

# 10 tips to reinvigorate your group



**Creating an active and thriving online group**



[khub.net](http://khub.net)



[support@khub.net](mailto:support@khub.net)



Where you go to work together

© Copyright 2015 Capacitygrid Knowledge Hub Limited.  
All rights reserved.

# Knowledgehub

# Introduction

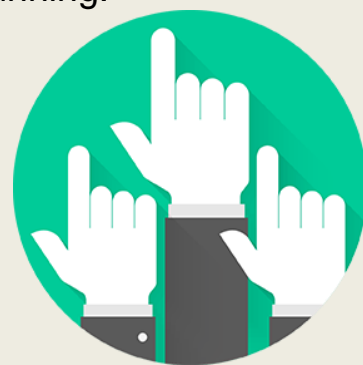
During the lifecycle of an online group, participation levels may drop for a number of reasons: perhaps you've not had as much time as you thought to facilitate the group, or maybe there's a bit of turnover in your area of work and members are moving on and changing. It might be that your group naturally sees peaks and troughs of activity throughout a typical year.

Whatever the reasons, an inactive group will leave you wondering whether it still provides value to members and what you should do about it.

It is important to find out why your group has become inactive, so you can start to consider strategies to reinvigorate it. A good place to start is to review progress and identify key actions.

Letting your group fall into decline without taking any action could result in a loss of all the valuable connections, content and knowledge you have built up over time. There was obviously a need for the group in the first place and it would be a shame to waste all the effort you and your members have put into developing and growing the group.

While sometimes groups do come to an end and close, our simple Health Check questions will help you explore all the options to make the right decision for your group's future. Our top ten tips will then help you reinvigorate your group and get it back up and running.



Where you go to work together

© Copyright 2015 Capacitygrid Knowledge Hub Limited.  
All rights reserved.

Knowledgehub

# Health Check

Here is a quick checklist to help you identify the symptoms of an inactive group. Please answer the following questions about your group.

Have activity levels dropped and do they continue to fall?	Yes	No
Are forum threads left unanswered?	Yes	No
Are documents left with few downloads?	Yes	No
Have any new documents or links been posted?	Yes	No
Have any new discussion threads, announcements or news been posted?	Yes	No
Do group messages encourage members to visit the group?	Yes	No
Do only a few members participate in the group?	Yes	No
Are members going somewhere else (another group, resource or communications channel)?	Yes	No
Have core members/champions stopped visiting and participating in the group?	Yes	No
Does the facilitation team lack vision, momentum and commitment?	Yes	No



Where you go to work together

© Copyright 2015 Capacitygrid Knowledge Hub Limited.  
All rights reserved.

Knowledgehub

# 1. Purpose

Build a sense of belonging and trust. Your group purpose (also known as a group description) is a great way to do this right from the start.

## Key tips:

- **Strengthen the group's purpose:**  
Does it include a description of why the group exists?  
Does it showcase what's in it for the members?
- **Consider the content and style of the purpose:**  
The statement should be engaging, allow evolution, show the objectives, promote participation, and encourage ownership from within the membership.
- **Make it obvious what the group is about:**  
Put the name of the group in the first sentence of the purpose and where possible include a range of relevant key words. These are important for an online group, because if you want to appear high in search engine rankings, you'll need clear and concise information that says exactly which areas you cover.



## 2. Membership

Understand your members. The make-up of your group membership can affect the trust and interactions within it.

### Key tips:

- **Refresh your membership:**  
Remove inactive members.
- **Reconsider your membership criteria:**  
Who should be in, and who should be out?
- **Consult your members:**  
Ask your key members who they believe should be included in the group and who should be excluded.
- **Re-develop your membership criteria:**  
Consider a simple inclusion/exclusion criteria so that all your facilitators can follow it clearly, and avoid any potential for any conflict or loss of trust within the group.



# 3. Engagement

First impressions count! Your acceptance message is your first point of contact with a new member, so make sure you make the most of this important message.

