**Discussion Tool:**

**Designing Communities of Practice**

**Directions:** Select from the activities below based on how much time you have to dedicate to the conversation/reflection.

**Five Minute Activity**

1. Call to mind a community of practice (CoP) that you have organized or participated in.
2. Review the list of key considerations for CoPs in the table below.
3. Place a check mark in the appropriate box to complete this sentence: “I/We (always/sometimes/rarely/never) complete this activity when I/we design a CoP.”

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Key Considerations for CoPs** | **Always** | **Sometimes** | **Rarely** | **Never** |
| Identify an appropriate need. |  |  |  |  |
| Select the right participants. |  |  |  |  |
| Identify a protocol to use during the meeting. |  |  |  |  |
| Hold meetings on a consistent, regular basis. |  |  |  |  |
| Select an effective facilitator. |  |  |  |  |

1. For any item where you selected “rarely” or “never,” consider why that is the case and what action you might take because of this information.

**Fifteen Minute Activity**

1. Jot down a list of times you have designed or participated in a CoP. Note key details of the structure, including why it was created, who participated, when it took place, what it looked like, etc. Then, identify whether you thought the CoP was effective or ineffective.
2. Watch the video “Key Considerations for Designing CoPs.”
3. After watching, complete the following table by placing a check mark in the appropriate box to complete this sentence: “I/We (always/sometimes/rarely/never) implement this activity when I/we design CoPs.”

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Key Considerations for CoPs** | **Always** | **Sometimes** | **Rarely** | **Never** |
| Identify an appropriate need. |  |  |  |  |
| Select the right participants. |  |  |  |  |
| Identify a protocol to use during the meeting. |  |  |  |  |
| Hold meetings on a consistent, regular basis. |  |  |  |  |
| Select an effective facilitator. |  |  |  |  |

1. For any item where you selected “rarely” or “never,” consider the following questions:
   1. Is this the case for every CoP I/we identified?
   2. Why might this be the case?
   3. What do the CoPs I/we identified as effective have in common?
   4. What impact might this have on my/our work?
   5. What steps do I/we need to take because of this information?
2. Watch New Mexico’s video about designing CoPs as part of their SRCL and CLSD work. Consider the following questions:
   1. What three words come to mind when you consider your CoP work? How are these similar or different to the words New Mexico identified?
   2. What did I/we see in this video that I/we may be able to add to my/our CoP practice?
   3. What additional information or resources do I/we need to complete this work?

**Thirty Minute Activity**

1. Jot down a list of times you have designed or participated in a CoP. Note key details of the structure, including why it was created, who participated, when it took place, what it looked like, etc. Then, identify whether you thought the CoP was effective or ineffective.
2. Watch the video “Key Considerations for Designing CoPs.”
3. After watching, complete the following table by placing a check mark in the appropriate box to complete this sentence: “I/We (always/sometimes/rarely/never) implement this activity when I/we design CoPs.”

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Key Considerations for CoPs** | **Always** | **Sometimes** | **Rarely** | **Never** |
| Identify an appropriate need. |  |  |  |  |
| Select the right participants. |  |  |  |  |
| Identify a protocol to use during the meeting. |  |  |  |  |
| Hold meetings on a consistent, regular basis. |  |  |  |  |
| Select an effective facilitator. |  |  |  |  |

1. For any item where you selected “rarely” or “never,” consider the following questions:
   1. Is this the case for every CoP I/we identified?
   2. Why might this be the case?
   3. What do the CoPs I/we identified as effective have in common?
   4. What impact might this have on my/our work?
   5. What steps do I/we need to take because of this information?
2. Watch New Mexico’s video about designing CoPs as part of their SRCL and CLSD work. Consider the following questions:
   1. What three words come to mind when you consider your CoP work? How are these similar or different to the words New Mexico identified?
   2. What did I/we see in this video that I/we may be able to add to my/our CoP practice?
   3. What additional information or resources do I/we need to complete this work?
3. Review the seven principles for CoPs provided in the “Resource from the Field” article. Consider the following questions:
   1. Which principle aligns best to my/our work implementing CoPs? Which principle aligns the least? Why might this be the case?
   2. What components of this resource can I/we use in my/our practice?
   3. What additional information or resources do I/we need to complete this work?