

Open Issues

Open Issues in the Community Development Methodology

1. Feedback

Feedback mechanisms are used to control the dynamic behavior of a system, to stimulate or adjust its behavior in some way. In an emerging social system feedback is how the self-organizing process can be accelerated or defeated, so it is a very important for us to figure out ways that we can positively reinforce the community. This is the most unknown thing in this whole process. We will be working it out as we go.

Would these things actually be a form of feedback?

- providing opportunities to the community in the form of communications infrastructure
- Holding "birds of a feather" meetings at appropriate conferences
- finding and providing resources (developing grant proposals?) at key moments in the community's development
- ???

2. Building membership

It seems like a good idea to not only expand the membership of these communities, but how much actual organization of the membership is needed is a question.

- It does seem that we want to have a large "silent majority" of lurkers that we provide some way to provide input.
- We definitely are hoping that a "solution council" will emerge. This should be a small group that acts as a quality control group for the community, as well as the group that leads the process of drawing resources into the community.
- It seems like there needs to be an intermediate level of membership where people register themselves somehow as "opting in" to the community. Organized efforts along this same line make a fairly big deal about having members opt in. It is a way of strengthening the community and being able to get commitments. One possibility is that we tie a level of access to the wiki to such a membership.