



**Xerox Global Services Communities of Practice Presentation for the**  
**Systems for Training, Evaluation, and Performance Group**

Jack Merklein

27 June, 2003

## Vision

# Help Xerox Global Services compete via communities

## Because...

- The knowledge economy is driving change in the structure and quantity of collaborative work
- Collaborative mechanisms are key to innovation
- Collaboration accelerates efficiency/effectiveness/learning
- Corporate social mechanisms have new support requirements
- Time/place and structural boundaries
- Rapid organizational and process change
- Technology is no panacea

**Xerox** has the **environment** and structure which encourages and **fosters** the **sharing**, transfer and re-application **of critical knowledge** and intellectual capital within and between Communities of Practices.

***It is a natural way to achieve an accelerated rate of organizational learning for competitive advantage.***

## How Did We Get Here? (not just us...you, too...and your clients...)

- Technology adaptation outpacing social mechanisms
- Compressed business cycles
- Knowledge worker factor: Sophistication of participants increasing with intricacy of work, greater specialization, more collaboration
- Business strategy evolution and product and service innovation cycles lead to:
  - Work process modifications
  - Changing knowledge requirements
  - Rapid changes in social dynamics
  - Physical change to work environment, i.e. new locations, move to telecommuting
- Employee satisfaction/performance
- Merger and acquisition activity
- New business initiatives, new management
- Capabilities assessments

## Communities of Practice

- Support enterprise culture
- Create framework for unplanned interactions
- Clarify enterprise guidelines and responsibilities for effective collaboration
- Learning mechanism for most participants
- Participation is voluntary to mandatory
- Minimal structure; participation can be infrequent
- Cross-matrix collaboration
- Structured with some defined deliverables; Participants intend to create meaningful outcomes from opportunities identified in group interactions
- Team-based collaboration
- Highly structured with well-defined deliverables
- Speed up diffusion of innovations and change
- Knowledge repositories

## What We Do

- We identify strategic objectives, model collaboration requirements to facilitate related work processes, and support the development of communities, enabling focus.
- Our methodology is based on internationally recognized success in community development, PARC research, and a socio-technical approach
- We train our people in knowledge management and communities of practice
- We have the support of management to make it work
- We have a team (the Learning @ Xerox Global Service team) who has the mission of supporting CoPs; it's in our mission statement
- On the Learning Team: 5 Certified Knowledge Managers, all trained in CoP lifecycles
- CoP Leader's Guide and training; Work Breakdown Structure; training modules that support all stages of the WBS as well as individual elements found within the WBS

## Communities of Practice

### Mission

To bring together a group of professionals that are **informally bound** to one another through exposure to a common class of problems, common pursuit of solutions, and thereby themselves embodying a store of knowledge about a functional aspect of our business.

### Objectives

Speed the **creation, sharing and leveraging of knowledge** to improve performance.

### Work Process

People with a passion for bettering their profession join and stay because that have **something to learn and something to contribute**. They collaborate, use one another as sounding boards, teach each other, and strike out together to explore new subject matter that grows and expands their collective and individual value.

Community of Practice participant negotiates with Management to participate in an empowered community based on consensus as to boundaries, expectations, and outcome value.

Community of Practice formalize and communicate their Charter, set their own agenda and protocol, manage their priorities and are self managed.

Major contributors are given an honored recognition of accomplishment.

## Types of Communities

- Internal communities
- Customer communities
- Business to business communities
- Networked CoP's: by subject/area of expertise
- External communities: Professional organizations or associations

