Summary:
A KM community of practice has been established at a large pharmaceutical company to 1.) promote education on knowledge management practices, 2.) to provide a mechanism for sharing ideas on how to implement new processes that promote knowledge management, and 3.) to identify potential champions for fostering change in the company. As a means to foster success of the initiative, participants at the Dec 13th meeting of the KMG identified key helping and hindering factors that may impact the success of this initiative. They then offered several suggestions that would address some of the factors that the presenting group selected as most important.

The KM CoP Hopes and Fears:

Current Status: Two meetings so far with a focus defined - building momentum

Desired future: Vibrant place to share ideas and expertise and do problem solving about KM CoP will actually participate in the facilitation of knowledge based activities

Worst Scenario: CoP dies, people talk more than do

Helping and Hindering Factors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helping Factors</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Hindering Factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Enthusiasm</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Geographic locations are spread out</td>
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<td>General Organizational Support</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Other projects compete for participants time</td>
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<td>Have participation across locations and</td>
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<td>Not currently using technology to support the community</td>
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<td>departments</td>
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<td>There is a drive for business efficiency</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Bad mouthing and cynicism regarding KM as the latest fad</td>
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<td>Performance measures are beginning to</td>
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<td>Lack of financial support</td>
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<td>support KM</td>
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<td>Recognition of the value of expertise by</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>People practicing KM don’t know about the CoP</td>
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<td>scientists</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lack of metrics to measure performance of CoP</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lack of awareness</td>
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5 = very strong factor, 1 = weak factor

Selected Points for enhancement (unedited notes taken from flip chart sheets):

How to build awareness of the KM CoP?
1. Use integrated intranet to feature KM success story of month
2. Newsletters; early ally in CorpComm
3. Tie KM effort to specific project in each group/department to grab their attention
4. CIO/CEO endorsement of its value/importance to company
5. Communicate clear, realistic vision of CoP—user benefits and value
6. Identify the WIIFM factor for individuals with shared goals/issues
7. Key ally in CorpComm and look for ally in HR/HRIS and intranet area for ways of leveraging success publicly
8. Identify a success in one sector/location and use CoP to present to entire universe

How to overcome cynicism about KM?
1. Create simple definitions
2. Collect success stories
3. Get a quick success and publicize well
4. Link initiatives to key business objectives
5. Keep objectives simple and realistic for first initiative
6. Enlist and publicize champion(s) at senior level in organization
7. Identify successes that contradict their objections
8. Identify KM skills/competencies that all people already have and use
9. Make KM/CoP real world. Link to current position and environment. Solve a real world issue
10. KISS
11. Broaden the base of participation

How to build metrics/ measures into CoP and KM in general?
1. Anecdotal success stories
2. After action reviews
3. Develop measurables baseline (e.g., cost of searching, delays, etc.) – then survey – then analyze
4. Describe drivers (i.e., factors that KM affects which move corporate goals)
5. Choose/create a compelling mission. I would suggest deciding to “do,” not just exchange info.
   And tie to business problem.
6. Enroll a sponsor/champion. The compelling mission will help you.
7. Report back regularly to this champion. Realize though that he/she may pull the plug on you.
8. Identify and ride along with other metrics/benchmarking projects in the company. Can you demonstrate effect on a metric already being measured?
9. Define expectations with respect to time and show processes to manage and improve
10. Identify mission of business, survey current effectiveness and use KM to improve

How to overcome geography spread?
1. Use Archiving and E-mailing BBS-Type System for each “Community of Practice”.
2. Use Virtual Network Technology.
3. There is no geography spread on the Web!
4. Moderated threaded-discussion-group on Intranet and ensure that stewards “seed” threads.
5. Web-based discussion of Usenet.
6. Use other travel occasions to schedule “Community of Practice” events; e.g., if you are going be in Europe for another reason, add a “Community of Practice” activity to your trip.
7. Use geographic locations as a positive. Capitalize on the unique and best practices for each location.
8. Ask for help on the most pressing challenges.

How to build on current enthusiasm of current “community of practice”?
1. Demonstrate a success or two! Make them real, Suggest a significant problem that is addressed.
2. Demonstrate how it benefits current work processes.
3. Promote participation. Same as a facilitator.
5. Identify some specific deliverables for the “Community of Practice” to complete – then celebrate!!
7. Recognize and reward contributions of participants.
8. Do not become a clique.
9. Establish regular communication vehicle within the Group.

How to build experience to make community of practice successful?
1. Join “knowledge management” associations (i.e., Conference Board).
2. Educate management on how a “Community of Practice” works in a hierarchy organization, so that participants and their managers feel comfortable with the concept.
3. Provide summaries of current literature and conference procedures.
4. Identify structure, function, process of effective “Community of Practice” examples
5. Borrow from other companies’ best practices.
6. IBM executive center has 2-day training in case studies.
7. Research, adopt, apply, communicate and celebrate.
8. Choose a few very-small problems and just SOLVE THEM.
9. Get in and get your feet wet. Work with small projects or efforts to build experience and confidence. ACT.