Aalto University
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Cultivating an inter-organizational community of practice

Case Lean Service Creation Community

Master's Thesis

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Abstract:

In the organizations of today, learning and knowledge management are becoming invariably important. Communities of practice have gained a lot of popularity during the past two decades, due to their potential in creating value in multiple different ways through managing and creating knowledge. Still, large part of the research is based on communities of practice created within a single organization.

This study analyzes the situation of a potential inter-organizational community of practice and creates development recommedations by combining the existing theory with empiric results obtained from this community of practice. The examined, potential community of practice is created around a service creation methodology called Lean Service Creation. This methodology was created by the orderer of this thesis, a Finnish IT-consultancy called Futurice.

The study utilized the principles of grounded theory and single-case studies to explore the subject. Data were collected through 16 semi-structured, explorative interviews were conducted between February and September in 2017. Three of the interviewees were community creators and 13 community members.

The community creators did not have a clear and shared understanding regarding the future of the community. They had difficulties in finding their role in relation to the community cultivation activities, but had a lot of different ideas of their potential roles. Currently, the community creators thought that the community building was frozen, although they also recognized multiple values it could generate when alive and functioning.

The community members viewed the community as a very positive initiative. They wished for more clarity and continuity in the community activities and prefered face-to-face meetings instead digital platforms. The organizational context of the potential members affected the kind of activities and support they wished for. There were also similarities recognized in the identities of the community members, which serves as a fruitful ground for the community cultivation.

The community itself is in its infancy, but has a potential to become a good exmaple of inter-organizational collaboration. After obtaining a clarity in their own priorities and roles, the community creators need to start actively cultivating the community, if they decide to invest in it.

Although the findings of this study are specific to this community of practice, hopefully they can act as inspiration and guidance for other inter-organizational learning and collaboration endeavours.

Keywords: communities of practice, knowledge management, organizational learning

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Tiivistelmä:

Oppimisesta ja tietojohtamisesta on tullut alati tärkeämpää nykyajan organisaatioille. Käytäntöyhteisöjen suosio tietojohtamisessa ja tiedonluonnissa on lisääntynyt dramaattisesti viimeisen kahdenkymmenen vuoden aikana. Käytäntöyhteisöt luovat arvoa monilla eri tasoilla ja tavoin. Kuitenkin suurin osa käytäntöyhteisöjen tutkimuksesta pohjautuu edelleen yhden organisaation sisäisten käytäntöyhteisöjen tutkimiseen kerralla.

Tämä diplomityö keskittyy analysoimaan erästä potentiaalista käytäntöyhteisöä ja esittämään suosituksia tämän käytäntöyhteisön kehittämisestä. Analyysi toteutetaan yhdistelemällä olemassa olevaa teoriaa diplomityön yhteydessä tehdyn empirisen tutkimuksen löydöksiin. Tutkimuskohteena oleva käytäntöyhteisö on rakentunut palvelumuotoilumetodologian ympärille. Tämä metodologia on nimeltään Lean Service Creation ja sen on kehittänyt työn tilaaja, suomalainen IT-konsulttiyritys Futurice.

Tämä työ hyödyntää Grounded theory -lähestymistapaa sekä tapaustutkimusta syventyäkseen määriteltyyn aiheeseen. Työn data kerättiin toteuttamalla 16 puolistrukturoitua, tutkivaa haastattelua helmi- ja syyskuun välisenä aikana vuonna 2017. Kolme haastateltavista oli yhteisön luojia ja loput 13 sen jäseniä.

Yhteisön luojilla ei ollut yhtenevää käsitystä yhteisön tulevaisuudesta. Heidän oli näin ollen, myös vaikeaa löytää omaa rooliaan yhteisön aktiivisena ylläpitäjänä ja kehittäjänä. Ideoita mahdollisista sopivista rooleista kuitenkin oli. Yhteisön luojat pitivät yhteisön nykytilaa hyytyneenä ja jäissä olevana, vaikka tunnistivatkin mitä arvoa yhteisö toimiessaan voisi luoda.

Yhteisön jäsenet suhtautuivat yhteisöön erittäin positiivisesti. He toivoivat jatkuvuutta, selkeyttä sekä kasvokkaisia tapaamisia yhteisön toimintaan. Yhteisön jäsenten kotiorganisaation luoma konteksti vaikutti siihen minkälaista tukea he yhteisöltä toivoivat. Yhteisön jäsenillä tunnistettiin yhteneviä identiteetin piirteitä, mikä toimii hedelmällisenä alustana yhteisön kehittämiselle.

Yhteisö on vielä lapsen kengissä, mutta potentiaalia sen kasvulle löytyy. Yhteisön luojien saavutettua yhteisymmärryksen seuraavien hankkeiden ja prioriteettien suhteen, yhteisön kehitystehtäviin on ryhdyttävä rivakasti, mikäli se sisältyy prioriteetteihin.

Tutkimustulosten toivotaan inspiroivan erilaisiin organisaatioiden välisiin oppimis- ja yhteistyöhankkeisiin, vaikka työn tulokset eivät olekaan laajamittaisesti yleistettävissä.

Avainsanat: käytäntöyhteisö, tietojohtaminen, oppiva organisaatio

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Last but not least, I would like to thank my family and friends. Thank you mum for the golden proof reading and additional comments until the last hours. For your sake, I hope I never end up writing a PhD. Thank you, my wonderful friends, for your never-ending patience with me and my endless hurry and multitasking. I am not sure how much time we have spent together during the last five years, but I know for a fact that the last four months I have been gone with the wind. Time come out of the cave.

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Nelli Myllylä

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1. Introduction

Organizations are often managed as they were on the industrial era even today (Saint-Onge, 2003, p.9). They often lay focus on managing their tangible capital as it is easier to grasp and conceive, although, for example financial capital is not any more the barrier for development and reaching goals (Saint-Onge, 2003, p.4). The new barrier is related to providing the needed capabilities to solve the task at hand, which is a knowledge bound obstacle.

In the era of knowledge, when new knowledge and information is being generated on continuously increasing pace, managing and leveraging the mass of knowledge is a growing challenge (Wenger and Snyder, 2001, p.2). This is an issue that cuts across organizations and our whole society. Organizations' knowledge capital is what can provide them with competitive advantage in this time (Saint-Onge, 2003, p.4; Summer et al., 2010, p. 44-45) and help them solve the task at hand.

In addition to managing the vast knowledge amounts within an organization, the discussions both in the academia and in the practicing field are directing towards harvesting knowledge and learning in ecosystems and networks (Lesser & Storck, 2004, p.109). Organizations are facing a challenge of learning in and from their networks (Kekäle ,2003, p.245). There are also unanswered questions regarding how these networks could be utilized for business and innovation purposes (Kekäle, 2003, p.245), although it has been clear already for a while, that sources of innovation can be found outside the organization itself (von Hippel, 1988).

This study focuses on exploring the potential of learning from and with the network of the case company. The learning is enabled by developing a potential community of practice, which consists of members of the network. Whether within an organization or inter-organizational, communities of practice bring large amount of knowledge, both tacit and explicit, to the fingertips of one person and an organization. Communities of practice have also a huge potential in accelerating decision making in this era of information overflow (Garcia, 2005, p.20). As the

distance to experts on different fields decreases, and the amount of knowledge available increases, the quality of made decisions increases.

This study aims understand the development of CoPs in general and in specific in the context of an emerging community of practice formed around a design methodology called Lean Service Creation (LSC), created by the case company. Specific research questions developed from this problem area are:

1. How are communities of practice created and cultivated?
2. What is the developmental stage of the LSC community as a community of practice?
3. What should be the next actions for further developing the LSC community?

Research questions 1 is answered through literature review regarding communities of practice and their cultivation from different perspectives. Answers to research questions 2 and 3 stem from comparing and combining findings from the literature review and empiric discoveries.

The structure of this thesis is following. Chapter 2 will focus on the theoretical background of community of practice and its cultivation. The third chapter concentrates on research design. Fourth chapter goes through the results and lastly the fifth chapter discussed the results and states final recommendations.

1.1 Premises for the study – What is Futurice and Lean Service Creation?

Futurice, the case company, is a European IT consultancy focusing on creating successful services for their customers from varying fields. Futurice customers consist of a wide range of organizations from different fields, sizes and maturity in relation to digitalization. Futurice aims to provide holistic support and partnership for their customers, starting from strategic standpoints to the very end of implementation – to the last pixel and line of code.

Lean Service Creation is a toolkit that Futurice uses for creating successful digital services. Lean Service Creation, also known as LSC, is also used as a methodology for changing organizational culture. When a customer organization goes through an LSC program, they are using the LSC tools to innovate and simultaneously learn new ways of working that stand for modern working life values, such as transparency, trust and multi-disciplinarity. Apart from the expertise, the most important tools of LSC are canvases, post-its, a small handbook and the webpage http://www.leanservicecreation.com/.

Starting from year 2016 Futurice and their LSC team have been thinking about creating a wider community around LSC. The thought was initiated by the realization that some of the organizations were quicker to adapt into the new ways of working than the others. They took ownership of the new tools and created new process for spreading the knowledge and culture within their organization. When seeing this, one of the LSC team members realized that the representatives from different organizations could benefit a lot of learning from each other, and seeing and hearing different ways of approaching new organizational culture, innovation and ways of organizing these changes. This thesis aims to provide Futurice with understanding of the current status of the community and recommendations regarding how and where to head in future.

Community of practice was chosen as the theoretical framework, by the case company and the author, due to its known potential for sharing knowledge and developing a competence together (Garavan & Carbery, 2007, p.35; Pastroos, 2007, p.21). In addition, communities of practice have been seen as a collaborative strategy for bringing together working, learning and innovation (Gongla, 2001, p.842-843) and they can be used in an inter-organizational context (Garavan & Carbery, 2007, p.35).

2. Theoretical background

Theoretical background of this study is built on the perspective of examining the LSC community through the community of practice lens. The community of practice is an interesting and topical perspective to adopt and it has the potential of creating benefits on multiple different levels. Therefore, this study starts by examining what communities of practice are. Acronym CoP and term community can be considered to act as synonyms to a community of practice in this thesis. With the understanding of community of practice as a definition the study continues to discover how communities can be cultivated.

The terms utilized for search of references have been at least the following: developing CoP, creating CoP, successful CoP, cultivating CoP, inter-organizational CoP, CoP, virtual CoP, evaluating CoPs, successful CoP.

2.1 Defining community of practice

Wenger (1998, p.6-7) writes that CoPs are everywhere. They are not unfamiliar to us although they might be invisible. CoPs are present often in our hobbies, at work and even at home in our families. Where there are people organized around doing – practices – there usually are also communities around. Communities of practice are groups of people, who share the same interest or passion and get together regularly to learn and share their ideas and thoughts (Lesser and Strock, 2001, pp. 831).

Lesser and Storck (2003, p.109) say that we must think of a CoP "as an engine for the development of social capital". They argue that the "social capital resident in communities of practice leads to behavioral changes, which in turn positively influence business performance" (Lesser and Storck, 2003, p. 109). Social capital, in particular, they argue shortens the learning curve, increases responsiveness to customer experiences, reduces rework and prevents reinvention, and also increases innovation.

From a more organizational perspective communities of practice are places where problem identification, learning and knowledge creation can take place (Brown and Duguid, 2001). Wenger et al (2002, p.4) describe communities of practice as "groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in the area by interacting on an ongoing basis." (Also recognized by Summer et al. 2010, p. 45; Kohlbacher and Mukai, 2007, pp.9; Coakes, 2007, pp. 76; MCKellar et al., 2014)

What Wenger (1998, p.7) actually aims to achieve is, to redefine how we think and talk about learning with the help of communities of practice. For him, many of the older theories define learning narrowly and do not emphasize enough the fact that learning should be seen through social participation (Wenger, 1998, p.4). The concept of communities of practice is tool in reforming what learning is, how and in which context it happens and how it can be supported (Wenger, 1998, p.5&7).

As can be seen, there are multiple different definitions and approaches to communities of practice. As many of these definitions are directly from Wenger or are based on Lave and Wenger's thoughts regarding situated learning, they do not differ that much on this level yet. Slight difference can be seen regarding the different authors stance on the purpose of community of practice. As Wenger and many others (e.g. Summer et al. 2010, p. 45; Kohlbacher and Mukai, 2007, pp.9; Coakes, 2007, pp. 76; MCKellar et al., 2014) focus more on the individual's learning, problem solving and connection to other community members, Lesser and Storck directly focus on the social capital, that is created for the hosting organization.

It has also been discussed whether to lay the focus on 'practice' or 'community' regarding definition of community of practice (Pemberton, Mavin and Stalker, 2007, pp. 64). The connotation of word community is considered problematic in the term *community of* practice as it may be more suitable for some national contexts than other (Roberts, 2006, p.632).

As communities of practice as a definition has reached wide success during last two decades, this has also led to a diffusion of the term (Hildreth et al., 2000, p.29; Lindkvist, 2005, p.1190). To be able to better grasp the true core of communities of practice or other group level constructs, there have also been a wave of new theoretical community concepts that are often subsequent to community of practice or adjacent to it. Community of innovation is for example a version of community of practice that focuses on fostering innovation (Coakes, 2007, p.77). Lindkvist also presents a new concept on group level, which is knowledge collectivity (Lindkvist, 2005, p.1197). To better understand what community of practice is, it is next discussed through its key components, nature and structure.

2.1.1 Components of community of practice

This chapter aims to shed light on the key components of communities of practice. There are a few different divisions of key elements presented and additional depth is provided through Wenger's thorough theoretical elaboration.

The philosophical and theoretical scrutiny of what communities of practice really consist of starts with understanding what practice really stands for. Wenger (1998, p.47) defines practice as a doing, which has a historical and a social context. It also provides us with purpose and structure for the doing. Therefore, practice is always social, it concerns both explicit and tacit knowledge and it includes acting and knowing. Practice also creates an interface for us to act and connect with the world (Wenger, 1998, p.51).

Wenger (1998, p.52) also considers that practice is strongly connected to meaning. Meaning is created in some point of negotiations of the meaning itself. The negotiation of meaning has a dual nature and consists of *participation* and *reification* in interaction. Participation and reification form a fundamental base for human experience of meaning and are therefore connected to practice (Wenger, 1998, p.52). Wenger (1998, p.53) concludes about meaning: "…meaning is neither in us, nor in the world, but in the dynamic relation of living in the world."

Participation for Wenger (1998, p.55) means living in a world of social experiences and memberships in social communities and active engagement in shared activities. Participation includes us fully: our bodies, minds, emotions etcetera. Taking part is a process, which involves taking actions as well as having a connection (1998, p.55-56).

Reification in turn means "To treat (an abstraction) as substantially existing, or as a concrete material object" (by Webster's *New World College Dictionary (4th edition)*. Reification is an important process for every practice (Wenger, 1998, p.59). Products of reification become the focus of negotiation of meaning and they also shape our experiences (Wenger, 1998, p.59). When we create a process or a tool to project our thought into the world, we simultaneously define how people behave around the tool or the process – we define the concept of these tools and processes.