## The Value Proposition

### Participants

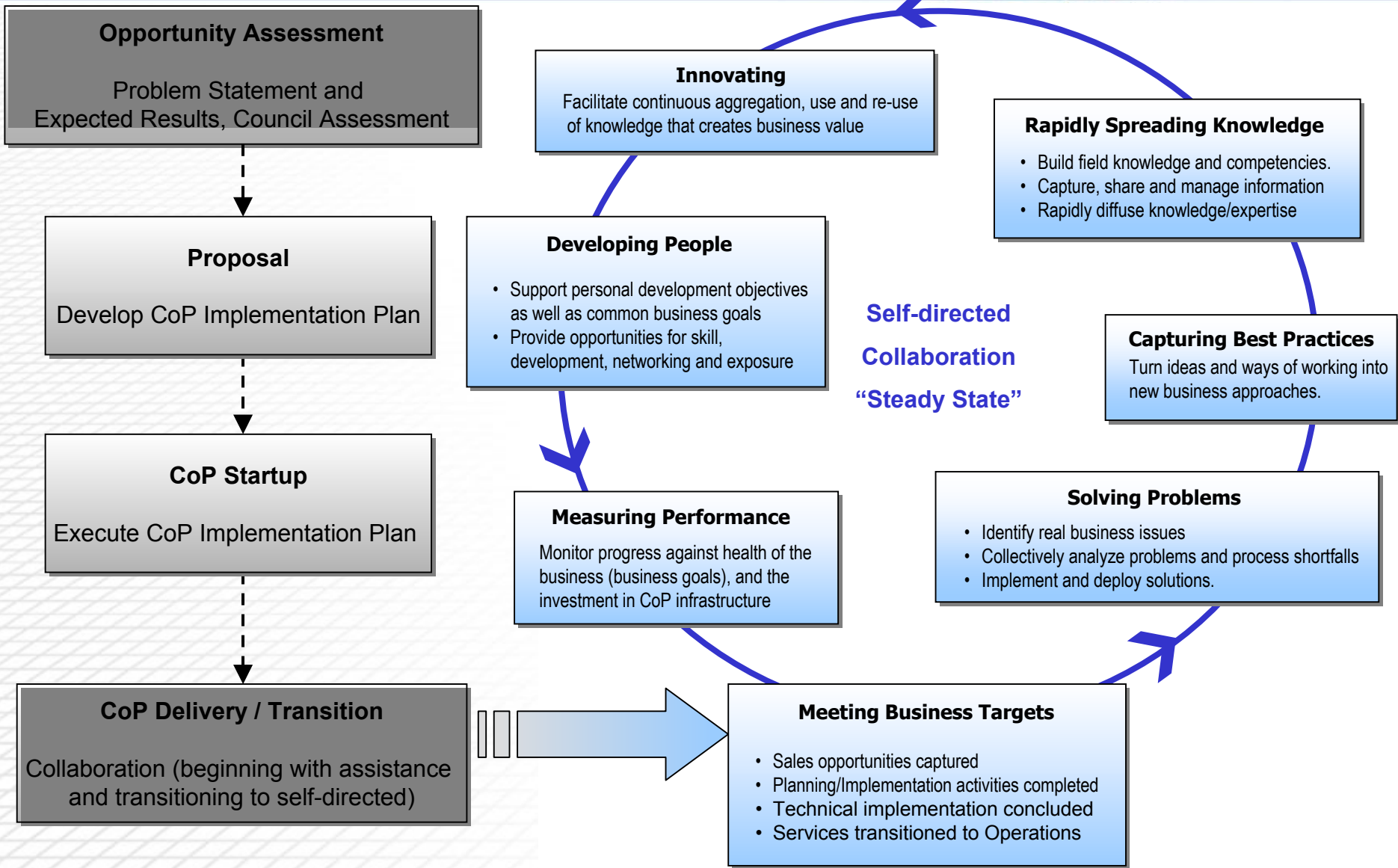
- What's in it for me?
- To be recognized by your peers
- To be recognized by management
- To grow professionally
- To meet the professional obligation to pass on knowledge to the next generation
- To gain new and broader perspective
- To demonstrate leadership
- To enable me to do my job better, smarter, faster with less effort

