Some **definitions** to get us started...

Online Communities

An online community is a group of people who have developed relationships around a strong common interest

Communities of Practice (CoP's)

For people to become better at what they practice (whether a profession or a hobby)

Communities should satisfy a need

Information needs

❑ Most common, especially for communities of practice

Social needs

❑ Be seen as unique... in a good way

❑ Make friends, be accepted

❑ VIP access to someplace exclusive

❑ FOMO (fear of missing out)

Communities should be **unique**

Strong delineation between who belongs...
(pick at least 2 criteria)

… and who does not

Communities should feel safe

✓Conducive virtual environment design
✓Clear community purpose
✓Skilled community management
✓Mutual respect
✓Sense of freedom
✓Culture of reciprocity
✓Desired behavior modeling
✓Rewards clarity

Communities of practice are for practitioners

Experts…

Have all the answers
Little time
Too expensive
No reason to risk reputation

Practitioners…

Ask questions
Little time but see value
Willing to invest
Seek recognition as experts

Highly successful communities

✓Many interactions between members
✓High levels of activity per member
✓Highly responsive (short-time to receive a response)
✓Self-governed
✓Definitive place for its topic
   ✓Strong sense of community

What turns **audience** into **community**?

Shared experiences lead from an initial spark…

Common interest	Interaction (spark)	Self-disclosure	Shared experiences	Emotional connection
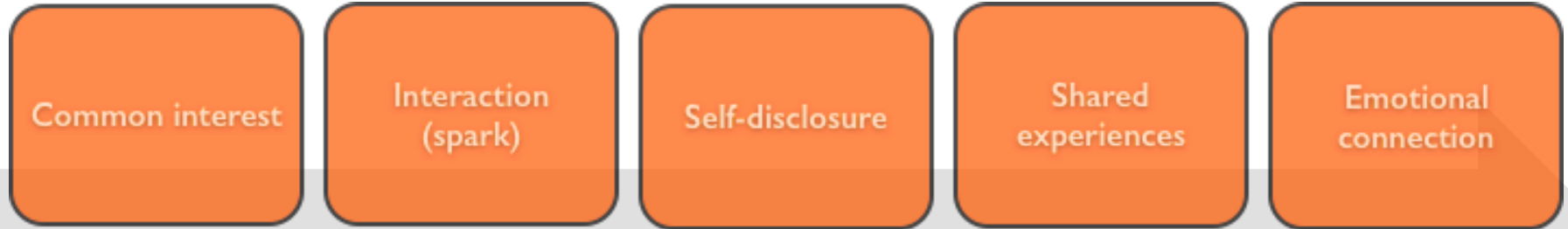
…to a sense of belonging

So what's happening in your CoP?