

Community Building for Major Facilities

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Community Building Report

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Community Building

- A community of practice (CoP) – “a group of people who share a common interest, profession, or passion and actively engage in collaborative learning and knowledge sharing” (Wenger, 1998)



Wenger, E. (1998). Communities of practice: Learning as a social system. *Systems Thinker*, 9, 2-3.

Graduate Research Assistants

- Introduce and acknowledge the 3 graduate research assistants at TTU, a Hispanic Serving Institution



Mahedi
Hasan



Sayo
Okunloye



Joni
Litsey

Zoom Interviews with MF Professionals

- 23 interviews across 21 MFs, mid-size facilities, and related orgs in 2023
- Length of interviews:
 - Longest = 65 minutes; Shortest = 29 minutes
 - Average = 48 minutes.
- Professional roles in the sample:
 - 13 directors/managers
 - 4 project staff, 3 technical staff, and 3 scientists



Q1: Is there a sense of community among MFs?

- Yes, a sense of community - “When people know each other, share experiences with each other” (interview excerpt).
 - Experienced more at the management level, less so at the member level
- However, each MF has a specific science mission, so they often face unique challenges.
 - So it can feel a bit siloed sometimes.
- Common interests/challenges that help create a sense of community
 - Cloud
 - Cybersecurity
 - Long-term data archive strategies
 - The pandemic (note: CI4Resilience infographic/handout at check-in desk)



Q2: Why is building a CoP for MFs important?

- Time vs. Values – Everyone is busy, a CoP has to provide values.
- Value 1 – Learn from Others Who Came Before You
 - “If you talk about the build phase, there are other MFs out there that have been there for 20 years. And so you could ask them the question – Well, what do you do with data once it’s 10 years old or 20 years old? Do people still want it? How do you archive it?” (interview excerpt).
- Value 2 – You Don’t Know When You Need a Community
 - “You don't know why you're going to need [an MF community]. You might not need it right away, but when you need it, you're gonna be happy when you do need it. And you don't know when you're gonna need it” (interview excerpt).



Q3: What strategies can help build a CoP for MF professionals?

(descriptive, including what CI Compass is already doing)

1. Identifying common interests/challenges
2. Promoting knowledge sharing
3. Organizing guest sessions
4. Providing networking opportunities
5. Facilitating collaborative projects/initiatives
6. Exploring new partnerships
7. Establishing community guidelines by the community
8. Creating an inclusive environment
9. Maintaining feedback loops
10. Regularly evaluating and iterating



Next Steps



- Quantify/measure the degree of community among MFs with a survey (to reach more MF professionals for input).
- Rate and rank the 10 community building strategies in the survey.
- Seek concrete examples of/suggestions for the 10 strategies.
- Use the 10 strategies as a checklist – Maintain what are currently being done, and explore creative ways to kick start new strategies.
- Seek even more strategies beyond the 10 on the checklist.
- Explore, implement, measure, and iterate!