Reification and participation exist in harmony and complement each other in negotiation of meaning. Sometimes they are so seamlessly interwoven, that a meaning seems only to be a meaning and not an interactive co-creation of reification and participation. Reification and participation bridge over the limitations of one another. The production or meaning and the continuity of the meaning depend on the proportions of reification and participation in the negotiations. This duality consisting of reification and participation is a fundamental aspect in discussing communities of practice, their evolvement, practices, identities and organizational context. (Wenger, 1998, p.63-65)

There are three important dimensions that define practice as the property of community, which can be seen in figure 1. (Wenger, 1998, p.72-73). These three dimensions are:
1. Mutual engagement
2. A joint enterprise
3. As shared repertoire

Network of relationships

Homomgenous or diverse

Coherence

Defines membership

Mutual engagement

A joint enterprise

A shared repertoire

Negotiated together

Indigenous enterprise

Regime of mutual accountaility

Drastically varying components

Ground for mutual engagement

Reificative and participative parts

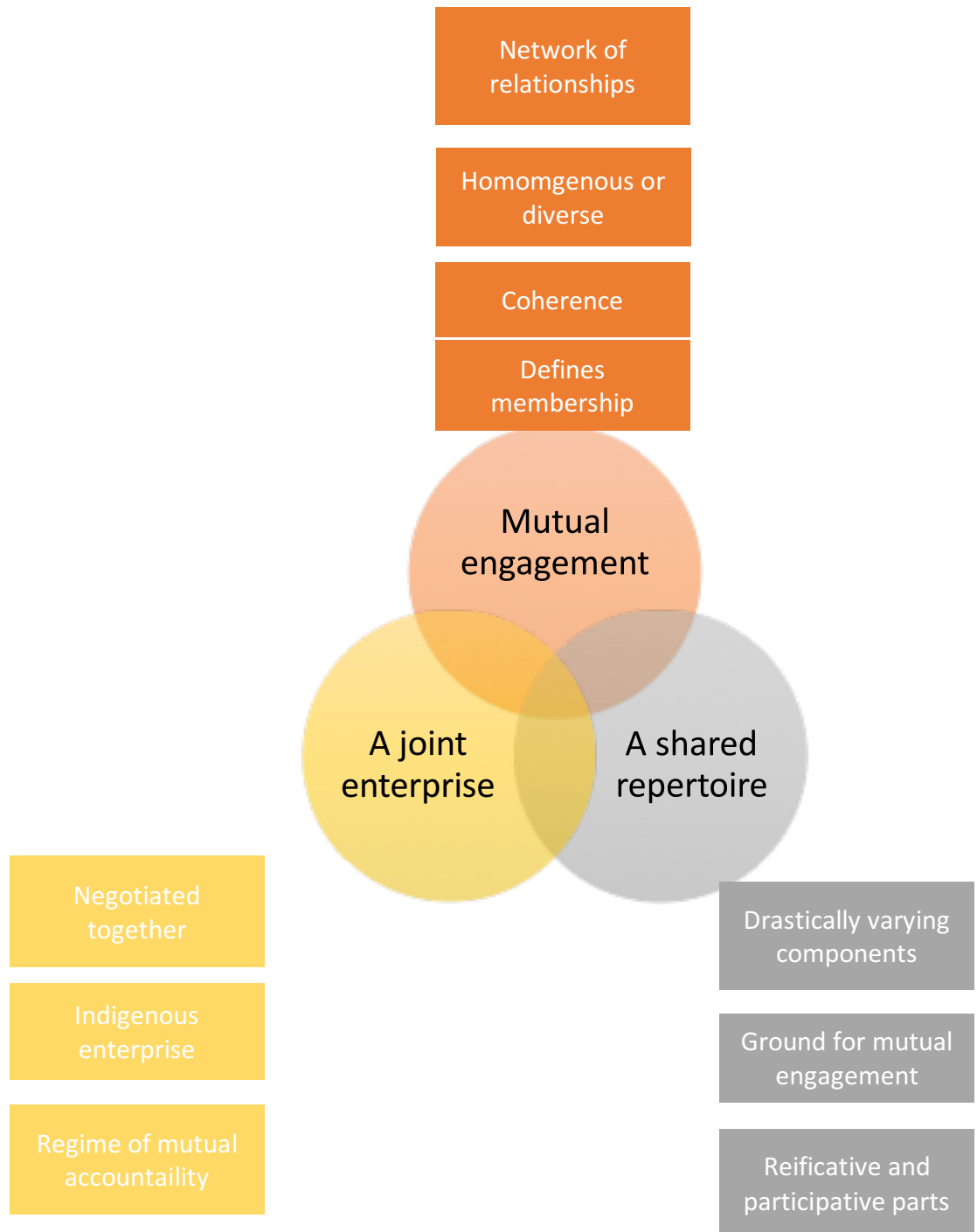Figure 1 | *Crucial components of a community of practice that enables learning (based on Wenger, 1998).*

Mutual engagement

Mutual engagement defines the coherence of the community as well as the membership in a community. Merely belonging to an organization or a network does not entail that there is a community of practice in question. Neither does geographical proximity. For Wenger (1998, p.74-76) mutual engagement can be

approached through enabling engagement, diversity and partiality, and mutual relationships.

To be able to engage in a community one first needs to be included. To be able to feel belonging to a community demands engagement in its activities and rules. The community also needs maintenance, to keep it functioning well and viable. Maintenance is an important functionality in the community although it might sometimes be invisible. (Wenger, 1998, p.74-75)

Both homogeneity and diversity are needed in a well-functioning community. Homogeneity brings the members together, helps them to find similarities and to get along. Diversity supports everybody to have a meaning and to build their own identity in the community. Mutual engagement is naturally present when the community members possess different knowledge and competence. It is often beneficial to belong to two different kinds of communities of practice: one where competences overlap, such as a group of specialists, and another where skills and competences complement one another, such as a multi-disciplinary team striving for a common goal. (Wenger, 1998, p.75-76)

Finally, mutual engagement creates a complex network of interpersonal, mutual relationships. Mutual relationships are not always positive, but can in fact take forms of disagreement, tension and conflict. This is a natural part of communal activities. Communities of practice and its relationships reflect the full complexity of cooperation. Also finding tension and heated participation can often signal an even greater commitment than passivity. (Wenger, 1998, p.76-77)

A joint enterprise
Negotiating a joint enterprise is the second characteristic of practice as a fundament of community coherence. For Wegner (1998, p.77) joint enterprise has three fundaments: a negotiated enterprise, an indigenous enterprise and a regime of mutual accountability. A joint enterprise means that the enterprise of the community

is shared and negotiated together. Not everybody needs to agree on it, but they are all engaged in the joint enterprise. (Wenger, 1998, p.78-79)

An indigenous enterprise stands for the idea of communities of practice developing their practice indigenously, although there would be constraints, rules or opportunities provided by the larger, outside context the community belongs to. The community responds to its situation and the current circumstances in its own way even when it is initiated by someone outside the community itself. The community negotiates its enterprise and in this negotiation it defines the roles of different demands, resources or constraints. (Wenger, 1998, p.79-80)

When negotiating the enterprise the community members also define relations of mutual accountability. This communal negotiation of mutual accountability helps the community members to prioritize and decide how to care and relate to different events or aspects in their surroundings. Not all the accountability is equally visible either, but this does not mean that non-visible accountability would not be important. Also, although the accountability would not be reified or simple, it would be optimal to be able to discuss it to within the community. (Wenger, 1998, p.81-82)

A shared repertoire

The third dimension of defining practice as a property of a community is shared repertoire. The components of the repertoire can be very different with each other. The components of the repertoire gain coherence through belonging to the same practices of the one community of practice trying to achieve the joint enterprise. The repertoire includes both reificative and participative parts. Wenger (1998, p.83) states that the repertoire can has the potential to become an enabler for the negotiation of the meaning. This is due to two characteristics of the repertoire: "1) it reflects a history of mutual engagement 2) it remains inherently ambiguous" (Wenger, 1998, p.83). Wenger (1998, p.84) sees this inherent ambiguity as a resource for mutual engagement. Difference in perspective calls for further alignment, discussion and defining. It is not solely an obstacle that slows done practices but

actually creates a possibility to create and negotiate new meanings. (Wenger, 1998, p.83-84)

Scarso et al. (2009, p. 433) define four main pillars for community of practice. These pillars are: organizational, cognitive, economic and technological. The organizational pillar is focused on the relationship between the community of practice and the organization. The cognitive pillar in turn covers for the knowledge and practices that the community possesses. The economic pillar concentrates on different values relevant for the community such as benefits, costs and other performances. Finally the technological value is concerned with the technological solutions relevant for the community.

Saint-Onge and Wallace (2003, p. 35) in turn recognize practice, people and capabilities as the key components of a community of practice. The aspect of practice is connected to knowledge base, processes and procedure related to delivering a product or a service. The people aspect in turn refers to the community that joins together to develop a capability connected to business strategies. The capabilities component is considered as the link between strategy and performance and can constitute of multiple different aspects e.g. brand, skills, abilities and attitudes.

Wenger et al. (2002, p.27) have even made a more practical version of the elements of communities of practice. Three fundamental elements of a CoP are *domain*, *community* and *practice* (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.27). When these elements are optimally combined together, they form a knowledge structure, where responsibility for developing and sharing knowledge can be assumed (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.29). Community development can also be guided through these three elements (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.45). They facilitate focusing on the right issues and finding a balance between the elements (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.45). All three should also be developed simultaneously but not too radically to maintain the balance (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.36).

Domain

Specification of the domain should be done within the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.45). The community members need to define what they wish to focus on and what is left outside the focus of the CoP (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.45). Comprehension of this focus should be shared between the community members (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.45). The community should also try to grasp its relation to the larger strategy of the organization they act within. The CoP members are going to be the leading experts of their field in the organization. Therefore, they also need be ready to take on some leadership within the domain and the organization.

Community

The community needs to be given attention, nurturing and organization (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.45). There can be initial ideas of the possible roles of community members and the meeting schedules (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.45). Developing trust needs to be enabled for the community to start forming (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.46). Also, thinking of how to balance between different kind of segments within the community can be fruitful in the beginning (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.46). If the community aims for growth of some sort, there is a need for new members. The introduction of the newcomers should be thought of as well in this case (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.46).

Practice

Developing the practice will take its own time, but the community members can facilitate it, by actively taking ownership of its development (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.46). The shared activities can be planned and the nature of the shared knowledge that will be shared can be discussed in advance. There might be later on also some kind of a place for gathered knowledge. Updating and managing this knowledge base can be planned (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.46)

as managing it will make the knowledge transfer faster and facilitate immediate value creation for the community members.

2.1.2 Nature of community of practice

The nature of communities of practice is inherently social and participatory. Lave and Wenger (1991, pp. 98) write "A community of practice is a set of relations among persons, activity and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice. A community of practice is an intrinsic condition for the existence of knowledge, not least because it provides the interpretative support necessary for making sense of its heritage." This knowledge and expertise that is created and shared is often tacit by nature (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Pemberton, Mavin and Stalker, 2007, pp. 62).

These inter-personal relationships focus around the created practice and shared identities. To be able to function, these interpersonal relationships need trust (Gelin, 2011, p.12-15). Trust creation can be supported by informality and friendly and comfortable atmosphere in the collaboration (Gelin, 2011, p.12-15). Creating a feeling of belonging to the community for the members, enables the true knowledge sharing to start (Gelin, 2011, p.12-15).

One of the main characteristics of a community of practice is that they are focused around learning (Khan, 2010, p.541). The learning happens both on the individual level as well as on the organizational level. Communities of practice lie on the presumption, that learning is tied to the situation where the practice is conducted (Plaskoff, 2011, p. 202). Learning is also socially bound, which solidifies the community around the practice.

Communities of practice can be partly defined through their difference in comparison to formal teams or work groups. Project teams are often led by shared goals and business based targets as communities of practice emerge or are created around shared interests (Wenger and Snyder, 2000). Juriado and Gustafsson (2007, pp.53)

also recognize that teams often have clear division of labour, as in communities of practice the delegation is often fuzzier.

CoPs can create opportunities for new kind of collaboration within complex systems (McKellar, 2014). CoPs can enable communication and collaboration across the different hierarchies of an organization (Lave and Wenger, 1991 in McKellar, 2014). CoPs also enable creating and identifying valuable knowledge (M2 Presswire, 2005, p. 2).

The nature of community of practice is ambiguous. What can though be stated is that communities of practice are inherently social structures and fragile in their very existence. The very existence, the permanence and the created value of the community of practice are all in the hands of the community members, their aspirations, energy and beliefs. Plaskoff (2011, p. 204) believes, that intersubjectivity is actually in the core of communities of practice. Through intersubjectivity everything comes down to two individuals truly transcending their own private worlds and becoming one with the other (Plaskoff, 2011, p. 204).

2.1.3 Structure of community of practice

Communities of practice can take various different forms and sizes. It is typical for communities of practices to emerge and lead their development by themselves (Wenger and Snyder, 2001, p.5). However, communities of practice do not always emerge independently, and are most successful when they are created, fostered and maintained (Gracia, 2005, p.19). There are specific managerial actions to be taken to fully leverage communities of practice (Wenger and Snyder, 2001, p. 2).

Membership is naturally initiated by the individuals themselves (Wenger and Snyder, 2001, p.5; Kohlbacher and Mukai, 2007, pp.10). Especially organic CoPs tend to be hard to interfere with or manage, because they are spontaneous and informal (Wenger and Snyder, 2001, p.4).

Although communities can have varying sizes, they usually have a heart of participants with passion for the topic and who form the intellectual and social leadership for the community (Wenger and Snyder, 2001, p.5). The regular structure of the community of practice consists of the core, inner circle and outer circle. The specific practices and roles within each circle or section vary depending on the community and where it is located, but it is typical that activity decreases towards the outer circle and level of leadership and expertise increases towards the core.

The structure of the community can also be sketched through different roles. Fontaine (2003, pp.127-128) has described 11 informal and formal roles that he has identified through his study of multiple organizations and their communities of practice. The most important roles are knowledge domain roles that usually are in the core and can also act as subject matter experts (SME) (2003, p.125). They hold the cultivated knowledge and enjoy having deep conversations regarding the domain.

The second important roles are the leadership and sponsor roles (2003, p.126). Leaders provide the direction and guidance that the community needs to function. Sponsors in turn make sure that the community has support from the organization it belongs to, and that enough resources and recognition is received.

There are differences in views regarding the creation of a centralized management for the CoP or CoPs. Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2003) suggest that there should be one as Summer et al. (2010, p. 46) suggest that centralized management hinders growth and innovation. Summer et al. (2010, p. 46) believe that additional freedom promotes effectiveness and ensures sharing the necessary information, not more not less. Managing includes moderating content creation in this context. When hierarchies within a CoP and its context is low, also the created solutions tend to be closer to the actual issues (Summer et al., 2010, p. 47).

One of the major topics in the contemporary discourse regarding communities of practice and their structures, is whether they are co-located or distributed. More specifically, whether communities of practice could work as tool for knowledge management also in distributed contexts where parts of the community are in a different location. Clearly there is a genuine interest and need for formats such as community of practice and a will to take it to the modern era of international, distributed and fragmented field of competences, learning and business (Hildreth & Kimble, 2004).

Hildreth et al (2000, p.29) for example aim to extend the concept of communities of practice to cover for partly distributed teams. They found that this was feasible at least when the cores of the communities were co-located Hildreth et al (2000, p.37). They also recognized, that face-to-face activities were crucial in regard of the speed of development of the community. Additionally, the use of shared artefacts was found to have the potential to act as a facilitating factor in the collaboration of the distributed communities.

As Lesser and Storck (2003, p.108) write, there is no definition of community of practice which would leave distributed communities and technology-mediated communication means out of the picture. There have though been many different kind of case studies that have either succeeded or failed with creating distributed communities of practice. Fairthlough and Geyer (2001, p.574) state that their endeavors to facilitate the community creation with online resources failed. Afterwards they state though, that it seems evident that no community can be created only with technology.

On the other hand, there are many successful examples of integrating partly or mostly virtual and distributed communities of practice. Krogh (2002, p.97) explains that information systems will be supporting the communities and help them exceed the limitations of size and space described by Roberts (2006, p. 630). Lee (2003, p.29)

even states that communities of practice in particular effective for communities that are distributed to multiple locations.

2.2 Creating and cultivating communities of practice

There is ongoing discussion in the literature whether CoPs can or should be managed (Pemberton, Mavin and Stalker, 2007, pp. 64) and whether they can be created intentionally or not. Some state, that: "CoPs may occur naturally, but they are increasingly being employed deliberately as knowledge management tools" (Wenger 2004; Cox 2005; Li et al. 2009; in McKellar et al., 2014).

There are both success and failure stories regarding intentional community of practice creation. The author agrees with Plaskoff (2011, p. 204) who states that communities cannot necessarily be created from scratch, but they can be built around existing practices, because "Where there is practice, there is community". Next principles for community creation are discussed and thereafter different development stages for communities of practice are reviewed.

