
Centre of Expertise in Communities of Practice, Canada School of Public Service
Government of Canada

"apprendre ensemble dans l'action" Extrait du 14 ième rapport du Greffier

Officially launched in 2006, the Centre has administered and contributed, since 2004, to the creation of more than 45 communities of practice (CoPs), bringing together more than 1700 public servants. A CoP is defined as “the process of social learning that occurs when people who have a common interest in some subject or problem collaborate over an extended period to share ideas, find solutions, and build innovations.” Up to now, the virtual site has received more than 91 000 visits from members nationally.

The promotion and implementation of CoPs in the public service is an example of innovative approaches to learning and knowledge transfer using technology. There are many advantages to this approach including:

- Creating a culture of learning.
- Exchanging and learning when and where public servants want.
- Enriching the collective knowledge of public servants nationally.
- Working in association with other practitioners to innovate in your field of expertise and leave a record of your work and your knowledge.
- Managing knowledge within your community and in your organization.
- Seizing tacit knowledge and making it accessible for others to learn from.
- Learning from the experience of others – inside and outside of your department.

The Centre offers consulting and implementation services, training and technical support for all members. As such, the Centre of Expertise is effecting positive organizational change on several fronts:

- Integrating technology into learning, networking and knowledge transfer helping to attract and retain new public servants – a necessary element for achieving a generational shift in the public service.
- Educating of public servants on the value of CoPs and how to maximize the potential of this approach. CoPs are now being directly integrated into departmental specific learning programs.
- Bridging the time and space gap for public servants to help bring people together, network with one another, share best practices and capture knowledge inter-departmentally.
- Coaching and mentoring of members by other members, providing a sense of belonging and motivation to improve performance.