Call for Chapters

Submission Deadline July 31st 2002

Knowledge Networks: Innovation through Communities of Practice:

A book edited by Paul Hildreth & Chris Kimble

1   Aims and objectives

Our aim for this book is to bring together the experience and expertise of people who have worked with CoPs in real world situations: the objective is to examine CoPs from a practical, rather than a purely academic, point of view. Hence, this call for papers is directed at those who can provide real examples of supporting real CoPs. Our expectation is that this book will provide a genuine and useful resource to practitioners and academics that work in the field of KM and CoPs.

2   Introduction to the subject area

Recently in the field of Knowledge Management (KM), there has been an increased recognition of the importance of less structured forms of knowledge (often known simply as tacit knowledge) and the role played by social networks in stimulating innovation and the creation of new knowledge.

Traditional approaches to KM have focused on the use of information systems to capture, codify and store more structured form of knowledge (explicit knowledge). However, the limitation of this approach in most organisations is that there remains a considerable body of knowledge that cannot be easily captured, codified or stored. Many companies are now discovering that the real value of KM is not in the sharing of documents, or the combination of databases, but rather in the sharing of insights and ideas, which although hard to document, are vital in the creation and assimilation of new knowledge.

Communities of Practice (CoPs) are seen by many as providing the environment where this less-structured knowledge is created, developed, nurtured and sustained. As such, CoPs have begun to attract much attention from consultants, industry and academics all of which have become increasingly interested in the role that CoPs could play in the facilitation of innovation and the sharing of knowledge and best practice in organisations.

It is claimed that the network of relationships that are developed in a CoP, the inner motivation that drives them, and the new knowledge they produce, all lead to the creation of an environment that is rich in creativity and innovation. CoPs can function as boundary-spanning units, assist in finding and sharing best practices and serve as engines for the development of social capital. The recognition of the implications that such communities might have for the creation and transfer of tacit knowledge within the workplace mean that many now regard CoPs as a vitally important component of any viable KM strategy.

3   Prospective Audience

CoPs are attracting interest both in academia and in commercial organisations. Academic researchers are undertaking research into CoPs, how they can be supported, the relationships within them, the process of creativity, the creation of new knowledge. Consultants in the field are supporting, coaching and facilitating CoPs, and advising organisations as to how they can identify and nurture CoPs and how they can benefit from them. It is to be expected that this book will be of interest to both academics and practitioners.

4   Themes and major sections
Section 1: Communities of Practice
The business view – what they are, the benefits they bring to an organisation.
*The anthropological v*iew - exploring CoPs from a more theoretical standpoint.
A critical review - 'Can a CoP be managed?' or 'the problem of knowledge transfer'

Section 2: Building and sustaining a CoP
Coaching CoPs - a practical 'how to do it' focus, possibility linking to a case study
Sustaining a CoP - more of a focus on sustaining a CoP, possibly with tips and pointers
IT support for CoPs - the emphasis will be on supporting CoPs with technologies.

Section 3: CoPs and Knowledge management
KM and CoPs - CoPs as part of a wider KM strategy
Networks in CoPs - CoPs as an environment for sharing knowledge
Innovation in CoPs - how CoPs can generate new knowledge and innovation

Section 4: CoPs and Virtual Organisations
CoPs and globalisation - Issues of time/culture/language barriers and virtual CoPs
*Boundary objects in C*oPs - boundary objects and how barriers are overcome.
A critical review - can CoPs be virtual and the role of face-to-face communication

5   Key dates and author instructions
Prospective authors are invited to send a 500 word outline proposal by e-mail (Word document) to Chris Kimble <kimble@cs.york.ac.uk> by July 31, 2002. The proposal should clearly explain the content of the proposed chapter and suggest a theme and section under which it should appear. Authors of accepted proposals will be notified by August 31st 2002 and sent guidelines for the completion of the final chapter. Final chapters should be no more than 14 pages long (approx 3,300 words, line spacing = double spaced, page size = 8.5 x 11 inches) and should be submitted by November 15th 2002. All submitted chapters will be reviewed on a blind review basis. The book is scheduled to be published by Idea Group, Inc., publisher of the "Idea Group Publishing", "Information Science Publishing" and "IRM Press" imprints in 2003

Date	Activity
July 31, 2002	Proposals to be sent to editors
August 31 2002	Notification of acceptance by editors
November 15, 2002	Full chapters to be sent to editors
December 31 2002	Reviewers comments returned to authors
January 31, 2003	Revised chapters to be sent to editors
February 28, 2003	Final acceptance