2.2.1 Principles for building a community of practice

Garcia (2005, p.22) has recognized four critical steps to take into consideration when creating communities of practice: clarity of community purpose and core membership, healthy infrastructure, community-building process and measuring results. Garcia (2005, p.23) emphasize that CoP creators should have a clear vision of the CoPs purpose, how it will be utilized and how its performance will be measured. Having a clear vision for the CoP is also a firm base for attracting and acquiring the right members to join (2005, p.23). Core members for the CoP should be recognized and they should represent the critical mass of knowledge of the context (2005, p.23). The core members should also be involved into the first planning workshop where the creation of the CoP is initiated (2005, p.24).

Lee (2003, p.29) states that there are three definitive steps in community creation. First, the community goals need to be aligned with the organizations goals and strategy. Second, the key individuals for the community must be recognized and they need to be harnessed to recruit new participants. Third, there must be a long-term vision created for the community and in addition, the value proposition of the community needs to be clear so that potential members can easily understand what is the value they get.

Garavan and Carberry (2007, p.39) have recognized four stages in the formation of a community of practice. The first stage is about formation of the community and focuses on goals, cohesion and basic rules for the community. The second stage consisted of creating shared meaning and boundary spanning skills. The focus of the second stage was to create a shared language and understanding the boundaries of the community and how to handle them. The third stage was concentrated around collaboration and work towards the shred goal. Lastly, the fourth stage concerned knowledge and learning crystallization so that it could be taken forward in the organization.

Summer et al. (2010) recognize six important aspects for the growth and success of a CoP. These six factors are:
1. Decentralized approach – Let Your Users Lead
2. Ease of Use – Make It Easy and users Will Come
3. Strong Support Structure – A Human Touch Is Critical and Signals You Care
4. Reach – Access Must Be Anytime, Anywhere, Anyhow, Anywho
5. Validation – Users need to trust the system
6. Rewards – recognition "sweetens" the deal
7. Word-of-mouth/cultural transfer – if the system works well, they will advertise for you

Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.53) have gathered seven most important principles they have found useful when creating and researching communities of practice. These seven principles are:

1. Design for evolution
2. Open a dialogue between inside and outside perspectives
3. Invite different level of participation
4. Develop both public and private community spaces
5. Focus on value
6. Combine familiarity and excitement
7. Create a rhythm for the community

Design for evolution

The community creation should be started from a base, where there already exists a network. The most important aspect in the beginning is to help the individuals in the network to create relationships and deepen them. Therefore, neither too many elements should be pushed on the community at first. Also attracting potential members can be defined as important in the beginning. Instead of forcing a structure or anything else on the developing community, the key is to listen and see what the community might need and support that. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.53)

Open dialogue between inside and outside perspectives

On one hand only the insiders deeply know the heart of the domain and therefore possesses a deeper understanding for the community's issues. On the other hand, sometimes outsiders are needed to really see what the potential of the community is and what it could achieve. That is why having outsiders facilitate in the beginning might be fruitful. This can also be done by the community leader and the core members of the community. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.54)

<u>Invite different levels of participation</u>

There are typically three forms participation: core group, active group and peripheral members. The core group makes up to 10-15% of the community members. They typically try to identify interesting topics for the community, actively participate in everything and they might also have some public duties related to the community. The active participants take up to 15-20% of the community members. They participate meetings regularly and might be active in community forums or similar.

The peripheral members participate rarely, but follow the interaction that takes place. There might be different reasons for them to stay peripheral, but most likely they are simultaneously learning in their own way. Lastly there are outsiders who are currently not part of the group. Members usually move between these different stages and shift in the way they participate. Despite the different ways of participating, all the members should be able to participate in their own way. The community should be built so that there is a fire in the middle of the community and everyone is welcome to join the campfire session. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.56-58)

<u>Develop both private and public community spaces</u>

Often communities have regular meetings, either face-to-face or through a digital platform. These meetings are open to all community members. There might be some content provided, but it is also typical to just allow the informal discussions to float. The usual mistake is to focus too much on the public events and forget the importance of the private sessions and spaces. As the community is a web of relationships the individual relationships should be enhanced. This mainly done by enabling one-on-one discussions. As the private and public space are interrelated, by understanding what happens in these private channels helps arranging the public space and events as well. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.58-59)

Focus on value

Value is especially important in the beginning when some of the members might be considering the size of their contribution and role of participation. To create value first for the members the focus should be set on their needs and issues (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.59). But what creates the value changes during the lifetime of the community. In the future, the knowledge created together will be emphasized together with its easy accessibility (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.59). The value should not be planned, but is should be visible through the interactions of the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.60). Members can also be asked to explicitly share what they find as valuable, or the value can be tracked by community creators and then communicated back to the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.60).

Combine familiarity and excitement

Familiarity and excitement should be combined in an optimal way to create fruitful ground for learning. The familiarity is important, so that members can engage without being on their toes and share honestly their ideas and insights. On the other hand, learning also demands some pushing forward and different kind of thinking. Familiarity can be created by regularity and repetition for example in meeting schedule. Conferences and workshops are examples of possible excitement elements. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.61)

Create a rhythm for the community

The tempo and rhythm of the community is important to keep the community lively and attractive. The tempo of interactions is formed by meetings and shared events.A good rhythm indicates liveliness and development of the community.The rhythm should also be balanced between the meetings of the whole community or the sub-teams only. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.62).

2.2.2 Development stages of the community of practice

Gelin (2011, p.10-11) divides the development phases of the community into four, which are *Set-up* phase, *Growth phase*, *Maturity/Sharing phase* and *Collaboration phase*. The *Growth phase* included a lot of content creation and trying to motivate the users to contribute. Having interaction with the community members, such as giving feedback or suggestions was important. Animator of the community, corresponding to the community coordinator, has an important role as a content creator as its booster and as a trust builder. The community animator also needs to create awareness and attract right kind of users to the community (Gelin, 2011, p.10).

In the *Maternity/Sharing phase* most important aspects are to motivate and encourage the members of the community to share their knowledge and experiences (Gelin, 2011, p.11). This can be strengthened through giving recognition and increasing trust in the community. The interaction between members should also be boosted and this can be achieved through providing new means for sharing, communication and collaboration (Gelin, 2011, p.11). The community also needs a steering committee, who has the main responsibility regarding developmental activities of the community. (Gelin, 2011, p.12)

Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.68) define five different development stages for lifecycle of a community. This study will only present the two first of them more deeply, as the community of inspection is young. Therefore, the last three stages are not in the scope of this study. These five stages are

1. Potential
2. Coalescing
3. Maturing
4. Stewardship
5. Transformation

The different development stages need different kind of actions and guidance to get further (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.68). The development is rarely

straight forward and smooth all the time, but typically contains difficulties and challenging moments (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.69). Each of the stages has its own central challenges and on the other hand hallmarks, that signal that they transforming and ready head to the next phase in their lifecycle (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.69). Naturally, all the communities experience slightly different paths and develop differently. Therefore, there is no one right way for their development. Still having an idea of their typical development can help in preventing the community from the typical pitfalls (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.70). This understanding can also facilitate in having patience with the development of the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.70).

Stage 1: Potential

As the name of the stage reveals, this stage is focusing on understanding and starting to realize the potential of the community. It is emphasized that the community building should be started on an existing network to have fruitful ground for the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.70). The potential community can be recognized through seeing some elements of a developed community already existing in the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.71). Additionally, this emerging community should have a full potential of becoming a full working community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.71).

There are key issues in every development stage. Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.71) go through the key issues of each stage through the community's most important elements: domain, community and practice. The key domain issue in the *potential*-stage is the scope of the domain (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.71). The scope of the domain should be heartfelt for the participants (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.71).

The key community issue is to discover people who are already gathered in some way around the topic. These people need to be encouraged to envision the outcomes and value of increased participation and networking. The key issue related to practice is

to identify and define the common needs for knowledge for the community members (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.71). All of these three dimensions, their key issues and potential solutions develop together.

Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.72) have defined three important phases of activities that should take place when creating a community of practice. These phases are *Discover and imagine*, *Planning communities* and *A critical role: community coordinator.*

Discover and imagine

This phase is focused on understanding the current state of the network that has the potential to grow into a community of practice. As the name suggests, there are too main activities – discovering and imagining. Discovering is focused on gathering information regarding the relationships of the current network: who talks to whom, which ties are strong and which are first emerging, who seems to have the best understanding of what is useful and what is not et cetera (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.72).

Imagining in turn is focused on understanding and revealing the true potential of the community of the practice. As the community is first evolving, the real value is not visible yet so it needs to be imagined. Imagining can be done initially by the community builder, but needs to be later on done by the community members as well (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.72), or they need to unite with the imagining of the community builder. Sometimes the imagining might be hard (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.72). It can be facilitated by the community builder. There needs to prevail a balance between discovering and imagining (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.72). Also, the imagining should be based on the discovery.

Planning communities

Although it would be tempting to create a detailed step-by-step plan for the community creation, it is preferable to start gently and all the time adjust the actions to the needs of the community. Wenger et al. have identified seven important themes in creating a community work plan. These seven themes are developed on the three base dimensions of the community of practice: domain, community and practice. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.73)

DETERMINE THE PRIMARY INTENT OF THE COMMUNITY

It is good to start with identifying the primary intent of the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.75). Communities often end up having multiple different purposes (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.73). Depending on the defined intents the community should be created and structured accordingly (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.74). Also the roles and activities of the community should be aligned with the intent (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.74).

DEFINE THE DOMAIN AND IDENTIFY ENGAGING ISSUES

Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.75) present three criteria that can help in defining the scope of the domain. First of all, the domain should be especially important to the business, so that the organization will be supporting the activities of the community. Defining this often requires some managerial support or participation. Secondly, the domain should focus on aspects that the members are passionate about and which can attract additional community members. Thirdly, the scope should be wide enough so that new ideas and solution can emerge, but narrow enough to attract all the members.

BUILD A CASE FOR ACTION

Describing a case for action help the community itself to describe and define the domain more specifically (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.77). Describing the case will facilitate the discussions with managers and other support providers

(Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.77). The case should describe potential value for the organization and the community members (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.77). The case should also describe why the community is worth supporting. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.77)

IDENTIFY POTENTIAL COORDINATORS AND THOUGHT LEADERS

These are the key people for the community and they lead the way both on an ideal level and on the practical level. Coordinators are more focused on the running practicalities, topics and facilitating the community, as the thought leaders are cutting edge experts in their field. Thought leaders should be used even from outside the community itself. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.78)

INTERVIEW POTENTIAL MEMBERS

The potential members can be interviewed on beforehand to explore the shared problem areas and opportunities for knowledge sharing. The interviews can also reveal potential topics and scope of the domain and provide information regarding the existing relationships. The initial roles can also be practices as the community coordinator would be the perfect person for this task. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.79)

CONNECT COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Connecting community members together is equivalent to creating the private space for the community. In the private space the community members exchange knowledge one-on-one and create and nourish their relationships (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.79). The vital aspect to connecting people is also to connect a person with a problem and a person with a solution (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.79). In this way they can also explore the potential value of the relationship.

CREATE A PRELIMINARY DESIGN FOR THE COMMUNITY

The most important aspect to remember with the community plan, is to keep it flexible enough (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.80). The gathered ideas and information can still be utilized to sketch how the structure and activities of the community could be aligned. Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.80) also propose that the further design is done in dialogue and the community leaders should be included to join.

A critical role: community coordinator

Community coordinator is a critical role for the community's success and is usually 20-50% funded by the organization that initiates the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.80). There are some key functions that the community coordinator should take care of. In large, the community creator is responsible for recognizing the important issues and problems from the community's perspective. Also, community members development is on the coordinators shoulders (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.80). That can be facilitated for example by building a shared knowledge base, which is updated and developed. Knowledge base can include different kind of practices, tools, methods and cases and it is usually updated by the coordinator.

Linking community members together is one of the community coordinators most important, and partly invisible, tasks (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.80). Connecting needs to happen over the organizational units and possible other barriers and structures (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.80). One of the most visible tasks of the community coordinator is to arrange the community events (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.80). The community coordinator is also responsible for taking care of the boundaries that the community has towards the outer world. These might be with the organization the community belongs to or even outside it. In relation to this function the coordinator should also keep track of the community's health and the value it provides to different parties (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.80).

According to Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.80) the suitable community coordinators typically are well-respected, knowledgeable about the domain, well-connected with the members, enthusiastic about developing the practice and posses relatively good communication skills. They should also be personally interested in community leadership and think of networking with others as a useful activity for their own careers as well (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.81). The best community coordinators are necessarily not the leading experts of the field, as their job is to connect people instead of providing answers to them. Lastly, the community coordinators benefit from having strategical and political awareness when negotiating the future and position of the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.82).

Stage 2: Coalescing

The community is ready for the next stage when the creators and/or the community understands what there is and where they want to go (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.82). Then coalescing can start. Officially launching the community is one of the first steps in the coalescing phase. By now, the community building and planning has already started and is running. The focus in the coalescing phase is to generate momentum and energy for people in the community. Also, there needs to be enough of shared events and discussions so that the trust creation can take place. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.82)

Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.82) have also recognized three main issues for this stage. The main domain issue is related to value generation. The community members need to recognized and experience that sharing knowledge of this specific domain gives them value. From the community perspective, the key issue is in trust creation. The coalescing will not start unless the community members are able to build trust between each other. The practice related issue touches upon knowledge classification. What is the knowledge that should be shared to other

community members and how would it be shared most efficiently (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.83).

It might be hard for the community coordinator to know what to focus on at first. It is still vital to try to maintain a good balance between value and trust creation so that both aspects advance (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.84). When they advance, they will also start supporting each other. During this incubation phase the communities are particularly fragile (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.84). Therefore, discovering the value soon is important, so that the internal and external pressure can be relieved and the community protected (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.84).

To make the community coalesce the community members need to start turning to each other for consultation (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.84). Therefore, they need to develop an understanding of the other people's work and knowledge (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.85). Understanding the work and tasks of the other community member is the base for trust creation (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.85).

Essentially, in this phase the community needs a lot of nurturing and support. The coordinators need to make sure to develop the private space aggressively in this phase, without also forgetting the public space. They should not hesitate to use support from outside as well if needed. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.85)

Nurturing communities
Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.85) have created nine activities for nurturing the communities in the coalescing stage. These steps are largely focusing on facilitating the members with their needs to build a solid foundation for the community and simultaneously demonstrate the value that they get out of the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.85).

BUILD A CASE FOR MEMBERSHIP

As on the previous stage, it is a good exercise to create a case describing and crystallizing membership. The case should be built around two kinds of value generation: on one hand the value that the member gets by contributing and participating and on the other hand by hearing other people's contributions (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.85). Sometimes even a clear domain description or communicating who else is involved is sufficient for attracting other potential members (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.85). Often though, recruitment is needed for catching the best members. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.85)

LAUNCH THE COMMUNITY

Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.86) present basically two different approaches for the community launch. The first option is going big and highly visibly. This option is suitable when there is already a sense of togetherness (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.86). Going big can be a good way to increase the momentum and energy of the community. The other option would be going small and calm. This approach works better when the community needs time to bond and the relevant issues are still somewhat unclear (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.87). Which approach will have the best impact depends on the organization or context the community would be operating in (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.87).

INITIATE COMMUNITY EVENTS AND SPACES

The focus of this stage is on energy and that can be fostered and maintained through events. Therefore, it is beneficial to start these events straight away after the launch. Having a repetitive rhythm for the events support keeping up the energy and sense of familiarity (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.87). Regularity of the events also anchors the community to the members lives. The rhythm of the events should still respect the availability of the members (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.87).

LEGITIMIZE COMMUNITY COORDINATORS

To attract right kind of people with the right attitude and skillset, the organization might want to legitimize and reward the coordinators early on in the community creation (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.88). There are multiple ways that the organization can use to show that the coordinators are meaningful. Legitimizing the coordinators ensures that the organization is able to get a right kind of person to the task, who can handle all the social aspects of community creation such as listening, conflict management and networking, in addition to the practical tasks of the job (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.88).

