Activity

Attributes of a Learning Community

Purpose: To establish basic attributes of good learning communities through real participant experiences:

Step 1
Participants write about a previous experience in a learning community that was a place of positive learning for them. Their writing should include the reason for the group’s existence, how it was structured, and what made it a positive learning place.

Step 2
Participants share their stories in groups of 3 or 4. As each story is told, the group picks out the attributes that made that learning community productive (i.e., there was a lot of respect for different opinions...).

Step 3
Each group makes a list of the 4 or 5 attributes that seem to stand out for them. Each group then says one attribute in turn while a facilitator records on a general list. Repeated attributes get noted with stars (*).

Step 4
When the list is complete, the facilitator asks the group if the list seems like a good list to guide the group as it forms its own community of learners. Additions & modifications can be made at this time.

Step 5
At different points during the activities of the learning community, these attributes can be used as a guide, and checked for development and progress.

Adapted from http://www/nsrfharmony.org/protocol