## Key tips:

- **Focus on contribution, not just membership**  
Don't simply welcome members, that's nice, but it's not enough to get them contributing. Make contributing to your group irresistible by highlighting great conversations members might want to get involved in. Keep it up to date and relevant.
- **Be clear with your decline messages**  
Why are you declining someone's membership request? Is it because they are not eligible to join the group? Or is there something you need them to do before they join? For example, add a picture or job title to their profile. If the latter, make them feel wanted, so they do come back.



# 4. Measurement

Know your numbers! Do you know what's working and what's not? Adding a Google Analytics (GA) tracking code will give you insight into your group's visitor numbers.

## Key tips:

- **Understand what GA provides:**  
Key data you can extract from GA includes: sessions, unique users, pageviews, pages viewed per session, average session duration and bounce rate. (You'll find definitions for all these terms within GA.)
- **Learn how to access GA:**  
Go to [www.google.com/analytics](http://www.google.com/analytics) and have a look at the 'get started with analytics' section of the help centre. You'll need to register for a google account if you don't already have one. Then you'll need to set up something called a UA code for your group. It looks a bit like this: UA-1234 5678-1
- **Add your GA code to your group:**  
In your group admin tab, go to 'general group settings' and add your GA code in the box under 'monitoring your group', then save. (It could take 12-24 hours for your GA monitoring to become active.) To see your group stats, you'll need to log in to your analytics account.



# 5. Discussions

No one likes a dull party! It's the same with an online group. Getting the conversation started can be hard, but engaging members and encouraging them to come back is essential.

## Key tips:

- **Spark some conversations:**

Here are 10 questions you could use to start some discussions in your group:

1. What is your favourite .....
2. What advice would you give to someone who .....
3. Can anyone recommend .....
4. What is the best/worst .....
5. What are your top five .....
6. How would you handle (topical issue)?
7. Does anyone know how to.....?
8. Has anyone tried .....
9. What are the advantages of .....
10. I can't live without my .....

- **Be creative, provocative & relevant:**

What is everyone talking about at the moment? What really gets people going? How can you use topical debate to fuel your group?





# 6. Events and activities

Create opportunities for non-contributors to become active participants. Events support activity and encourage members to visit more frequently and get involved.

## Key tips:

- **Connect the face to face with the online:**  
Encourage participants at traditional conferences, workshops and seminars to continue their conversations and networking online via the group afterwards.

Consider covering parts of the event via webinar, so that those not present can join in too. Record the session, so that people who didn't see it can catch up later via the group.

- **Get focused in the forum:**  
Plan a series of 'hotseats' (focused, time specific forum discussions) where members can ask questions on a hot topic to an expert (or panel of experts).
- **Run an online conference:**  
Set up discussions based on a theme across a week. Run 'hotseat' sessions with a number of different people at different times (just like traditional conference workshops). Use the ideas tool to crowdsource ideas for sessions.



# 7. Content

Members come for the content, but they stay for the community. What types of content encourage participation in your group?

## Key tips:

- **Drip feed your compelling content:**  
Don't upload all your good stuff all at once! Keep a steady stream of useful content coming.
- **Mix it up! Use different sources of content:**  
What do you have between your facilitation team that could be useful and interesting for group members? Do you know any of your members who you could encourage to upload useful information? Is there anything about your group as a whole you could add that increases the sense of community for everyone?
- **Mix it up! Use different types of content:**  
Don't just stick to uploading standard documents in the library, or adding news items to a forum, think of different content items you could upload. A presentation in the library, a video embedded into a forum, a set of signposting links on a wiki page, some suggestions for group activities in the ideas section...



# 8. Invitations

Invite new members. New people bring new ideas and experiences and can stimulate activity.