BUILD CONNECTIONS BETWEEN CORE GROUP MEMBERS

Developing a core group for the community is essential at this stage, although the coordinator might feel urge to increase the amount of memberships (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.88). The core group will facilitate in understanding the core issues and values of the community. When the core of the community is tight and secured the community can better handle growth and its pressure (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.88).

FIND THE IDEAS, INSIGHTS AND PRACTICES THAT ARE WORTH SHARING

Discovering the most important insights and practices is very important during this stage. Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.89) found that best way to support this goal is to make the core group members solve each other everyday challenges. Concentrating on the current projects ensures the relevance and value of the community activities. Each community naturally has their own way of finding the most suitable ways to work with (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.89).

DOCUMENT JUDICIOUSLY

The community members often discover that they have a lot of overlapping material that could be united (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.89). Usually they also tend to urge to start arranging this material to one place, but doing this documenting

work is likely to slice some of the energy of the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.89). If the documenting is still thought to be a necessary activity, it is fruitful to clearly target this to a dedicated group such as the core of the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.89).

IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE VALUE

Because value generation will be crucial for the community's evolution and viability, the coordinator should ensure this especially in the beginning (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.90). Therefore, connecting members with a problem, with members with solutions is vital. Also the events and material of the community should be focused around the members needs (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.90). On this stage, the members rarely focus on recognizing the generated value, it is important that the community coordinator collects quotes and insights regarding value generated for the member and the organization (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.90). At this stage, it is typical for the community to generate more intangible value than tangible value (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.90).

ENGAGE MANAGERS

Managers are the ones who can create possibilities for the members to participate, make sure the community also focuses on businesscritical issues and protect the communities from pressure related to immediate value creation (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.90). Although involving the managers is vital the whole lifetime of the community, it is critical at this stage (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.90).

Stage 3: Maturing

The maturing stage can be demanding for the core community members. If the growth arrives rapidly, their roles change rapidly too and they become possessors the body of the knowledge, instead of group of friends sharing tips. One of the main challenges of the *maturing* stage is that the focus from defining the value the

community can deliver, needs to be sifted to roles, boundaries and focus (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.97). The community needs to understand who they are in the organization and in relation to other communities and entities (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.97).

Focus and expand

Balancing between focusing in the content and welcoming the new members is the most critical task of the stage (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.98). The new members keep on giving energy but also drag the discussion to surface waters, which can be frustrating to the core members. The core members have to also tolerate the fact that their intimacy and identity building is entering another level and changing.

Maturing: A typical workplan

A lot is happening during this stage and it is stated that if the community will fail at some point, this is most likely it (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.99).

IDENTIFY GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE AND DEVELOP AN LEARNING PLAN

Developing a learning agenda will help the community to dive deeper into the domain and generate new knowledge. Recognizing the knowledge gaps will also help the community to understand their own needs and identity. Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.99) give the example of creating project teams for the recognized knowledge gaps. These teams will then aim to cover the gap.

DEFINE THE COMMUNITY'S ROLE IN THE ORGANIZATION

Defining the scope and the role of the community will help it in focusing to the right tasks (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.100). When the community grows and becomes better known, also the amount of requests from different parties start to increase. Maturing communities gain often more credibility, which also leads to increasing amount of requests.

REDEFINE COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES

When the community grows, it might need to redefine its boundaries. There might actually be more needs than the one community can cover and therefore maybe a sub-group emerges, for example due to geographical division of members. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.101) To keep the community viable and focused clear boundaries are a necessity.

ROUTINIZE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

When the community grows, the amount of novice members naturally increases. To be able to keep the community focusing on the domain and creating new knowledge, some communities have recognized a need to define entry requirements (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.102). This will clarify the situation also for the senior core members, who can through created entry processes and requirements make sure that the community meetings are for the content and the possible mentoring activities are arranged during another time.

MEASURING THE VALUE OF THE COMMNUITY

To attract new potential members and to communicate explicitly the value of the community it is suggested that a convincing case is created about the community value (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.102).

MAINTAIN THE CUTTING-EDGE FOCUS

To be able to keep the core members' interest the community coordinator needs to make sure that the community meetings can still focus on the deep knowledge and cutting-edge subjects (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.102). This is also important for the community future in general, because often the new comers are attracted by the senior core members.

BUILD AND ORGANIZE A KNOWLEDGE REPOSITORY

There needs to be a place for the important community documentation. This information needs to be arranged so that it is easy for all the members to find.

Therefore, it is suggested that the taxonomy would be as close to the practice as possible (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.103).

A useful role: community librarian

During the growth the community also starts to generate more and more material. As the material captures some of the knowledge and value of the community, it is suggested that a person is assigned to keep the documents in order. The librarian is preferably someone from the community who knows the domain, can organize the material and help others find it (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.103).

Stage 4: Stewardship

The main concerns of the fourth stage are focused around keeping the community focusing on the cutting-edge issues, maintaining the relevance of the domain and the intellectual focus viable and engaging for the members (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.104).

Ownership and openness

Key to the success in this phase is the balance between ownership and openness (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.105). The openness is important so that new ideas and members keep floating in. Those new ideas need also to be fostered actively, so that they will not only remain on the idea level. Although new ideas should be embraced, this should happen on a stable and established ground, where ownership and domain definitions are clear.

Sustaining momentum: A typical workplan

The coordinator's task in this phase is to try to create a good rhythm for new and old input to the community. The core members can facilitate in this decision making. The community coordinator needs to aim take care of the right level of energy in the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.105).

INSTITUTIONALIZING THE VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY

When maturing, the community often experiences that it wants to affect the organizations strategy and direction more (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.106). Recognition by the home organization is important also due resources and staff that keep the community attractive and viable.

REJUVENATE THE COMMUNITY

To keep the community interesting, new topics and aspects need to be introduced during the periods of lower energy (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.106). This can take the form of meetings, new speakers or even connecting globally. Sometimes change in the community's rhythm creates new and revitalized energy (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.106).

HOLD A RENEWAL WORKSHOP

Arranging a renewal workshop with the community can create new energy. The community can together decide where it will be heading and what is wanted from the future (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.107).

ACTIVELY RECRUIT NEW PEOPLE TO THE CORE GROUP

Core members are often active on many fronts and have a shortage of time for the community activities. Sometimes core group members can also disappear if the focus of the community shifts somewhat (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.107). Finding people who are in fruitful phase in their careers, so that they could contribute to the community and on the other hand would like to take a more active role in the community, will be a win-win situation for both the individual and the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.107).

DEVELOP NEW LEADERSHIP

Changing the leadership of the community can create a feeling of a new era. In some communities of practice the leaders rotate yearly, which provides an energizing mechanism for the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.108).

MENTOR NEW MEMBERS

Creating a clear mentoring program can help the seniors to save time from sudden bursts of new members' inquiries regarding the community. Having a separate mentoring program can also support keeping focus during the community's main activities (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.108).

SEEK RELATIONSHIPS AND BENCHMARKING OUTSIDE THE ORGANIZATION

Getting ideas from outside the own organization can help in defining the future for the community and refresh the community (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.108).

Stage 5: Transformation

Sometimes communities come to a point where they need to transform. This might be due to a drop in the energy levels or rush in the amount of new members. The transformation can typically take multiple different forms. The community can fade away due to a decrease in participation (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.109). The community can become a social hub and lose its focus and touch to the domain (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.109). There might be a new future to the community in multiple communities if multiple needs are identified (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.110). Potentially the community can become totally institutionalized and incorporated to the organization (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.110).

The endings are often emotional in one way or another (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.110). The endings can either be officially arranged and accounted for, which creates a possibility to honor the active members and move forward the community's legacy (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.111). Alternatively, the ending can be ignored when this kind of opportunity does not surface (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.111).

Plaskoff (2011, p. 210) has elaborated on top of Wenger et al.'s recommendation. He recognizes four main stages of development. These are *coalescing*, *active*, *disperse* and *memorable*. The main difference in this classification is, that Plaskoff (2011, p. 210) sees that the active phase of the community lifetime is divided into two. The first phase of the *active* stage is focused on the community itself. Members are defining their relationships, community practices and roles. In the second phase of the *active* stage the members start to think about their community's relationship to the organization fostering the community – what is the community's purpose for the organization, maybe improving some of the existing practices and influencing decision making.

Plaskoff (2011, p. 212) also presents another model for community creation called APPLE. The APPLE model also consists of four stages, which are assessment, planning & preparation, launch and establishment & evolution. The assessment phase is focusing on collecting enough of data and analyzing it to understand whether further community building activities should be initiated. The point is to understand the community's current state – what kind of relationships and trust exists between the members now, is the needed level of infrastructure there?

The planning & preparation phase is a very active community building phase (Plaskoff, 2011, p. 214). The grounds for the launch are created. The core group of the community needs to be built in this phase and they should be involved in creating a charter for the community. The charter described the most important aspects of the community like description of practice, boundaries, objectives, measures of success, values and reason to exist.

Launching the community has several important meanings (Plaskoff, 2011, p. 216). It lures potential members closer to the core. In the launch the core members can get feedback regarding the appeal of the charter and improve it if needed. The launch also communicates the community's existence and value to the organization. The launch can take a variety of forms, but it should still focus on delivering a message

about the community and its values. Plaskoff (2011, p. 216) does not discuss the remaining stages of the community creation and evolution.

2.3 Value of community of practice

There has been many attempts in understanding and defining the value of a CoP (McKellar, 2014, p.386). Communities of practice are not solely about leveraging the huge knowledge capabilities of an organization or community, but also about enabling individuals to learn and grow as professionals (Saint-Onge, 2003, p.9). It is about increasing the capabilities of both an organization and an individual (Saint-Onge, 2003, p.xxii).

Pastoors (2007, p.21) states that the success of the community is not merely defined by the company strategy, but also by the willingness and motivation of the employees to join and contribute. Therefore, in this study the value is defined from two perspectives: value for the community members and value for the community creators or the nurturing organization. These perspectives are partly aligned and sometimes also overlapping. This chapter starts by discussing value of the community from the community creators' perspective and continues then to account for the community members' perspective.

2.3.1 Value for the community creator

Gelin (2011, p.9) state that measuring the produced value for the company is not straight forward in regards of communities of practice. Gelin (2011, p.9) found, that ROI (return on investment) is not the most suitable metric, but ROA (return on attention) is considered to be more useful. ROA measures how the members participate and contribute to the community (Gelin, 2011, p.9). Gelin (2011, p.9) states that CoP is by far the most efficient way of sharing certain types of knowledge, such as product and application knowledge. He contrasts the value with the expenses of flights and on-site training. Analytics regarding participants and participation of the community are vital (Gelin, 2011, p.12).

In measuring the value of a CoP has some challenges. For example, the effects of actions done in a CoP are not visible in real-time, but arrive later. Also, the results do not appear in the CoPs but in the teams and departments to where the knowledge and ideas from the CoP are taken further. Wenger and Snyder (2001, p.15) emphasize that best way to measure a community's value might be through listening to its members insights and experiences systematically and regularly. (Wenger & Snyder, 2001, p.15-16)

Both qualitative and quantitative metrics are needed for estimating the effectiveness of a CoP. Digital platforms provide and easy access to some basic quantitative metrics of the CoP's current state, in case the community has some virtual elements. Following growth both in number of members and possible publications can also be seen as an indicator of viability of the CoP. (Garcia, 2005, pp.29-30)

According to Wenger and Snyder (2001, p.17) communities of practice add value in six ways:

1. They help drive strategy
2. They start new lines of business
3. They solve problems quickly
4. They transfer best practices
5. They develop professional skills
6. They help companies recruit and retain talent

These potential values described by Wenger and Snyder rely strongly on the potential of community of practice to learn, share knowledge and collaborate. Parts of these listed values can also be seen as values for the employee. For example, developing one's professional skills is worthy for both the individual and the organization. The same goes for recruiting and retaining talent.

Lesser and Storck (2003, p. 115) have also recognized four ways in which the communities of practice they examined impacted business outcomes. The listed benefits were: decrease in learning curve of new employees, responding more

rapidly to customer need and inquiries, reducing rework and preventing "reinventing the wheel" and spawning new ideas for products and services.

Communities of practice offer a possibility for organizations and cross-organizational communities to understand what is the knowledge they posses (Saint-Onge, 2003, p.xxi). Understanding what is the knowledge the community has enables the community to leverage it.

As can be seen, the value of community of practice for the organization is obscure by its nature. It is strongly bound to the individuals and their capabilities to collaborate. At its worst, if the individuals arrive to an unsolvable conflict during the community activities, the community can even temporarily harm the organization. In the core of the value of community of practice is understanding what kind of knowledge the organization possesses, transferring knowledge of different kind between employees and creating new knowledge.

To be able to release the value of the communities of practice the organizations nurturing the community need to provide a fruit soil for the community to grow in. There is no exclusive listing of which aspects are most important, but there are some features that have been proven to support the flourishing of the communities.

Paasivaara and Lassenius (2014, p.1574) have recognized that the organizational culture has a significant impact on the success of the community. The community needs to have an infrastructure to support its prosperity and in general a supportive atmosphere. Garcia (2005, p.24) sees the healthy infrastructure of a CoP to be formed of three main components: people, process and technology. Additionally, the CoP needs a support team, especially when growing, to ensure the right direction and effective development (Garcia, 2005, p.24-25).

2.3.2 Value for community member

The value generated for the community member can also exist on multiple levels. Value can be created through individual learning or possibility to share knowledge with others. On the other hand, if the community of practice is connected to the organizations career development or reward systems, the individual can experience the value of the community also through these formal, and more explicit channels.

Gelin (2011, p.9) describes usage of indirect member rewarding. Member's contributions to the community platform, meetings and discussions were followed and those members with most activity and contributions were invited to become core members of the community (Gelin, 2011, p.10). The core members discuss the near past of the community and also plan the future (Gelin, 2011, p.10).

One major value for the community members acknowledged by was, that community members gained recognition from their peers and the management (Gelin, 2011, p.15). The community members also enjoyed being able to discuss and exchange thoughts freely with their peers, without external time, or other limits. Members can also get titles for further recognition of their contributions. (Gelin, 2011, p.10)

Reward and recognition, when implemented in a fruitful way, can spark both the growth of the community but also increase the time invested by the existing users. Summer et al. (2010, p.48) implemented the rewarding system in a competition alike manner, which got both old and new members invested. Summer et al. (2010, p.47) figured that the reward system functioned best when it was aligned with the overall career level development structure. To ensure growth of the CoP it needs to be implemented in a way that makes its users recommend it (Summer et al., 2010, p.48) so basically have a high NPS score.

Participating in a community of practice will develop and improve the participants professional skills (Snyder, 2003, p. 20). In addition, the communities of practice can

provide a place for developing one's professional network and possibly advance the community members career (Snyder, 2003, p. 20).

3. Research design

The philosophical background of this study is based on critical realism. Critical realism considers that knowledge can exist independent of humans, but simultaneously understands that science is always partly socially constructed (Clark, 2008). Critical realism states that knowledge is best understood and gained in its natural domain, and therefore methodologies, strict disciplines and preconceptions might hinder grasping knowledge in its real form and context (Clark, 2008). Critical realism recognizes that behavior is always constructed by both the individual and the structure the individual operates in (Clark, 2008).

Research approach of this study combines both inductive and deductive thinking. The data is compared with the theoretical perspectives to map out the current development stage of the LSC community (research question 2. *What is the current state of the LSC community?)* The current stage is analyzed both from the perspective of the community member and the community creator. The analysis from the community creators' perspective is deductive, as the theoretical frameworks supports the community creators' view. To be able to better asses the community's development from the perspective of the community member, research results are utilized inductively create a framework for the assessment.

To answer the third research question (3. *What should be the next actions for further developing the LSC community?*), the gathered data and results are combined with the theoretical understanding into recommendations. This phase is inductive in its nature. In addition to providing recommendations for the case company, this study lays ground for deductive research to either validate or diminish the strength of the created concepts and understanding.

