On Line Communities of Practice

Burden or boon for the VET practitioners?

Instructional Intelligence

- Instructional intelligence aims to develop student learning through a mixture of curriculum content, structuring effective group work, teaching tactics and strategies, knowledge of how students learn and information about personal a systemic change. (Bennett, B., Rolheiser, C. 2001)

- *It's the sharing of information, without the I'm not telling anyone element. Each and everyone here is willing to share thoughts, ideas, help, tips etc, not to mention the most basic of all, the Aussie mateship, which we extend to our o/s mates as well. It works because we're all ready to step up and have a say, share and spare a kind word for a buddy in need. Many of us have made good friendships because of the forum too. Regular meet ups, drop ins etc are now the norm.*

- *Today I think the members' feeling of ownership of the forum is what keeps it going strong and they have that because of the hard draft (graft?) maintaining the rules. It isn't evident by just visiting a forum the amount of work involved.*

- *Older folk do not see the online possibilities as serious. Universities are struggling getting older academics to even use email as a valid submission medium for papers. Students are forced to communicate in hard copy with these recalcitrant academics*

- *Without leadership and mods, this forum would have petered out within a year. Mini projects to build cohesion, shared skill building, opening up research channels all these are services the forum offers, so you need to be able to define, implement and support these services. With sponsors, with competitions, with people saying hey lets go this way, come on guys, x promotion with the magazines. This forum is a business guys, it has a plan, a vision, and was executed to plan. Sometimes the plan was changed, or guidelines changed, but the vision was always clear.*

Designer Quest 19 entry

Barriers for Lecturers

1. Edna is clunky (2)
2. When I send an email, I get lots of replies but when I use Edna there is no response (1) (see above)
3. No one is promoting it(2)
4. What is in it for me (4)
5. II is already working – why do I need this? (see above) (1)
6. Other things to do in my ARD time (1)
7. Lecturers are split in too many directions already/ too many changes for TAFE lecturers already (3)
8. No time (7)
9. Don't have time to type stuff (1)
10. Prefer face to face contact/prefer to talk to people / Unsatisfactory way of communicating (7)
11. Do not like online environments/ Do not like to learn online (6)
12. Fear of open forum (1)
13. Have other networks for support (1)
14. I forget about it (2)
15. Not much activity (1)
16. Did not know about it (4)
17. Pedestrian (1)
18. Inertia (1)

Conclusions

- Online CoPs do not happen by themselves
- Active and passionate moderation is essential
- Time must be given for moderation
- Potential participants need a reason to use them
- Some people do not see value in online communication
- Lecturers need to accept that CoPs can be part of their working life
- Management needs to understand online communication themselves so they can promote it.