



Community Management Best Practices/Recommendations

<http://interact.gsa.gov>

1. **Update/create a “Welcome to Interact” email.** Use this to welcome and orient members to the new community and community leaders.
 - Be personal... use their name in the intro and your name in the outro.
 - Be active... give them three things to do immediately in the community.
 - Be human... write it in a conversational way.

2. **Make the new member home page more active.** Remove barriers for them to get involved/make that first contribution.
 - Create an “Introduce Yourself” thread and link to it from an image on the home page.
 - Create a “Getting Started” post with ideas for how a new member can get the most out of Interact.
 - Encourage them to complete their profile.
 - Make it easy for them to share Interact with friends/colleagues.
 - Link to a page that introduces each of the community leaders.

3. **Make community managers more visible.**
 - Create a welcome page with community manager bios. Share as much personal info as possible to help members get to know you.
 - Behave how you’d like to see members behaving (complete your profile, comment on posts, etc.). Members look to model leader’s behavior.
 - Contact members (by phone if possible) to thank them for joining/contributing and being part of Interact. Put a voice with the name.
 - Recognize key contributors: Invite active members to submit a blog post to develop evangelists and enlist their support in building the community.
 - Dedicated CM: Consider hiring a full-time community manager to help coordinate all groups/activities on Interact. It’s very challenging to effectively lead a community as a % of your job.

4. **Create more events to give members more opportunities to interact.**
 - Office hours... Regularly scheduled times with dial in for people to connect with community manager(s) with questions/comments/ideas.
 - Other events... List related events (not necessarily GSA) if they’re appropriate for members to be aware of.
 - Meet the expert... Schedule time with member or GSA experts on specific topics. People love recognition.

5. Add more training to the schedule.

- Greater visibility... Show the next three months of training opportunities.
- Geographic Diversity... Training should/could mirror member geo diversity.
- Add Interactivity... Allow members to add comments about training (i.e. "I took this training course and loved it!")

6. Focus more energy on content.

- Create different content types... Interact seems to be heavy on text. Audio and video content helps engage members who tire of text.
- "Snackable" content... Getting all the content in one post might seem like a good idea, but members are better able to engage with content focused on a specific topic. If interaction is the goal, bite-sized should be the approach.
- Ask a question... Ask a provocative question at the end of your blog posts. A simple "What do you think?" doesn't get people to act. Spend as much time on the question as you do on the post.
- Launch a newsletter... Regular newsletters keep you in front of members and prompt them to return to the community.
- Consistency vs. Frequency... It's more important to stick to YOUR schedule than post often. Once a week might be fine.

Pre-Workshop Survey: Key Findings

1. 40% of respondents are neutral/apprehensive/not at all comfortable using social media in a business context.

- Leadership... Publicly align leaders with social media and community goals.
- Policies & Governance... Clearly articulate how you expect people to use social media in a business context.
- Training... Provide social media training to bring people up to speed on how to use different social tools.

2. 30% of respondents are neutral/apprehensive/not at all enthusiastic about the ability of social methods to impact their business.

- Evangelism... Host regular meetings to articulate the vision & report results.
- Metrics & Measurement... Focus on the metrics that matter to each audience. Executives care about very different data than community managers.

3. 73% of respondents feel that internal culture is either a somewhat or extreme obstacle to the effective use of 'social' methods in their business.

- Bring together the core community team (and leaders) for a culture workshop. Dig into where you are today and where you want to be as a group. Develop a roadmap to get there.