook for your own network: charter, role descriptions, session formats and an impact report template, ready to agree with your sponsor.

## For Your Manager

After this course the team member can set up and govern a practitioner network, facilitate sessions that surface expertise and report the network's value in terms a sponsor can use. They bring back a Charter and Facilitation Playbook, first used to agree the charter with the sponsor and run the next network session.

training@mercury-training.com
www.mercury-training.com