

Wednesday,  
30th April 2003  
London

Tuesday,  
9th September 2003  
Brussels

Wednesday,  
5th November 2003  
London



# Communities of Practice Masterclass 2003

Latest in a long-running sell-out masterclass series

Understand and maximise the role of communities in your organisation

## Dr Etienne Wenger

Co-Author: *Cultivating Communities of Practice: a Guide to Managing Knowledge* (Harvard Business School Press, 2002).



## Richard McDermott

Co-Author: *Cultivating Communities of Practice: a Guide to Managing Knowledge* (Harvard Business School Press, 2002).



“ Knowledge has become the key to success. It is simply too valuable a resource to be left to chance” ”

(*Cultivating communities of practice: a guide to managing knowledge.*

By Etienne Wenger, Richard McDermott, and William Snyder)

This one-day interactive masterclass will give you a theoretical understanding of the power of communities of practice to share knowledge, stimulate innovation and impact upon your bottom line. In addition, you will build up practical experience of how to manage, nourish and maximise communities in your own organisation.

## Masterclasses will be organised into 6 sessions including:

- ✓ Cultivating communities of practice in your organisation: how do they serve their members and the organisations to which they belong?
- ✓ Communities as knowledge sharing structures: elements of a knowledge strategy
- ✓ Integrating communities into the organisation: integrating mechanisms and supporting tools
- ✓ Reflecting on how communities use collaborative problem solving
- ✓ Creating and stimulating specialised communities for innovation

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# Communities of Practice Masterclass 2003

## Understand and maximise the role of communities in your organisation

According to Richard McDermott and Etienne Wenger there is an increasing need for organisations to become more intentional and systematic about managing knowledge. Cultivating communities of practice in strategic areas of the business is the first step you should be taking in order to manage knowledge effectively.

Knowledge has become a key element in ensuring the success of your organisation. "Companies need to understand precisely what knowledge will give them a competitive advantage. They need to keep this knowledge on the cutting edge, deploy it, leverage it in operations and spread it across the organisation" 'Cultivating Communities of Practice: a Guide to Managing Knowledge' Etienne Wenger, Richard McDermott, William M. Snyder (Harvard Business School Press, 2002). Thus cultivating communities of practice in your organisation is integral to managing knowledge and encouraging innovation.

The Communities of Practice Masterclass 2003 will draw upon Etienne and Richard's vast experience to provide you with guidelines to develop your communities of practice into tangible business assets. In particular, they will focus on how to leverage communities to drive overall company strategy, generate new business opportunities, tie personal development to corporate goals, transfer best practices and recruit and retain talent.

The event will be structured to include a balance of theoretical and practical sessions. As a delegate you will also be encouraged to share as a group your own experiences of managing communities and interact with the course leaders. Advanced participants will be required to think out of the box and engage in a shared exploration of leading edge issues.

### Who should attend the Communities of Practice Masterclass 2003?

- Managers at all levels wanting to understand the importance and potential of communities of practice in their own organisation
- Professionals responsible for internal communications and organisational development, HR professionals, marketing and training professionals
- Change agents at all levels wishing to understand and harness the power of communities including: transforming organisational change, nurturing communities of practice, stimulating innovation, transferring knowledge and communicating values
- Practitioners wanting to build communities of practice

### Suggested pre-masterclass reading for delegates:

#### For the application of a community-based approach to knowledge in organisations:

*Cultivating communities of practice: a guide to managing knowledge*  
By Etienne Wenger, Richard McDermott, and William Snyder, Harvard Business School Press, 2002.

*Communities of practice: the organisational frontier*  
By Etienne Wenger and William Snyder. Harvard Business Review. January-February 2000, pp. 139-145.

#### For technology issues:

*Supporting communities of practice: a survey of community-oriented technologies.*  
By Etienne Wenger. Self-published report available at [www.ewenger.com/tech](http://www.ewenger.com/tech), 2001.

#### For in-depth coverage of the learning theory:

*Communities of practice: learning, meaning, and identity*  
By Etienne Wenger, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

### Benefits of attending the Communities of Practice Masterclass series 2003

**Come face to face with the leading experts in the field of communities of practice**

**Gain an insight into the latest thought leadership on how to build and maximise communities in your organisation**

**Engage in conversations with your peers around the wider issues concerning how communities can impact your company's bottom line**

**Use this opportunity to build your own network of contacts**

**Base future recommendations on fact, not intuition, and move toward best practice**

# Understand and maximise the role of communities in your organisation schedule

**08:00** Registration and coffee

**08:30** **SESSION 1** **WHAT?: the state of the field**

Establishing common ground for the workshops to build upon:

- What key concepts and principles are we going to build on?
- How has the field evolved?
- Where are communities of practice being used in organisations today?
- What is our own experience with communities of practice?