The nature of the study is qualitative as the research problem is qualitative by nature. The study explains and explores the current situation of the LSC community through the individuals' experiences, values, identities and relationships. In addition, it aims to create complex recommendations and theorizations regarding the subject.

Qualitative methods are thought to produce most valuable, deep and versatile results. Quantitative methods would leave relevant perspectives out of the examination of this study. Qualitative approaches are well suited for topics that call for assimilation to the participants experience (Shermann and Webb, 1988 in Anzul, 1991).

Research strategy of this study is grounded theory. Grounded theory was chosen as the research strategy as it provides solid and clear structure and tools for theory generation. A good theory will connect a theory to a phenomenon in four different ways: through fit, understanding, generality and control (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, pp.237-255). Fit describes that the theory purposefully describes the phenomenon it aims to understand (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, pp.237-255). Understanding refers to the theory's clarity and logic so that people involved can comprehend it (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, pp.237-255). Generality stands for possibility to utilize the theory in other context as well and its base on enough of data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, pp.237-255). Lastly, control refers to a clear description of the conditions under which the theory operates (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, pp.237-255).

Grounded theory is chosen as the research strategy of the study because the aim of the study is to create theory-like recommendation for the case company to further develop the LSC community. Grounded Theory as a strategy also enables to study the topic in depth (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 37). The study aims to understand the creation of an inter-organizational community of practice in Finland. The focus of this study is a process, which is typical for research questions tackled by grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 38).

In addition to grounded theory, this study also utilizes case study approach. Case study approach serves well the purpose of diving deep in to one specific case and understanding it thoroughly. This study is an intensive single-case case study. Case studies can be utilized for theory building (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 548) as can grounded theory. Although, this study is not aiming to create a whole theory, the explorative

nature of case studies facilitates the aim to give valuable and insightful recommendations for designing the LSC community further.

3.1 Case description – Background of the LSC community

This case description is based on the author's knowledge and experiences about the developments of the LSC community.

Creating the LSC community has been defined to start with LSC alumni. LSC alumni are experts from different fields of industry who have participated in an LSC training called LSC program run by the case company. LSC program is usually 5-8 weeks long period during which the participants use Lean Service Creation methodology to learn how to create new services and collaborate in multi-disciplinary teams. The participants of an LSC program are usually individuals who are closely connected with R&D activities, product development or customer service.

The idea for the LSC community emerged, when the community creators realized, how differently the client organizations were spreading the knowledge about LSC in their organizations. Some of the client organizations had taken more ownership of the methodology and were therefore well ahead in educating their colleagues and spreading the knowledge around the company. On the other hand, another client company struggled with the new tools and their implementation into their corporate processes.

When these differences in approaches were discovered by the community creators, they thought that the representatives of these organizations could learn from each other in this regard. This idea was taken to implementation in Autumn 2016 when the first community meeting was held. The idea of that meeting was to explore the initial feelings and attitude towards this kind of a community and what would be the initial needs for it. In addition, in this first meeting the potential community members were offered a chance to join a huge LSC workshop (Ahto'17) in Finlandia hall in the beginning of year 2017 as a facilitator.

Around 40 of these potential community members joined as facilitators to Finlandia hall in January 2017. Otherwise, during year 2017 there has been one official meeting in June and some additional facilitation opportunities offered for the community members. The second community meeting in June 2017 was co-arranged with one of the client organizations. The event took place in their premises and they also presented how they had taken LSC into use. Additionally, the representatives from the case company presented some new tools that were developed to serve as a continuum for the original tools.

In addition to face-to-face events the LSC community has a Facebook group. There are currently 409 members in the Facebook group of the LSC community and on average 40 of them actively participate in LSC events and other activities around LSC. There have also been some content published in the Facebook group, but these activities have not been very systematic or strategic. The community also has a LinkedIn group, which consists of roughly 100 members. Often same or similar content has been published in both channels.

3.2 Selection, sampling and data

Sampling of interviewees to this study is information oriented and theoretical. As typical to information oriented selection, interviewees are picked based on their assumed, or known, best suitability and information value, in relation to the knowledge that is aimed to obtain (Flyvberg, 2006, 34). Theoretical sampling is aiming at theory generations and therefore after first round of sampling and data collection the initial answers are analyzed and the sampling and data collection is continued based on the emerging needs of the developing theory (Glaser & Holton, 2004, parag: 51).

For this study 13 interviews have been conducted with the LSC alumni. The choice of interviewees has been based on recommendations of the community creators and on proven activeness and enthusiasm of the alumni to use LSC in their work. These

chosen interviewees are expected to have critical aspects about and in relation to the community building. Five of the interviewees also make decisions regarding whether LSC will be used in projects that they run. In other words, the first target segment of the community are the most probable members, who supposedly will need new knowledge and experiences regarding the methodology. The amount of interviewees, their field of business and the year of first learning LSC are listed in table 1.

Currently the active base for the LSC community is formed of representatives of seven Finnish and international, middle sized and large corporations from different industries. These corporations come from industries of logistics, retail, construction, vessel building, energy and fuel and telecommunications. One to two interviewees have been chosen from each corporation to be interviewed. All of these organizations have initiated LSC working methods starting from the bottom of the organization. These LSC alumni have participated the LSC training at some point during years 2015 to 2017.

In addition, all the three community creators who have been initiating the community have been interviewed. They are all employees of the case company and have been creating and growing LSC as a methodology, as a business and now as a community. They were chosen to get the best grasp of the community's grounds, first steps and possible goals.

The community creators come from different study backgrounds, but have been working with the case company at least six years. One the community creators is the founder of the case company. LSC has not been part of the initial competence of any of the community creators, but through their work experience in IT consultancy they have developed their skills and formulated some of it into the format of LSC.

Number of interviewees	Industry	Year of starting with LSC
2	Logistics	2015
1	Retail	2016
2	Vessel building	2016
2	Tele communications	2015
2	Construction	2017
4	Energy and fuel	2015 & 2017
3	Case company, IT consulting	2014

Table 1 | Summary of the interviewees.

3.3 Data collection

The level of structure in an interview is usually considered to reflect how much of the topic is already known and how much new aspects should still be covered (Wengraf, 2011, pp.60-70). When interview data is used to for exploration and inductive theory building the structure can be lighter (Wengraf, 2011, pp.60-70). When the research is or is becoming more theory testing and deductive the structure usually needs to be heavier (Wengraf, 2011, pp.60-70).

Data were collected by semi-structured interviews in this study, both for the community creators and community members. The level of structure can vary vastly in semi-structured interviews based on the focus and aims of the study. In this study, the semi-structured interviews are conducted by using open-ended questions. This is a well-working tool, when the themes of the interview are clear, but the research is explorative by nature. Semi-structured interviews let the researcher explore the themes they held most relevant and simultaneously leave room for new insights and learning about the interviewee and the phenomenon at hand.

The interview structure of this study is created roughly in the same manner as Wengraf's (2011, pp.60-70) pyramid model proposes – starting from the central research question, dividing that into theory-questions of interest and those theory-questions into more specific research questions. The pyramid model of this study can be found in figure 2. In this specific case, the interests were to hear about all the different needs, feelings and experiences of the interviewees, in relation to the topic, although they also had some preliminary guesses of the interviewees' situation.

Research Purposes (RP)

Central Research Question(s) (CRQ)

Theory-question$_1$ Theory-question$_2$ Theory-question$_3$

II/IQ$_{1A}$ II/IQ$_{2A}$ II/IQ$_{2B}$ II/IQ$_{2C}$ II/IQ$_{3A}$ II/IQ$_{3B}$
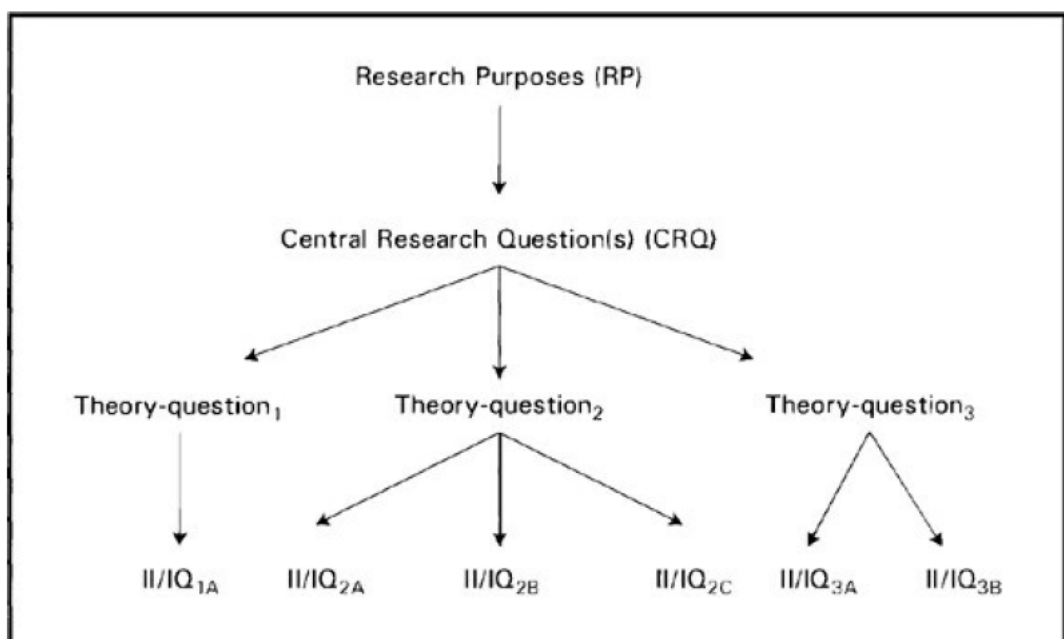
Figure 2 | *Pyramid model: Relation of research questions to interview questions (Wengraf, 2011, pp.60-70).*

The interview structure was updated after seven interviews to include more direct questions regarding the LSC community. The idea of the first interview structure was to focus more on exploration and the organizational context of the interviewees, covering also questions regarding their role and identity in the organization. Communities were discussed on a general level to be able to get to the actual communal habits of the interviewee and to avoid the possible biases created by the

case company related initiatives. Many of the interviewees have a very positive relationship to the case company and they might have been very positive towards all initiatives by the case company. Therefore, the communal aspects were first covered starting outside the case company's initiatives. Later in the process the author understood that there was more data needed regarding the LSC community. The seven first interviewees were asked the inserted questions by email to get all the themes covered by all the interviewees. The two different versions of the interview structure and the additional emailed questions are found in the attachments 1 through 3.

Each of the interviews lasted between 30 to 60 minutes and were conducted either face-to-face or on the phone. The overall themes of the first interview structure were covering current state of the represented organization, identity at work, role and type of work tasks, feelings awoken by the work, current participation/utilization of different kind of professional or other communities, possible needs for the communities in question and wishes or ideas. The interviews were arranged between February to end of September in year 2017.

3.3.1 The authors role

The author's role relates to the study on many levels. First of all, she is an employee of the case company and has been partly responsible for the LSC community activities during year 2017. Second, she has also been member of the LSC community, and participated its activities from Autumn 2016. She has also been working closely with the community creators and is well aware of the different aspirations and plans the different community creators have.

The author has utilized this multi-role position as an asset in the study and it has enabled deeper learning for her and a deeper study in general. She has also considered herself as an informant in some parts of the study where she has had some extra knowledge regarding the topic. This applies in specific to the last recommendations. These pieces of knowledge are explicitly stated in the study.

Despite the multi-role situation, the author has aimed to keep fresh eyes and mind as a researcher, towards the opportunities and challenges, that she has met during the study, both in the data collection as in the analysis-phase.

3.4 Analysis

Grounded theory helps in investigating a phenomenon of interest. Within grounded theory observed or noticed events or discrete happenings are described as concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 61). The first step in the analysis in grounded theory is open coding, which starts by labelling the phenomenon, that is observed, into concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 62). The labelling might generate a huge amount of concepts and therefore, after the labelling the researcher will start to discover categories, that summarize set of the concepts together.

Each of the generated categories has properties and the properties have dimensions (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 70). Strauss and Corbin (1990, pp.70) provide the example of color as a category. Color as a category can have properties like shade and intensity. Both of these properties can also vary on a dimension. The shade can be strong or weak, or the intensity can be low or high, or something in between.

Open coding is thus concerned with ripping the data apart into bits and pieces (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 63). The next step in the analysis process of grounded theory, is focused on putting the data back together (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 96). Axial coding is an analysis process focused beyond the categories and properties (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 96). The goal of axial coding is to understand the category in its context (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 97). The categories do not appear in a vacuum, but might appear due to certain conditions. Individuals involved in the phenomenon and category have different strategies in handling the categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp.97). These strategies of dealing with the category also have consequences (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 97).

This study has closely followed the analysis steps described above. The first step of analysis in this study, has also been open coding and labelling the data and recognizing categories. Through recognizing the properties and their dimensions the analysis has shifted from open coding to having emphasis on axial coding. As Strauss and Corbin (1990, pp. 97) have described the analysis process of this study has also tended to shift between open and axial coding flowingly.

The interviews were conducted in Finnish. The author has freely translated the answers of the interviewees. All the interviewees have had a chance to read through and review their input for the study before its published.

4. Results

The focus of this chapter is to present the remaining empirical findings of the study. These findings will form the basis for further recommendations regarding the community development, which is discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter. First, the community creators' perceptions are covered, and second community members perceptions will be presented.

Each of the subheadings corresponds to a category. Category's representation forms are described with *italics.* If the representation has subcategories, those are presented with *underlined italics.*

4.1 Perceptions of community creators

4.1.1 Community vision and strategy

Currently, the community vision and its future are undecided, which is strongly reflected in the community management activities. The LSC community has been set up quite organically. There is no official budget or delegation for the community, neither systematic plan or steps for advancing it. Strategic aspects of the community have not been thought through. The community creators share the feeling, that LSC community and its activities *lack clear systematics*. What seems to be lacking the most is clarity in the community's goals, functioning and responsibilities.

> "I feel that we should have a clearer strategy with the community, so that one would know what one should be doing regarding it."
>
> "There hasn't been any systematics for the community. The first meeting was all about finding out about the participants needs. We are now more into this central decision model, so we need a shared decision to proceed. My role is connected to what we decide together. The situation is that we haven't decided what to do about it."

"We need to get the company's internal acceptance and support to advance this. We have the Facebook group and events sometimes but no real systematics."

4.1.2 The purpose and benefits of the community

Although LSC community creators do not specifically remember when the first idea of the community creation was conceived, the community has been created on four insights:

- *Closer to the clients* – LSC community enables the creators to be closer to their clients and learn from their experiences

- *Supporting organizational change* –The LSC Alumni had a need to get some support outside their own organization to continue the change within their organization

- *A bigger impact* – One of the trained organizations had started an LSC community within their organization, which sparked the thought that the need might be wider

- *Learning in the network* – One of the community creators had recognized that one of his customer organizations was having a problem, which another customer organization had already solved. Therefore, he thought that these customers could learn from each other.

"We wanted to learn how they were doing… if they had been able to advance what they started during the LSC program. And also [to learn] what problems they were facing. We also saw that the trained people still needed support with continuing with these activities. This gives us contacts to talk to regarding needs and other things. It's sort of a sales channel too."

"We also had the idea of additional sales, I think. But also the branding angle was clear. We wanted to make this into a bigger thing. We thought that the community could spread some "good will"."

"We had seen that one of the client organizations had started a community of their own. It felt like a very good idea and it was natural to advance these

thoughts. I had also witnessed the systematics of this client company to spread and teach LSC. I wanted another client to see this systematics. I guess I thought it's best if they talk with each other."

So far the benefits of the LSC community have been various. It *strengthens the brand* of LSC and the case company, and has enabled creating *new revenue streams.* LSC community also taps well into all of the strategic goals of the case company.