## Key tips:

- **Write an engaging invitation:**  
Include key details such as the group name, why you are inviting them and what's in it for them.
- **Make them feel wanted:**  
How can this person get involved and help shape the voice and direction of the group?
- **Tell them what's in it for them:**  
Explain the benefits of participating in the group, such as:
  - new opportunities
  - professional development
  - collaboration with others
  - sharing knowledge and expertise
  - developing best practice
  - inspiring innovation



# 9. Signposting

Groups include so much useful information, but members may not always know where to look. It's really important to point people in the right direction.

## Key tips:

- **Make the most of the group's communication tools:**  
Use the group announcement to signpost the latest discussions, events and content. Send out group messages pointing people to key information.
- **Always include a call to action:**
  - Download now
  - Share your thoughts on...
  - I urge/encourage you to...
  - It's easy to do, just add your comment below...
- **Direct members to items they'll be most interested in:**
  - most liked items
  - top discussions
  - newest documents
  - latest events
  - blogs by other group members
  - questions that require an answer



# 10. Communication

The key to keeping members coming back is communication, communication, communication. Remind people how useful the group is on a regular basis.

## Key tips:

- **Send regular group messages:**

Let people know what's happening and direct them to discussions, events and content – including those calls to action (from tip 9 - signposting).

You might want to send a regular 'nudge' message, once a week to highlight one or two key items within the group.

It's also a good idea to consider a regularly monthly newsletter – a round-up of activity and a heads up about forthcoming events and activities.

- **Consider your use of language:**

Grab your members' attention. Be provocative to help spark debate. Use positive language and include members' names draw others in and encourage participation.



# Need more help?

We're always happy to provide more help and support where we can. We have a range of free and chargeable services to suit all needs.

# 1

## Online facilitator support

**[Online facilitators group](#)** – if you've not joined already, you'll find loads of tips, advice and help from us and your peers.

**Online facilitator toolkit** – our toolkit will guide you through the key actions and activities to help you create an active and thriving online group.

---

# 2

## One-to-one support

**Group MOT** – undertake a review of your group with an experienced community manager to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the group.

**Bespoke consultancy** – based on your needs and requirements.

---

# 3

## Online facilitation training

**Building your online group** – is ideal for individuals new to facilitating online groups and will take you through the initial planning and growth stages of creating your group.

**Successful online group facilitation** – is ideal for facilitators who have established their groups and are looking to learn more about evolving their groups and measuring the results.

---

Contact us for more information: [support@khub.net](mailto:support@khub.net)



Where you go to work together

© Copyright 2015 Capacitygrid Knowledge Hub Limited.  
All rights reserved.

# Knowledgehub

# 10 tips to reinvigorate your group

If your group has become inactive, a good place to start is to review progress and identify key actions. Our simple Health Check questions will help you explore all the options to make the right decision for your group's future and our top ten tips will then help you reinvigorate your group and get it back up and running.

1. **Purpose** – build a sense of belonging and trust. Your group purpose is a great way to do this right from the start.
2. **Membership** – understand your members. The make-up of your group membership can affect the trust and interactions within it.
3. **Engagement** – make the most of your acceptance message; it's your first point of contact with a new member.
4. **Measurement** – adding a Google Analytics (GA) tracking code will give you insight into your group's visitor numbers.
5. **Discussions** – getting the conversation started can be hard, but engaging and encouraging members to come back is essential.
6. **Events and activities** – create opportunities for non-contributors to become active participants. Events support activity and encourage members to visit more frequently and get involved.
7. **Content** – members come for the content, but they stay for the community. What types of content encourage participation?
8. **Invitations** – invite new members. New people bring new ideas and experiences and can stimulate activity.
9. **Signposting** – groups include so much useful information, but members may not always know where to look. Point people in the right direction.
10. **Communication** – the key to keeping members coming back is communication, communication, communication. Remind people how useful the group is on a regular basis.



Find out more in the [online facilitators community](#).



Where you go to work together

© Copyright 2014 Capacitygrid Knowledge Hub Limited.  
All rights reserved.

Knowledgehub