### Communities/Corporate

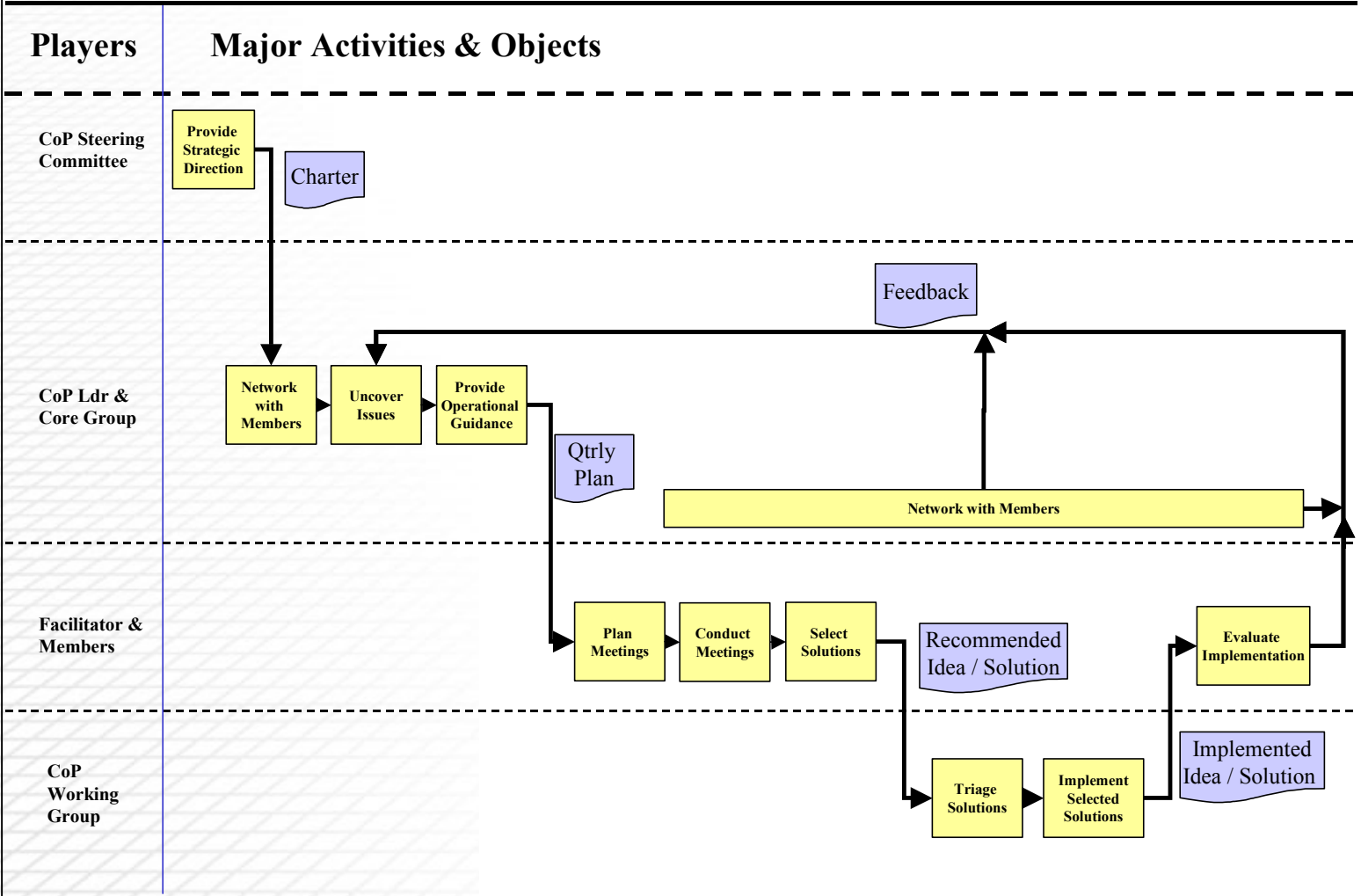
- More influence/control of environment.
- Improved integrated tools, practices, and skills.
- Cross community learning.
- Recognition and faster development paths.
- Professional pride in advancing their field.
- Leading stakeholders in driving best-in-class performance.
- Source for deep know-how and knowledge transfer
- Accelerates productivity through knowledge transfer
- Develops leaders in product and process/methodology development



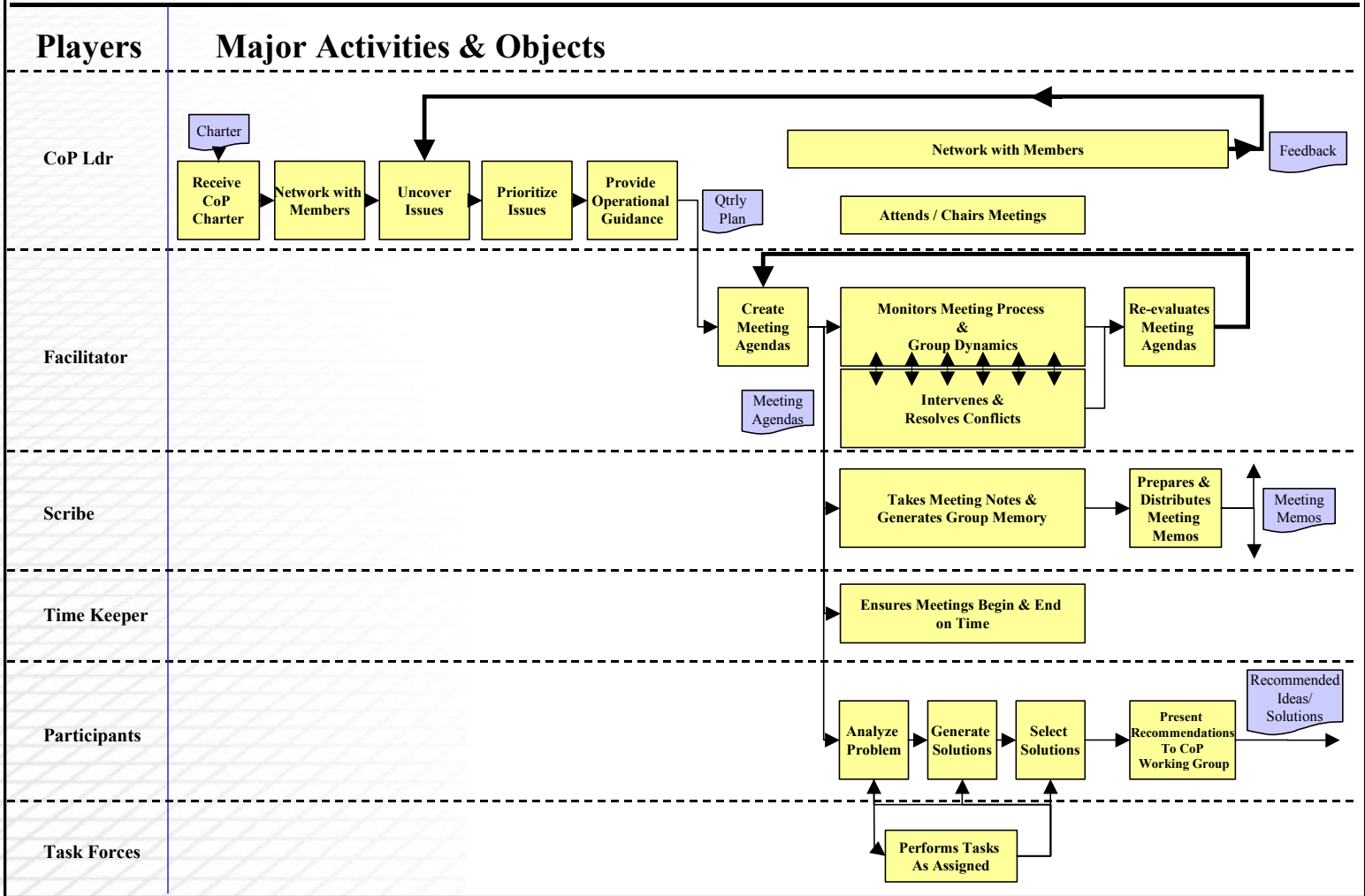
**Community of Practice Workflow Diagram**