"So far it (the community) has helped us to create something bigger, which we and the them (community members) are a part of. It has also enabled us to sell more."

"I think the community supports all of our strategic goals."

4.1.3 Current state of the community

There has been roughly two ways of keeping the community alive and growing. One of them is, that traditionally, new members to the LSC community have arrived through large events or LSC trainings. Lately, these activities have not been realized, which has created a *stagnation* in the community growth in terms of number of members. The other way of keeping the community alive is related to published and updated content. Although there have been advancements within LSC during the last four months, those have not been actively shared to the community. Two of the community creators even described the community activities being *freezed*.

"It is not very stable. Sometimes we have events and we have the Facebook, but there is no systematics. Everybody has their own things going on."

"We have been focusing on other things lately, all of these (community related) activities have been frozen."

"It's frozen. Faltered. Forgotten." (describes the community's current state)

The stagnation of the community is strongly related to the state of the LSC team. The LSC team has been focusing on redefining its strategy, vision and focus areas after the summer holidays (2017) and therefore there have been few activities accomplished related to the LSC Alumni community (author's note).

4.1.4 Community creators' roles in relation to the community

There is a trend that all the community creators bring the alumni from their training to the community. They are the *link, the face and the contact* between the alumni, and the community. The community creators are also the strongest *thought leaders* in the community.

> "I think I currently know most of those people. I think I possess the strongest thought leadership in the community."
>
> "The people you have trained get linked to you."
>
> "Many of these (alumni) recognize that I have been hanging around. Of course, if I have been running a course or a program, those people get easily linked [to me]."

Although all the community creators have participated in the content creation, they have all had different focuses with in the content. New canvases have been the main focus of one of the community creators (author' note). Another has been acting as an *author*, updating the handbook and as an *actor* creating introductory videos.

Also new and unrealized tasks were suggested. One of the community creators described, that he should be an encourager in the community and lift people up. The delegation in regards of content creation has been mostly unplanned and has emerged organically based on the interests of the community creators.

> "The content creation is also strongly my thing. We pushed out the new version of the handbook. I also made the videos."

"I'm sure there is a lot of tasks that I should be doing, which I'm not doing currently. I should probably be actively sharing what we do on Facebook. And lift people up there, both us (case company employees) and clients' employees."

4.2. Perceptions of community members

In the alumni events arranged, the alumni have been group working and getting to know each other that way. In the small teams the participants have also been able to share their own views and experiences and hear others'. The most wanted content was straight connected to interaction and knowledge sharing:

"It's nice to hear other's experiences of what works and what doesn't. For example cases would be good."

"More good cases!"

"Sharing more experiences. It enables checking one's own level in an occupational view."

"More of free hanging out and sharing experiences. Also I would hope for more learning events where we could have cases and chatting."

4.2.1 Attitude towards the LSC community

Nine out thirteen interviewees stated that they would be *interested* in the community's activities or thought that it could bring them value.

"It's always good to discuss with people in the same position."

"I would love to come by and see what's going on in there!"

"Especially in the development phase we (refers to his work organization) are in, being part of the community could be very beneficial."

"I would love to participate these (community events) in the future too. I really like to develop these things with you guys! We could even meet more often with a larger crowd."

"I really enjoy the LSC way of doing, There is a proper buzz around it."

"It's very good to get to meet others, not straight competitors, and learn from their insights and experiences."

"We would definitely need some support with this (using LSC and changing the organization)."

"It's a good way for sharing new knowledge and getting ideas. It's interesting to meet people who are in the same situation."

"I think it's a great thing!"

Some of the potential community members were still *hesitant* towards the community initiatives. They felt, that it was hard for them to comment as the description of the community's content was still on a vague level. A few community members were *concerned* that the community activities would remain focused on the capital region, which makes it hard for them to participate.

4.2.2 Community practicalities and growth enablers

Word of mouth was an important factor for spreading awareness of the community as most of the interviewees did not actively search for communities to belong to. Mostly recommendations of communities came from a friend or a colleague. *Publicity in relevant media* was also important, because reading articles, books and blogs is also a source of recommendations.

"I read a lot and that's how I find interesting things. I also get recommendations."

"I get ideas based on what I read. If it seems interesting I find out more."

"Somebody invites me. Or then I hear from a representative of another company that these exist."

"I usually hear from my friends."

"I sometimes find recommendation in magazines."

"I get a lot of invitations through CRM systems."

"I often find out about these through a colleague."

"I have been invited through someone at work."

"I think I have heard about them from a colleague or read in the trade organization's newspaper."

Most of the interviewees reported that they would still *prefer face-to-face* communication and activities from the community. Those of the interviewees who had or did participate actively in some professional communities also reported to be more engaged in the one that had more face-to-face meetings and social relations involved. This might be affected by the alumni's thought that they had high social skills and got easily along with different kind of people.

> "I belong to couple of informal groups (face-to-face meetings). All of them have come through people I have worked with."
>
> "There could be more of these events. I participate my alumni (university) network happenings at least 4 timer per year."
>
> "Face-to-face meetings are important."
>
> "I prefer face-to-face meetings. Otherwise there is no memory trace."
>
> "I think it would be nice to meet people in the same kind of situations. I wish we could speak freely and maybe even extend beyond talking by doing something together."
>
> "If I had to choose one, I would choose face-to-face. Digital components can also be suitable as they can be checked in one's own time."
>
> "I think physical presence is important."

The digital communities were largely consumed more as a spectator and listener. LinkedIn groups and Facebook groups were followed, but *publishing in digital communities was rare*. The Facebook groups the members belonged to, were not necessarily work related. In some cases there were also so many groups that it was not feasible to follow all of them. Digital platforms of communities might have been used for finding information and to order some help for a work-related task. These platforms were mainly webpages, not social groups.

> "I belong to some LinkedIn groups."

"LinkedIn groups are most typical and there are conversations too. I publish so little these days. I should do it more."

"I belong to some LinkedIn groups. They are easy to join."

"I belong to some Facebook and LinkedIn groups but pretty loosely. I publish rarely. I don't dare. It takes too long to form a sensible opinion to share."

"I don't have my LinkedIn up-to-date. I'm on Facebook, yes, but I'm not so active."

"I do use some digital tools. LinkedIn has a bad user-interface."

"There are some groups in Facebook and LinkedIn, which I belong to, but I'm not so active. I don't think I can talk there freely."

"I belong to some LinkedIn groups, but there is no real novelty value. There are more individuals sharing. Pretty low activity there."

A couple of the interviewees still thought that a digital component might be interesting after having the first events and meetings face-to-face. *Digital component for sharing knowledge, experiences and asking for help quickly*, was considered to be useful. Two of the interviewees even stated that having both the face-to-face and the digital component of the community is a necessity to make it well-functioning.

"In the Salesforce community there is a digital side but also face-to-face. They have arranged it (the community) well. The themes and the organizer are decided on the digital platform and then the meeting is face-to-face. "

"If I had to choose one, I would choose face-to-face. Digital components can also be suitable as they can be checked in one's own time."

Relevant aspect to the communal activities was also the fact that the other community members would be *representatives from non-rivalry organizations*, so organizations that do not operate on the same field of industry. This enables *concern free sharing* for the community members. They can express their insights and thoughts, without needing to worry about company secrecy or non-disclosure agreements.

"A smaller team of people who do not represent rivalry organizations. Then we could share knowledge more openly. "

"It's nice to benchmark and share thoughts without needing worry about secrecy."

"I'm sure it would be very useful, but I'm hesitant over the limits set by company secrecy."

"It's very good to be able to meet other, not direct competitors, and hear their experiences and insights."

"I need to be very careful with what I share, so that wrong things doesn't end up in competitors' ears."

4.2.3 Needs from the community combined with organizational development stage (in relation to digitalization)

Observed needs varied based on organizations development stage in relation to digitalization. On a rough scale there were interviewees from three kinds of organizations:

1) the need to change was not yet fully acknowledged,
2) the need to change was acknowledged, but there was no clear plan for how to react to it and
3) the need to change is acknowledged and reactions in relation to digitalization have been planned and taken.

In the organizations, that were not fully aware of the need to change, there was a bigger need for *mental support*. The interviewees wished for having *a feeling of belonging* and sharing the views on world. One of the interviewees described meeting likeminded people as 'strengthening the faith', which was weakened in his home organization where he needed constantly to battle for the change.

"It's so important to meet likeminded people. In one of the events my "faith" was strengthened, that there still are other models than waterfall. I get a lot of support from my customers."

"I participate events just to meet people in similar positions. I need a reality check, that I'm not crazy (with supporting agile ways of working and change in the organization)."

In the somewhat advanced organizations, which acknowledged that digitalization affects their business and they need to change, the wishes also included *new tools* and *case examples* in addition to the *mental support*. Interviewees from these organization wanted to learn from the others – how they had tackled similar issues and what were the crucial moments and arguments for change. There was in general interest towards *learning* from other members' learnings.

"Example cases are good! And it would be good to be reminded of the tools if you haven't used them for a while. When we are left alone with this, then we need support too. We are still hesitant over how to approach this change. It would be great to hear other people's experiences if they have been doing this for a while already."

"One gets insights and solutions to own issues. One gets also empathy. We battle the same things although on other fields."

"One gets peer-support and sparring. Still sharing knowledge is the most important part. I wish for more free exchanging of thoughts and case examples."

"I think it's nice to share experiences and opinions. I also like hearing other people's insights and experiences."

"I think it's nice to hear the best practices evolutionary versions regarding LSC."

In this study, only one of the organizations seemed to be well advanced in relation to digitalization. Possible differentiating needs of the representatives of these

organizations should still be considered carefully when designing the community. According to interviews conducted for this study, if the organization is advanced in regard to digitalization, the needs seem to shift from the peer-support side towards *inspiration* and *success stories*.

> "It's important for me to not need to listen to how hard other people have it. We are ahead in this change. Great cases are always inspiring."

4.2.4 Challenges experienced on the team level

The interviewees experienced some challenges on the team level. These challenges were connected to *team attitude issues* or *organizational barriers*. These team level issues were mainly present in the organizations on level 1 and 2 on the scale presented in the previous section.

The *attitude issues* were mainly connected to forms of <u>*resistance to change*</u>. In many cases the workers could be stuck in "engineer thinking" without understanding the broader scope of things or their role in it. Some of the interviewees reported that their team members already thought they knew the new ways of working, although they were not able to implement them. Some of the workers had already been in the organization for a long time and seen different phenomena to pass. Therefore, it was hard for them to understand that this time the changes would really need to happen.

> "Some of the team members think that this is just one of those new crazes."
> "Also people easily think that they already know the new stuff and get stuck with their own ideas. Luckily customer-centricity helps in tackling this."
> "People have hard time comprehending the size of the change. It remained on the "it was just a one time thing" –level."
> "The biggest issue is the "engineer thinking". We really need to bring the customer's perspective in. We aim to create and understanding that this is not just passing, but we really need to change."

> "Our challenge is: How do I inspire Pekka from Pieksämäki to use post-its when he has his "real work" undone?"

Organizational barriers that the teams faced were mainly focused on _resources_. The interviewees described that the team and the workers were not provided with enough of time to learn and adapt to new way of working. Connected to this issue, the workers 'own work' was pushing the learning aside. This reflects the fact that the new ways of working or learning were not truly prioritized by either the worker or the organizational structure. Learning and new ways of doing were not measured nor justified by the organizations.

> "People are struggling with how to slip this into the work. They are also wondering whether learning a new way of working "really takes this long" (three working days). This is often seen as on top of the own work."
>
> "Some see the new ways of working as separate from their "normal" work, although it shouldn't be like that."
>
> "People received it (new ways of working) well, but clearing the calendar is hard. It's not easy, bringing these new ways of working to this kind of company that is full of old legacy."
>
> "The biggest challenge is to get the time for the team members. People are so stressed about their own work, that they have hard time understanding why this is important."

Another found *organizational barrier* was, _connecting new and old processes_. One third of the interviewees stated that they had issues after ending the so called LSC development phase. Typically, when they moved forward from this phase, the initiatives were jumped into the organizations old development processes, which were stiff and slow. Therefore, the value gained in the lean and agile beginning was easily lost.

"It also feels hard to move from the LSC-phase to the real implementation phase."

"Getting further from the business case is the hard part. LSC and similar end there, where the most challenging parts (scaling and telling when something doesn't work) start."

"What we have now, when we move to the implementation, that transition is hard. Combining the old and the new."

"These day the flow goes so, that after the LSC spring we jump back into the waterfall track. That's insane."

4.2.5 Elements of a shared identity

The LSC Alumni community members described themselves often by similar terms. The first common denominator was *high level of social skills*. 54% interviewees answered that they were good with people, got well along with everyone or that they simply had good social skills. The interviewees considered interaction with other people natural and inspiring and they were often operating in many different roles and tasks in their organization. One of the interviewees described herself as a connector between different parties. Some of them also acted in a supervisory role.

"I need to be facilitating and leading the doing."

"I come well along with people. I can easily discuss with anyone."

"I think I like people."

"I'm good at listening what people have to say. I'm a sort a judge of human nature."

"I'm good at reading people and can easily adopt my language to fit theirs."

"I'm very humane. I'm a connector between parties and a support person."

"I'm a very good listener and I ask a lot of questions. People feel that it's easy to talk to me."

The roles that the interviewees reported were often connected to enabling the other colleagues to do their work. The interviewees acted as *sparrers and supporters* for

their colleagues. They would often be persons, who other people would turn to, if something was not going well or there was a confusion. One of the interviewees went as far as describing herself as *a therapist* for her colleagues. Enabling others work also took forms of actually removing existing organizational barriers from a team or a colleague. This might be as simple as removing a meeting from a person's calendar. The interviewees considered themselves as work boosters.

"I enjoy inspiring people. And when I see that they realize that they can have an effect on their own lives. When I've discussed my strengths with my colleagues, the one thing they say is that I can lead by finding personal value for my employees."

"My new role is about harvesting new ideas and opportunities from the field. We aim to solve at least one internal issue per site in 2 days."

"I move horizontally in the organization and drive innovation. I work with multiple different groups of people and also customers. Everything happens in teams. It's hard for me to get myself going alone."

"I'm involved a lot in sales and therefore negotiate a lot with our clients. I enjoy it a lot. I'm good at putting myself into their shoes."

"My job is to concretize what this change (digitalization) means for our leadership and my team. I try to bring a good vibe and the customer closer."

"I'm usually coaching these days. I also connect people together and try to open up doors for them. This role is natural for me: Opinion influencer and leading the way."

"I'm an enabler for digitalization. I remove barriers from people so that they can work better. I am mostly this change agent trying to persuade people to join me to the new future with a lot of opportunities."

"I'm a sparer myself. I aim to help my team with working more effectively."

Also *elaborate communication skills* were brought up as a part of the skill palette of the interviewees. Constant persuasion and convincing was often considered being

part of the work description. Some of the interviewees were also actively presenting advancements for different kind of audience and giving public talks. The main purpose for the communication in this context was to change the listener's opinion about the status quo or the direction that should be taken. Mostly this had to do with adoption of new ways of working on the grass root level or on the management level. A couple of the interviewees stated explicitly that they act as *change agents* in their organization.

> "I'm able to formulate my thoughts in a way that other people understand them easily."
>
> "I easily adopt into customer's language."
>
> "I am also a messenger between different stakeholders. I communicate about how things can be done and what is the best way for taking initiative forwards. I'm sort of a communication and support person."

The interviewees described stress as a challenge. The stress was mainly created by the position in between parties that pull to different directions. Interestingly, though the interviewees reported the job as stressful, they also tended to enjoy the fast paced and pressured environment. One could describe the interviewees as *hotheads*.

As the position of the interviewees was often demanding, they also had developed coping mechanisms and ways to motivate themselves. Some of these aspects are closely related to developed practices and some are more related to the personality. Some of the interviewees described that their personality supported them or that the role was found natural.

The interviewees were found to be *active learners*, as learning was an essential coping mechanism and motivator for the work. Many answered that they had *a drive* for the work as the role, and the work itself were interesting. Other motivators were seeing persuasion for change being successful and a colleague had learned something new or changed in some way.