**Etienne Wenger**

**SESSION 2** **WHY?: the value of communities of practice**

Exploring the business case for communities of practice:

- What are the short and long-term values of communities of practice?
- How do they serve their members?
- How do they serve organisations?
- How to balance the potential benefits and risks?

**Etienne Wenger**

**11:00** Coffee and networking

**11:15** **SESSION 3** **HOW?: open discussion on cultivating communities of practice in organisations**

Identifying issues and cases raised by participants: the purpose of this session is to start a collaborative discussion on selected topics (to be continued in the afternoon):

Potential topics include:

- Community development: stages and design principles
- Key roles inside and outside communities
- Large and distributed communities
- Measuring the value of communities
- Strategic capability building
- Community-based knowledge initiatives
- The role of community-oriented technology
- Specific cases/problems/next steps submitted by participants

**Etienne Wenger**

**12:30** Lunch and networking

**13:30** **SESSION 4** **Communities as knowledge sharing structures**

Considering different types of knowledge sharing structures:

- Elements of a knowledge strategy
- Strategic and spontaneous communities
- Centres of excellence
- Other knowledge sharing structures

**Richard McDermott**

**SESSION 5** **Integrating communities into the organisation**

Discussing mechanisms for integrating communities into your organisation

- Participants identify which integrating mechanisms to discuss
- In-depth discussion on integrating mechanisms

**Richard McDermott**

**16:00** Coffee and networking

**16:15** **SESSION 6** **Open discussion continued**

Further collaborative discussion of issues and cases raised by participants

Potential topics include:

- Expanding on themes from the morning discussion
- Implication of the case discussion for other knowledge sharing issues
- Reflection on how communities use collaborative problem-solving

**Richard McDermott**

**17:30** Close of masterclass

**Other Masterclasses in this series include:**  
**Organisational Storytelling and Narrative Patterns**  
Facilitated by Dave Snowden and Steve Denning

18th Feb 2003, London  
16th September 2003, London

9th April 2003, Brussels  
18th November 2003, Amsterdam

## Dr. Etienne Wenger: Sessions one, two and three

Dr. Etienne Wenger is a globally recognised thought leader in the field of communities of practice and their application to organisations. He was featured by Training Magazine in their “A new Breed of Visionary” series. A pioneer of the “community of practice” research, he was the co-author with Jean Lave of *Situated Learning* (Cambridge University Press, 1991), where the term was coined. More recently, he was the author of *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), a book that lays out a theory of learning based on the concept of communities of practice. 2002 saw the publication of a new book, *Cultivating Communities of Practice: a Guide to Managing Knowledge* (Harvard Business School Press, 2002). Co-authored with Bill Snyder and Richard McDermott, this new book is addressed to practitioners in organisations who want to base their knowledge strategy on communities of practice.

Etienne’s work is influencing a growing number of organisations in the private and public sectors. Indeed, cultivating communities of practice is increasingly recognised as the most effective way for organisations to address the knowledge challenges they face. Etienne helps organisations apply these ideas through consulting, workshops, and public speaking, and courses, both online and face-to-face. He is a founder and managing director of CPsquare, a cross-organisational, cross-sector community of practice.

## Richard McDermott Ph.D: sessions four, five and six

Richard McDermott, President of McDermott Consulting, is one of the leading thinkers, authors and consultants on designing knowledge organisations and building communities of practice. For nearly two decades, he has been designing knowledge-intensive organisations and worked within engineering, sales, and manufacturing industries. He has been the subject matter expert for two national studies of best practices in knowledge management, one on creating a knowledge-sharing culture, the other on institutionalising communities of practice. His clients include Shell Oil Co., Hewlett-Packard, Agilent Technologies, Aventis Pharmaceutical, Ericsson, LISC, Schlumberger, Conservation International, The European Commission and Ben & Jerry’s. In addition to writing and consulting, Richard has developed a comprehensive tool kit for community leaders.