# CoP Activities (High Level)



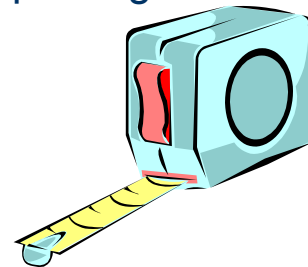
# CoP Activities (Detailed Level)



## POSSIBLE MEASURES

Make them quantitative/ qualitative more important  
 Tie to making money  
 Doing more with less people  
 Better decision making  
 Lessons learned  
 Value of time being spent in CoPs  
 Visual  
 Associate understanding  
 Sponsorship of CoPs  
 Accomplishment of KM strategies  
 Accomplishment of CoP vision  
 CoP participation  
 Knowledge and skill levels of participants  
 Adoption and diffusion  
 Frequency and accuracy of communication  
 Content provided by CoPs for communication is timely and up-to-date

Frequency and accuracy of communication  
 Content provided by CoPs for communication is timely and up-to-date  
 Baseline of current team efforts for comparison later  
 Tracking of problems being solved through CoPs  
 Occurrences of collaboration  
 Knowledge capture, storage, retrieval  
 Benefits of collaboration to company  
 Documentation  
 Reuse of knowledge  
 Time/dollar savings due to not repeating the same mistakes  
 Inputs to repository  
 Ease of search and retrieval  
 Number of hits  
 Degree of trust  
 Ambassador skill levels and effectiveness  
 Global connectivity



## Getting Started – Best Practices

- Create a business case for community development.
- Find community leaders and champions.
- Define the scope of the community.
- Design the community's core activities and structure.
- Recruit and engage community members.
- Align with the current culture.
- Design community roles.
- Develop a support structure.
- Launch the communities.
- Implement appropriate information technology.

▪ **APQC**

## Communities of Practice ... Summary of key ideas

### **Objective**

Xerox people learn faster, perform better and respond quicker than our best competitor. Participation in communities is a key enabler.

### **Nurturing**

Management provides a nurturing environment, time & resources that enables and encourages people to participate in Communities of Practice. It provides support & infrastructure to enable the flow of creativity.

### **Passion**

Communities of practice leadership is vested in people with a passion for bettering their profession and with deep expertise and experience who share their knowledge and insight in the work that they do. They encourage others to join this knowledge growth path.

### **Grow**

People participate naturally in their community of practice as a way to grow professionally and amplify their contribution to the success of Xerox, and ultimately to amplify their individual value and success.

### **Learn**

Our communities of practice excel because they learn, transfer knowledge, and apply lessons from past experiences. They seek out best practices and innovate around new ways to do their jobs better, faster and more effective as individuals and as a community.

### **Asset Value**

Our intellectual capital, therefore resides in the know-how of our people, and those assets grow in value as they propagate within and between communities of practice.