

Resources:

Stein, J. (n.d.). HR at MIT | Learning & Development | Using the Stages of Team Development.

<http://bit.ly/UsingTheStagesOfTeamDev> An article explores stages of team development: Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, Termination/Ending

Stodd, J. (2013). The lifecycle of a social learning community and the shape of moderation.

<http://bit.ly/TheLifecycle> A blog post proposes a model 'lifecycle' of moderation in a community, especially Forming, Guiding and Narrating



Thinking

Section 3 Learning Communities



Find out more at
bit.ly/AcademyLearningArchitecture

Forming, Guiding and Narrating Learning Communities

In social learning, communities **form**, are **guided** through learning and experience sharing and the resulting co-created story is **narrated**. While not defined or sequential, each stage represents a shift in community management strategy, according to the community's progress. The different community management approaches you might consider for each stage are shown here.



1 - Forming

Description:

- finds its trust and shared values, definition of the culture.

Community Feelings:

- excited to be part of the team and eager about the work ahead
- high positive expectations for the learning experience
- may also feel some anxiety, wondering how they will fit into the team.

Management Strategies:

- set shared purpose & permissions
- explore & normalise technology
- start relationships based on behaviour and reputation.

Examples:

- highlight the community's purpose, identify those with experience in learning communities.
Why are you here? Expectations and context
- invite learners to co-write the 'rules of engagement' and/or define community identity
- create examples that learners can refer to: Start a personal blog, Create a video diary or podcast
- start the conversations about topics if necessary and approach learners individually to identify barriers to participation
- find common ground: start an introduction or welcome forum
- invite learners to share stories of their everyday reality.

2 - Guiding

Description:

- to co-create meaning and share community knowledge.

Management Strategies:

- co-created narratives can be used as foundation documents for successive cohorts in the same learning programme
- recognise contributions by individuals, what sparks discussion and debate.

Examples:

- summarise discussions and clarify conclusions drawn by the learning community
- notice why and on what topics learners express differences of opinion
- work out loud-Show your work about community management and/or the learning programme topic
- co-create a sharing strategy for distributing the community's collective learning.

3 - Narrating

Description:

- to provide structure and norms for learners.

Management Strategies:

- build flexible and inclusive norms and expectations
- skill building: critique, feedback, challenge, constructive criticism, critical thinking.

Community Feelings:

- focus may shift from the tasks at hand to feelings of frustration or anger with the community's progress or process
- cohesion in response to differences and how community handles conflict
- increasing acceptance and group cohesion, recognition that diversity of opinions and experiences contributes to strong and rich learning experience
- constructive criticism is both possible and welcomed
- increasing sense of comfort in expressing "real" ideas and feelings.

Examples:

- set an example for contributions to discussion: appropriate feedback, reference to co-written 'rules', indirectly inviting social moderation
- respond to expressions of frustration appropriately and timely, rather than dismissing or ignoring
- dedicated space for feedback on process and progress, eg: video meetings, forum space
- recognising and writing about emergent social moderating behaviours
- guide discussions on topic and community behaviours. Notice and ask for learners' stories of successful collaboration and co-creation. Model personal and co-creative behaviours for social learning
- ask questions that bring conversation back on topic, refocus community on goals
- identify new themes or topics, new direction of conversation
- curate information on topics that arise.