

ABOUT LEARNING COMMUNITIES

I. Ten Social Practices of the learning communities in the National Writing Project from Lieberman & Wood's *Inside the National Writing Project*

1. Approaching every colleague as a potentially valuable contributor
2. Colleagues teaching other colleagues
3. Creating public forums for sharing, dialogue, and critique
4. Turning ownership of learning over to learners
5. Situating learning in practice and relationships as well as in relevant knowledge
6. Providing multiple entry points into learning communities
7. Reflecting on practice while reflecting on learning
8. Sharing leadership
9. Adopting a stance of inquiry
10. Rethinking professional identity and linking it to professional community

II. Ideas from Etienne Wenger's *Communities of Practice*.

a. Overlapping dynamics in learning communities:

- ü Identity
- ü Meaning
- ü Practice
- ü Community

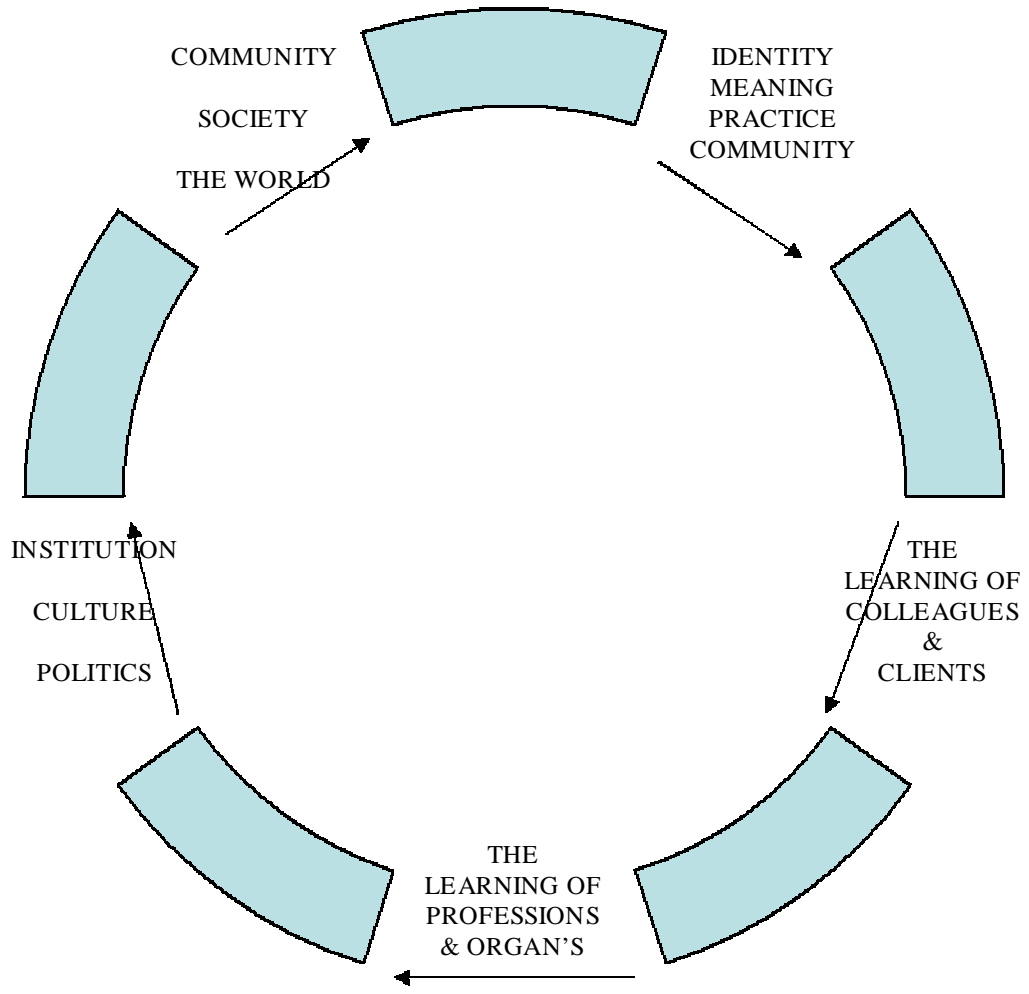
b. Successful learning communities focus on all four.

III. Potential barriers to successful learning communities

- a. time/schedule/job descriptions
- b. authority/control
- c. lack of purpose/shared vision or conflicting purposes/visions
- d. poor interpersonal relationships
- e. poor communication/dialogue
- f. history/habit
- g. cultural norms
- h. mono-culturalism

IV. Senge's five disciplines:

1. Personal Mastery
2. Mental Models
3. Shared Vision
4. Team Learning
5. Systems Thinking



THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF LEARNING COMMUNITIES

PRACTICES

Reflective Action

Habits of Mind:

- **Inquiry**
- **Continuous Improvement**
- **Systems Thinking**
- **Weighing multiple perspectives**

Skills / Techniques

Teaming

Learning-Centered

MEANING

Vision

Mental Models

Significance

Values

Ethics

Appreciation for Diversity

IDENTITY

Commitment

Desire

Recognition from others; recognition of others

Autonomy

Contribution

RELATIONSHIPS

Interpersonal dynamics

Shared vision

Team learning

Social practices

Cultural norms

Inclusion of Voices/Multiple Perspectives