"It's important to understand your own limits. I'm not perfect, but I don't need to be."

"The stress that follows with this position is totally unreasonable, because I don't have top security (security guaranteed by top management). I must be a lunatic to cope with this. But I enjoy speed and dangerous situations. More challenges and just fast forward. Without development nothing happens."

"This is very challenging and super inspiring. On the other hand, I like the challenging environment. "

"It's very interesting but very wearing and the amount of learning is drastic."

"It's so inspiring when you see, that someone just realized something."

Most of the interviewees stated that they were in an *independent* or even *lonely* position. Sometimes there was no clear team they belonged to or people in the same position driving similar or same tasks. Although many of the interviewees reported feeling lonely in their positions, some of them also had support. Some got support from their nearest team and got the feeling of doing things together. Some even found support in events, where they could find similar people or people in the similar position, who they could connect with. Some simply reported that they had the best colleagues, who they could turn to in case they needed mental or other support.

"I get support from my colleagues and my supervisor. We always discuss aspects through ad hoc."

"My role is very independent, but of course I work with a lot of people and I try to learn from them. I search support depending from the topic: tech team for tech issues, supervisors for strategy, and also from friends sometimes."

"I am alone in this role at least to begin with. If I need support I just grab the phone and call someone wiser. My closest team spars me the most. The leadership is also very approachable."

"I am a lonely rider and I think many other in similar positions are too. I search for support often outside the house (his own organization). It shouldn't be this way."

"I enjoy the microclimate in my team. I should though get myself a mentor."

"There is actually no one else doing this job except me. I've been doing this for a year now. It's very tough to do this alone. "

"My team makes me cope. I also have one trusted co-worker, who I turn to when I need let out some steam."

"I'm the first person with this competence now."

"We have a great team and a full of support from the management."

"It's so important to meet likeminded people. In one of the events my "faith" was strengthened, that there still are other models than waterfall. I get a lot of support from my customers."

"I participate events just to meet people in similar positions. I need a reality check, that I'm not crazy (with supporting agile ways of working and change in the organization)."

5. Discussion

This chapter focuses on summarizing and discussing the research and its results. The practical implications of this study are not presented separately as they are a part of the third research question. The chapter will start with a summary of the findings, which are presented in the order of the research questions. The second part of this chapter discusses the limitations of this study and the third chapter concludes the thesis by suggesting potential areas and angles for future research.

5.1 Summary of the findings

The findings are presented in the order of the research questions. First creating and cultivating communities will be discussed. Second, the developmental stage of the LSC community is analyzed. Lastly, recommendations for developing the LSC community are presented. These recommendations correspond to the typical chapter dedicated for managerial implications.

5.1.1 RQ1: How are communities of practice created and cultivated?

Creating a community of practice is fragile and delicate activity. The community creator should think, whether they are imposing something formal onto a social context or whether there really is a potential for the community. Luckily, this can be found out relatively easily by discussing and observing.

If a potential for the community is found, careful designing, planning and experimenting activities can be started. The community creator can first map out for herself, what would the domain, practice and community be. Soon after the first thoughts, the potential community members should be joined to discuss the options and opportunities.

The creator should not forget that she is an intermediary. She needs to be focusing, at least in the beginning, both on the community creation inside the community, and simultaneously take care of the boundaries and negotiate the existence of the

community with the hosting organization. It is a two-way street and people everywhere.

The community creator should always keep in mind, that her focuses and responsibilities constantly change and develop with the community. The community creator cannot be acting in the similar manner on *coalescing*-stage as she was on the *potential*-stage. The focuses shift, needs changes and the world outside the community develops.

5.1.2 RQ2: What is the developmental stage of the LSC community as a community of practice?

The current development stage of the LSC community is approached from two perspectives: community creators' perspective and community members' perspective.

5.1.2.1 Community creators' perspective

The empirical results are compared with Wenger et al.'s model of community cultivation. Wenger et al.'s model was chosen due to its detailed and elaborated character.

According to Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.68) there are five different development stages for lifecycle of a community. These five stages are:

1. Potential
2. Coalescing
3. Maturing
4. Stewardship
5. Transformation

According to this view of the community lifecycle, the LSC community is situated on the first and the second stage. The tables 2 and 3 describe how LSC community activities relate to the stage definitions. No features or activities related to stages 3-

Development stage:	Sub-phase:	Activity:	Discovered activity:
Development stage: Potential	Community creator	Develop community members	
		Handling community events and boundaries	The last alumni event was arranged in June 2017. In September the alumni were offered a possibility to facilitate in an event through the community.
		Linking community members	
		Recognize critical issues and problems	Done together with this thesis.
		20-50% funded	There has been funding, but an unclear focus so far. "Around Autumn 2016 we started discussing hiring someone to drive the community. We had no clear delegation during that time."
	Planning communities	Create an early design for the community.	Aim is to define parts of this in this thesis.
		Connect community members	
		Interview members	Done together with this thesis.
		Identify potential coordinators and thought leaders	Done together with this thesis.
		Build a case for action	
		Define domain and find engaging issues	"Getting case examples of how LSC has been used in other organizations." "Getting information about the newest tools and practices." "it's nice to meet like-minded people."
		Define a primary intent	
	Discover and imagine	Understanding and revealing the true potential of the community.	Has been partially done by the community creator.
		Exploring the current relationships in the community and understanding its current stage.	Done together with this thesis.

Table 2 | Connecting the *Potential*-stage with current state of the LSC community.

5 were identified and therefore those stages are not discussed further here.

The aspects that are covered or under development to some extent are colored. Green refers to the aspect being 90-100% covered, blue refers to 50-89% of coverage and yellow refers to less than 50% covered.

Although the *Potential*-stage is not fully covered yet, there are some aspects from the *Coalescing*-stage present. In table 3 you can see the initial connection of the stage activities and their realization in the LSC community creation.

Development stage:	Sub-phase:	Activity:	Discovered activity:
Coalescing	Nurturing	Engage members.	Members were engaged for example by having a couple of them arranging the alumni event in June 2017. They have also been invited to facilitate in later events where Futurice has been present.
		Identify opportunities to provide value.	
		Document judiciously.	
		Finding the insights and practices worth sharing	
		Building connections between core community members	
		Legitimize community coordinators	Legitimizing the community coordinators has started with me. Other coordinators and roles should be decided.
		Initiating community spaces and events	There have been events arranged for the community.
		Launching the community	There have been activities that would signal that the community has been activated. Still, there hasn't been any specific launching event.
		Case for membership	

Table 3| Connecting the *Coalescing*-stage with current activities and state of the LSC community.

There have been activities that also suit the description of the *Coalescing*-stage. The members have been engaged in arranging community activities and participating in them. The LSC community has not got a special space but there have been events arranged as described before. Although the community has already been somewhat active, there has not been any special launching event for it. The community coordinator has been recognized, but other coordinators from other organizations have not been named. The fact that the community is not just inside one organization makes the role division more challenging and the role division should be carefully designed according to the community members potential and wishes.

5.1.2.2 Community members' perspective

The literature review revealed no frameworks for analyzing the development stage of the community of practice from the participants point of view. Some of the articles used the definition of community of practice (usually Wenger's, Snyder's and McDermott's, 2002, definition through domain, community and practice) to analyze how the participants relate to the community of practice and how they see it.

To be able to assess the evolution of the LSC community I mirrored Wenger's, Snyder's and McDermott's (2002) stages *Potential* and *Coalescing* to reflect the participants view and connected that with my learnings from my data analysis. In the tables 4 and 5 you can see the *potential* and *coalescing* stages represented from the community members' perspective. The color coding remains the same: green refers to the aspect being 90-100% covered, blue refers to 50-89% of coverage and yellow refers to less than 50% covered.

Development stage:	Sub-phase:	Activity:
Potential – Participants	Identification	Understanding roughly what kind of memberships the community entails and what is the minimum value that one needs to provide for the participation.
		The participant can recognize the value proposition of the community for her/him and finds it resonating.
	Entry	Finding out how and where the community communicates and meets
		Understanding how to participate
	Discovery	Identifying where the community is going/what it is trying to achieve
		Recognizing the coordinators/thought leaders of the community
		Recognizing the existence of the community

Table 4| Outlining of the development stage *Potential* from the participant point of view.

Nine out of the thirteen interviewees were aware of or had participated the activities of the community. Six of the nine who had heard about it before, thought that the community was a good idea and would bring them value. The three remaining were skeptical due to either geographical location of the activities, higher position in the organization and therefore not using the LSC tools, and because their organization is a forerunner in this field. The forerunner wanted to make sure they are not just listening to other people's issues. As all the interviewees had been trained by some of the community creators, they were aware of the thought leaders of the LSC community.

Development stage:	Sub-phase:	Activity:
Coalescing – Participant	Interaction	Getting to know the other participants
		Possibly sharing one's own experiences
		Learning from others
	Personal positioning	Finding a suitable way for participating
		Identifying what one wants to learn

Table 5 | Outlining of the development stage *Coalescing* from the participant point of view.

5.1.2.3 Development stage of the LSC community – Synthesis

Based on the understanding created in the former chapters, it can be concluded that the LSC community is on the *Potential*-stage. There have been a lot of ideas and good initiatives regarding the community, its future and needed activities. There have been events and initiatives that have communicated the community's existence to the potential and interested members. There have been preliminary interviews conducted with the potential community members to create an understanding of the potential community members' needs and wishes.

Although there have been successful events and activities regarding the LSC community, there is a lot more to harvest. It has become inevitable, that the community creators need to gain clarity regarding the community's future and goals. The community will not be able to flourish and provide its potential value, if the case company and the community creators are not invested in the community and making it grow.

When the community creators are themselves confused regarding what should be done, how, when and by whom, all the energy that is used goes into defining case company's and the creators position in relation to the community. Simultaneously, less time is left for understanding the community members, their relationships, their needs and what they could provide for each other.

From the community members' perspective, the community's situation is confusing. There have been some activities and events that they have enjoyed and which have provided them value. Nevertheless, there is no sign of the future activities, no continuity or understanding of how to take part in developing the community. This seems to be frustrating especially for those community members who consider the community to be very valuable.

5.1.3 RQ3: What should be the next actions for developing the LSC community?

1. **Recommendation – Clear decision and consensus**

First, the case company and the LSC team need to come to a conclusion if they wish to pursue the community building and with which investment. This study solely stands for the choice of pursuing the building of the LSC community. There are four major reasons for that. A) Community creation as a competence is very topical in the digitalizing world, B) Communities of practice are a valuable and effective way for knowledge management with in an organization and potentially inter-organizationally C) LSC community is an interesting way to apply network theories into strategic account management and D) through the LSC community the case company can develop its brand as a thought leader in the market of IT consultancy.

Table 6 aims to outline a recommendation for the initial investment to facilitate the discussion and decision making.

Topic	Sub-category	Amount
Workforce		
	Main community coordinator	2,5 days/week
	Secondary community coordinator	2-4 hours/week
	Though leader 1	2-4 hours/week
	Thought leader 2	2-4 hours/week
	Thought leader 3	2-4 hours/week
Tools		
	Program licenses	For 4-7 teams
	Canvases	For 4-7 teams
	Post-its	For 4-7 teams
	Pens	For 4-7 teams
	Handbooks	For 4-7 teams
Spaces		
	Rooms/halls for events	2-4
Catering		
	Food and drinks for the events	

Table 6| Outlining of the formation of the investment into the LSC community from the case company point of view.

2. **Recommendation – Goals for LSC community**

The near future, year 2018, goals for the LSC community should be related to its current stage of development. The most important aspects here are to create the feeling of continuity, linking community members with each other and deepening and consolidating the understanding of the community members' current needs.

To achieve these goals the community creators' and coordinators need to set up a preliminary schedule for the community activities and communicate this to the community. Additionally, there needs to be safer means for communication established between the community members, so that they can easily approach each other and ask for opinions or similar. The Facebook group is too public for this purpose. Following the discussions and how the members participate in the activities, what they like and dislike, will give the community creators better understanding of

the community members' needs and what their real situation is in their home organizations. Are they using LSC at all? If so, when and where? What are their key issues and enablers? New and different communication medium will facilitate also community creators' and coordinators job in linking people and knowledge together.

An example for the schedule could be following:

Event	Focus	Time suggestion:
1	Totally on the needs of the members. Finding a collaborating partner again. More free discussions. Maybe initializing a project together. Understanding what could be the basis for an activity reward system.	15.2.2018
2	Sharing case examples. Harvesting the value of the last meeting. Initiating a reward system for the community	23.5.2018
3	Aiming to start a shared project.	19.9.2018
4	Celebration. Sharing different kind of homages for the active community members. Inviting the new members presenting the case for membership latest here.	12.12.2018

In addition to this schedule, LSC alumni, the community members should also be invited into other collaboration activities where the case company and LSC are present. Also, this is just a first draft, if there seems to be need for more or different kind of activities, then naturally the plan should be modified accordingly.

The larger goals, visions and mission should be planned with the community creators, thought leaders and coordinators. There are some initial ideas for long term goals for the community, but nothing definitive is not decided yet. Also, the community responsibles should take some time for imagining the future prospects more thoroughly for example after the first community meeting on year 2018.

One of the long-term goals for the LSC community could be to aim to build it into a global network around LSC, service creation, organizational change or teamwork. A good example of this could be the Salesforce community that has over 2 000 000

members all over the world. There are also huge conferences arranged for the Salesforce community, where the community members can network and learn new things. Although the community has first been built around a product and its side-products, today they are at least aiming to expand beyond customer relationship management, to topics like artificial intelligence and learning.

On the other hand, it might be more challenging and interesting to start out the community around LSC but rather quickly expand the theme of the community to concern innovation or organization culture development in general. This would enable the possibility to transform during time and not needing to fight for one product when technologies develop and products change and there are competing products and processes entering the market. Rather these new competitors and products could be incorporated fluently to the evolving of the community as an additional and possible skillset or toolset. Defining this aspect strongly connects to Wenger et al. (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.31) discussion about the domain of the community of practice.

One of the wildest dreams would be to just aim to create a huge network of professionals from different fields of knowledge. Then different quarters could approach the community with challenging dilemmas and an expert team with the needed competences could be assembled to solve the task. Maybe in the future the dilemmas could be on a global level. In this case to community would become a huge knowledge and know-how bank.

Lastly, there might be several other interesting options for the LSC community's further future, but to reveal these aspects the community responsibles should gather together to imagine and discuss these dimensions.

3. Recommendation – Roles

To achieve the goals and unleash the value of the LSC community, the LSC team needs to be on top of their responsibilities. As stated in the first recommendation, there should be at least the community coordinator and those thought leaders who are already recognized as thought leaders by the community members.

The community coordinator is responsible for the basic continuity and arrangements regarding the community. Arranging the events and having the main responsibility of linking people together. The community coordinator should also take responsibility of documentation of the created knowledge and see that all the knowledge is available for the members. Community coordinator's tasks include also to make sure that members have a possibility to move between different levels of engagement in the community.

Thought leaders should aim to provide interesting and topical content and tips in the forums of the community. They can also connect members together sometimes if needed. They should definitely be present in the community events to share their latest insights from the field and to support the professional development of the community members. One of the though leaders of the LSC community already nicely suggested community tasks for himself by saying: *"There are probably things that I should be doing that I'm not doing currently. I should probably be telling of new things on Facebook. And use it (Facebook) for lifting people up there. Also, people from our customer companies. That might actually be quite simple to do."*

In addition, there are several employees in the case company, who are often utilizing LSC and could have a smaller and sometimes active role in sharing their insights into the community to keep it lively and keep the knowledge flowing. Also, the LSC team, those who are not coordinators or thought leaders, should dedicate from 2 to 4 hours a week to share their knowledge into the community. All of the LSC team members utilize LSC in different contexts and have individual insights about it and therefore would be in key position for knowledge sharing.

4. Recommendation – Do it now!

There is a clear need, enthusiasm and momentum for the community now. If there will be more time put to prioritizing other tasks or aspects, this momentum might vanish as organizations and people change and new tools arrive to the market. The community could be experimented for a while to be able to see, to which direction it is moving and what kind of activities and value emerge.

5. Recommendation – Community domain and topics

There are several topics that could be covered. To be able to direct resources in a valuable way, there should be a mapping and a prioritization session held to reach consensus of what to tackle first.

First of all, the LSC related difficulties need to be discovered. It has been recognized that the transition from the LSC process to the organizations own implementation pipes is not usually smooth. Second, the different needs of organizations in different phases in relation to digitalization could be explored. Understanding these needs better, would help the LSC team to better cater the different needs and divide the community members into interesting and valuable subgroups. This knowledge could be utilized for developing the case company's offering even more broadly.

Third the challenges that the teams experience are real for them, although not necessarily originating in the team itself. If this development topic is prioritized, there are two main focuses. First, the community members need support with motivating their team to change their ways of working. There are always ways for individuals to change their experiences by changing their attitude. Surely, changing one's attitude will not change facts. Therefore, secondly, the LSC team can decide to focus on impacting the managerial level to help the teams to gain e.g. more time for learning or updating the old processes to better match the new ones.

6. Recommendation – Practicalities and community growth

There needs to be enough of face-to-face activities, especially in the beginning, to ensure and enable the birth of inter-member relationships. These face-to-face activities need to be arranged so that the members can freely discuss in subgroups where are no representatives from rivalry companies.

As stated before, some digital components should be tested or introduced in the events. Most likely some of them might be useful, if utilized for right purposes and right kind of activities are expected. It seems for example, that the community members enjoy reading and seeing content online, although they do not necessarily like to produce it.

To be able to monitor the community progress, whether an experiment or long term, there need to be proper metrics set up. Here is a recommendation for the metrics in the beginning and for the second phase of the community.

First phase:
- Amount of events
- Amount of participants in the events
- Amount of created inter-member relationships
- Amount of new needs recognized
- Client partners arranging or co-arranging the events
- Establishing a repository for community material (Google Drive?)
- Establishing a communication channel for casual, fun and quick questions and insights (WhatsApp/Telegram/Slack?)

Second phase, add these:
- Amount of shared documents in the repository
- Amount of activity in the closed group
- Amount of shared projects among the members
- Amount of new members, which have been invited by the old members

There should also be a reward system set up for the community. In the beginning the rewards could possibly be something material and fun. Later on, the rewarding system should be updated to utilize community role shifts as rewards too. This might not be feasible in the beginning.

7.   Recommendation – Early elements of identity, use them

The elements of the community members identity should be utilized in the community development. To begin with, the members need to be led to discussion topics that will make them realize their similarities, both regarding their work contexts and their personality. This will facilitate the birth of inter-members relationships, which in turn will enhance the feeling of belonging and creation of trust between the community members.

The elements of identity can also be utilized when defining the domain and the mission of the community. As the members report being often in helping and supporting roles, this can be leveraged by defining the community's mission through helping others. For example: The mission of LSC community is to provide tools and means for people, who wish to update their skills or change their career plans.

5.2 Limitations and reliability

One of the major counter arguments for the study's premises could be questioning whether the LSC community can be seen as a community of practice, which would shake the whole foundation of the thesis and its recommendations and results. Nevertheless, it needs to be noted that this study did not focus on analyzing whether the LSC community is a community of practice but started with the premises it being one. Therefore, even the interview structures used in the study do not provide enough and right kind of data to answer this question.

A potential limitation is also the fact that the theory base of this study emphasizes the core literature regarding communities of practice, which is mainly based on studies of communities of practice within one organization, not inter-organizational communities of practice. Therefore, some aspects of the theory base might not hold true in regard to the inter-organizational communities of practice. On the other hand, in defining community of practice, the practice is usually the emphasized as the glue of the community, instead of their context for example. From this point of view the context, whether one organization or many, should not have a major relevance for the community.

Communities of practice some disadvantages, which could have been considered more thoroughly, before deciding to use CoP as a theoretical framework. Pemberton et al. (Pemberton, Mavin and Stalker, 2007, pp. 69) describe for example *Port in a storm* –feature of communities of practice, where the CoP becomes an escape from the real organizational context. People come to the CoP to let steam out, but then when they return to their home organizations they do not necessarily change anything there but they continue bearing the situation. This does not necessarily enhance the initial purpose of the community.

Communities of practice also need leadership to stay alive and cohesive (Pemberton, Mavin and Stalker, 2007, pp. 62). This is a clear investment from the case company side and due to the slow development of CoPs, it will remain unclear for quite a while whether the community will actually be delivering its value to the members and to the leading party.

Many of the articles seem to consider the virtual elements as a self-evident part of a CoP (Garcia, 2005; Gelin, 2011). Therefore, it might be a fruitful to find out whether the positive impacts of CoPs are mainly created by the technological solutions integrated into the people's work or their effects on who and how people communicate. Also understanding more thoroughly how the face-to-face relationships facilitate, enable or accelerate the utilization of the virtual parts of the

CoP. It also seems that the discussion around CoP has shifted from Wenger's human focused definition into considering the right kind of combination of the human factors and technological components. Many case studies only focus on building optimal digital communities of practice and wonder how it should be done and what the value of them will be.

5.3 Future research

As stated before, many of the theories regarding communities of practice have been based on studies of communities that are within one organization. It would be fruitful to understand more thoroughly how inter-organizational communities of practice differ or what special actions they need in relation to communities built within one organization.

For future research, it would be interesting to take a closer look of the intersections of user-centered design and community development stages from the perspective of the community member. In this current situation Wenger and others study and discuss this matter mainly on the community level, which leaves some relevant insights hidden.

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Appendix

The appendices are currently in Finnish, if you wish to have them translated, please contact the author.

Appendix 1 – First interview structure for community members

Alustus

Moikka,

Kiitos kun tulit! Ollaan kehittämässä LSCtä ja hhaluaisimme kuulla ajatuksisa ja ideoita siitä, miten voitaisiin tukea LSC:n käyttöä sun työssä paremmin.. Vastaukset anonymisoidaan, eikä niitä voida yhdistää haastateltuihin. Jos et halua keskustella jostain aiheesta, niin kerro niin siirrytään eteenpäin.

Taustat
Mitä kuuluu?
Mitä teet yrityksessä X?
Missä asut?
Onko sinulla perhettä?
Jonko sinulla harrastuksia tai muita kiinnostuksen kohteita?

Digitalisaatio
Minkälaisia ajatuksia digitalisaatio herättää?
Miten se näkyy teillä paikassa X?
Onko teillä käynnissä projekteja siihen liittyen? Jos niin mitä? Miten ne etenevät?
Mitkä ovat niiden päämäärät?

Minkälaisia ongelmia digitalisaatio saa aikaan teillä?
Miten teillä taklataan digitalisaation mukanaan tuomaan ongelmia?
Mikä sai teidät reagoimaan digitalisaatioon?

Miten näet itsesi mukana tässä murroksessa?
Osaatko listata konkreettisia työtehtäviä, joita olet tehnyt, jotka on suoranaisesti olleet yhteydessä digitalisaatioon?
Miten te tiimeinä kohtaatte sen teillä? ESIM

Miten koet että teidän johto (keskijohtoon ja ylin johtoon) kohtaavat tämän murroksen?
Koetko että näette tämän murroksen samalla tavalla?
Jos, et niin miten haluaisit muuttaa heidän näkemystä?
Oletko joskus kokeillut? Jos niin miten?

**Mikä saa sinut jaksamaan työssäsi? Ja johdon suuntaan?

Yhteisöt
Minkälaisiin yhteisöihin/ryhmiin kuulut? Miksi?
Miten päädyit niihin alunperin?

Kuulutko johonkin ammatillisiin yhteisöihin? Mihin? Miksi?

Julkaisetko niissä jotain kokemuksia tai ideoita? Jos niin minkälaisia? Miksi? Miksi liityit niihin?

Kiitos!!

Appendix 2 – Second interview structure for community members

Alustus

Moikka!

Kiitos kun tulit! Ollaan kehittämässä LSCtä ja haluttaisiin kuulla sun ajatuksia ja ideoita siitä, miten voitas tukea LSCn käyttöä sun työssä paremmin. Vastaukset anonymisoidaan, eikä niitä voida yhdistää haastateltuihin. Jos et halua jutella jostain aiheesta, niin kerro niin loikataan eteenpäin. Tiedot on ainoastaan Futun käyttöön.

Taustat
Mitä kuuluu?
Mitä teet yrityksessä X?
Missä asut?
Onko sinulla perhettä?
Jonko sinulla harrastuksia tai muita kiinnostuksen kohteita?

Identiteetti ja rooli
Sanoit että teet X yrityksessä. Kuvailisitko tarkemmin toimenkuvaasi?
Kerro eilisestä työpäivästäsi? Mitä siihen sisältyi?
Mistä nautit töissäsi eniten?
Mistä et pidä työssäsi?
Mikä on haastavinta siinä?
Miksi olet hyvä työssäsi?

Mikä saa sinut jaksamaan työssäsi?
Mistä haet tukea jos sitä tarvitset?

Miten hankit lisätietoa/kouluttaudut lisää?

Yhteisöt
Kuulutko johonkin ammatillisiin yhteisöihin? Mihin? Miksi?
Miten olet saanut tietää niistä?
Koetko saavasi arvoa niistä?
      Jos joo, niin minkälaista ja miksi?
      Jos ei niin miksi ei?
Onko ne digitaalisia vai kasvokkaisia?
Kummat ovat sinusta toimivimpia?
Tai minkälainen yhdistelmä molempia?

TRAD.
Minkälainen roolisi on näissä kasvokkaisissa yhteisöissä?
Onko yhteisiä tapaamisia kuinka usein?

Mitä niissä tehdään?
Pidättekö muuten yhteyttä?

DIGI
Julkaisetko niissä jotain kokemuksia tai ideoita? Jos niin minkälaisia? Miksi?
Miksi liityit niihin?
Liittyykö niihin kasvokkaisia-tapaamisia?

(Jos ei löydy ammatillisia, niin voi kysyä mistä vaan yhteisöistä:
Minkälaisiin yhteisöihin/ryhmiin kuuluu? Miksi?
Miten päätyi niihin alunperin?)

LSC & LSC yhteisö

Missä tilanteessa viimeksi käytit LSCtä?
Miten käytit sitä konkreettisesti? Miksi?
Mikä sinun tyypillisin roolisi on LSCn suhteen?
Kuinka suuri osa yrityksestänne tuntee/käyttää LSCtä?
Onko teillä jotain jatkosuunnitelmaa LSCn suhteen teidän, mistä oisit tietonen?

Mitä hyötyä siitä on sinulle/teille ja teidän liiketoiminnalle? Top3? Miksi?

Oletko tykännyt LSC:n käyttämisestä? Miksi?
Onko joku asia vaikeaa? Miks? Top3?
Mitä teet sitten ku joku näistä haasteista tulee esiin? Miten ratkaiset sen?
Pyydätkö apua joltakin? Keltä? Miksi?

Mitä mieltä olet LSC-yhteisöstä?
Mikä on käsityksesi sen tämän hetkisestä toiminnasta ja tarkoitusperistä?
Miten näet oman roolisi siinä tällä hetkellä?
Mitä hyötyä koet nyt saavasi siitä, jos mitään?
Mitä opit yhteisöstä?

Mitä toivoisit LSC-yhteisöltä?
Minkä roolin haluaisit saada siinä itsellesi, jos saisit valita minkä vaan?
Mihin suuntaan kehittäisit sitä itse? Esim. syksy 2017.

Kiitos!!

Appendix 3 – Complementing questions for first round interviewees via email

Kysymyksiä LSC-yhteisöön liittyen
Oletko tietoinen että LSC:n ympärille ollaan rakentamassa/ on yhteisö?
Mitä mieltä olet LSC-yhteisöstä?
Mikä on sun käsitys sen tän hetkisestä toiminnasta ja tarkoitusperistä?
Miten näet oman roolisi siinä tällä hetkellä?
Mitä hyötyä koet nyt saavasi siitä, jos mitään?

Mitä opit yhteisöstä?

Mitä toivoisit LSC-yhteisöltä?/Miten se voisi tukea/toimia tarpeisiisi parhaiten?
Minkä roolin haluaisit saada siinä itsellesi, jos saisit valita minkä vaan?
Mihin suuntaan kehittäisit LSC-yhteisöä itse? Esim. syksy 2017.

Appendix 4 – Interview structure for the community creators

Alustus ja taustat

Moikka!
Kivaa kun saan jututtaa teitä :) . Teen kahvit korvaukseksi.
Tämän haastattelun tarkoituksena on kartoittaa teidän ajatuksia siitä miten LSC-yhteisö on laitettu alulle, mitä tarkoitusta/tavoitteita varten se on perustettu ja miten alkuaskeleet otettiin. Myös kiinnostaa kuulla miten näette sen tulevaisuuden ja potentiaalin, sekä mahdolliset tavat joilla jäseniä otetaan sisään ja sitoutetaan.

Futuricen strategia ja yhteisön luonti
Mistä ajatus yhteisön perustamiseen lähti alunperin?
Mihin tarkoitukseen halusitte perustaa yhteisön?
Mikä on yhteisön missio?
Onko yhteisölle asetettu jonkinlaista budjettia tai tavoitteita?
Mitkä ovat ajatuksenne yhteisön seuraavista askeleista?
Miten seuraatte yhteisön kehitystä/edistymistä?
Mitä lyhyt-/pitkäaikaishyötyjä LSC yhteisöstä on? Tai ajatellaan olevan?

Futuricen rooli yhteisössä
Miten näet Futun roolin yhteisön suhteen nykyään?
MIhin toivoisit sen tulevaisuudessa kehittyvän? Jos toivoisit…
Kuuluuko yhteisöön paljon Futulaisia?
Minkälaisia rooleja muilla Futulaisilla on yhteisössä?
Minkälaisia rooleja toivoisit että muilla Futulaisilla olisi yhteisössä?

Roolisi LSC yhteisössä
Miten näet oman roolisi LSC yhteisössä?
Minkälaisia tehtäviä rooliisi kuuluu?
Onko sinulla rooliisi liittyviä tavoitteita yhteisön suhteen, joiden saavuttaminen on vastuullasi?
Minkälaisia haasteita kohtaat näihin tehtäviin/yhteisötyöhön liittyen?
Miten ratkot kohtaamiasi haasteita?
Mikä motivoi sinua yhteisö-työtehtäviisi?
Miten näet roolisi kehittyvän seuraavan 12kk aikana? Miksi?

Yhteisö ja sen kehittäminen

Yhteisön luojan näkökulmasta
Miten LSC yhteisöä alettiin konkreettisesti rakentamaan?
Kuvaile LSC yhteisön matkaa alusta tähän päivään? Mitä on tehty ja tapahtunut?
Miten mielestäsi nämä erilaiset aktiviteetit ovat onnistuneet/toteutuneet?
Mitkä ovat olleet mielestäsi yhteisön kehityksen kannalta tärkeimmät stepit/tapahtumat? Miksi?

Miten kuvailisit LSC yhteisön tämän hetkistä tilaa/kehitysvaihetta?
Ketkä näet yhteisön kehityksen ja tavoitteiden kannalta tärkeimpinä henkilöinä? Miksi?

Yhteisön jäsenen näkökulmasta
Minkä ajattelet olevan yhteisön tärkein arvo sen jäsenille? Miksi?
Miksi ajattelet jäsenen ryhtyvän jäseneksi tällä hetkellä?
Minkä ajattelet estävän jäseneksi liittymistä tällä hetkellä?
Minkä aspektien uskot olevan haasteellisimmat jäsenten näkökulmasta tällä hetkellä?
MItä ajattelet olevan jäsenten kehitystoiveet yhteisölle?

Lopetus
Tuleeko mieleesi vielä muuta mitä haluaisit tuoda esille aiheeseen liittyen?

Kiitos!