
How to Find Your Tribe

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Sun, Nov 14, 2021 at 11:51 AM

Life is who you go through life with.

You've likely heard the saying that you're the average of the five people with whom you spend the most time.

But beyond individuals, the communities you spend the most time with directly impact your mindset as well.

When you come up with a crazy idea, or talk about exponential technologies, or brainstorm solutions to humanity's grand challenges, do you have a support network that inspires and supports your big thinking? Or do friends shut you down and tell you that you're crazy?

To be inventive, to make a difference in the world, an entrepreneur needs a safe and supportive network that will allow you to embrace and explore crazy ideas.

Your community shapes what you do.

But what if the community you need to pursue your passion and Moonshot doesn't exist?

In true entrepreneurial spirit, create your own!

It turns out that there are eight stages to building a successful community.

In today's blog, Part 1 of a two-part series I'll discuss who should (and should *not*) create a community and the first three of those stages, including forming your community's identity and practical steps you can take in the early days.

Let's dive in!

NOTE: Want more insights and guidance on how to navigate this era of exponential change? Join my [year-round Mastermind and Executive Program Abundance360](#).

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FIND YOUR TRIBE

The ego-belittling truth the internet makes visible is that none of us is as unique as we'd like to believe. This is good news!

It means that if you are passionate about something, there's a pretty good chance others share that passion.

Here are the **first three stages** you need to go through to build a thriving community.

STAGE 1: ESTABLISH YOUR IDENTITY

It's important to remember that people join communities because it reinforces their sense of identity.

So, start by finding your people.

What is your Massive Transformative Purpose (MTP)? Who is in your tribe?

Be as specific as possible. Write up a mission statement, post it in a visible place on your website, then live by that statement.

This is also why it's important to tell your story.

A mission statement is nice, but unless you're already a public figure, then people need to know who you are and why you're doing what you're doing.

This could be in written form, but even better: record a short video.

Let your passion shine through.

STAGE 2: DESIGN YOUR COMMUNITY'S PORTAL

There are six basics regarding designing the look, feel, and engagement of your community portal:

1. Just Get Started and Design Something Authentic. Find inspiration in Reid Hoffman's famous statement: "If an entrepreneur isn't embarrassed by the first release of their product offering, then they launched it too late."

The same applies to communities.

You want to start by *starting*. Don't spend years designing the right portal, and don't blow your bank either.

Authenticity matters. And having a personality is key, so people can quickly figure out if they belong in your tribe.

But giving people a place to have a conversation is more important.

You can always add better window treatments later.

2. Navigation. People need to know how to move around easily.

They want to know where to go and what they'll find there, and if you can't tell them this information quickly and clearly, there are plenty of other places to visit online.

The navigation bar is not the place to get creative.

3. Simple Registration. If it takes more than 30 seconds to become a member of your community, you're not going to have many members.

Similarly, if you want much more than my email address, then I suspect you're secretly planning to make money selling my personal information and I'm not interested.

Ask for my email. Tell me exactly what I'm getting in return. Promise me that you're not going to resell my data.

And give me an easy way to invite my friends to join as well.

4. The Information. What to post on your platform is a matter of personal preference, but it's helpful to remember that people join online communities for four main reasons:

- a sense of belonging
- a support network
- greater influence
- a way to satisfy curiosity/explore new ideas

Most everything you choose to put on the site should be designed to meet these needs.

5. Recognition. Whether you create a leaderboard/rating system, or you make your blog or message board open (so that anyone can post), be sure to highlight popular content.

Specifically, a short description of the post and, more important, a larger picture of the person posting.

Remember: people want to be celebrated for their contributions.

6. Scalability. Sure, you might think you want a gargantuan membership, but understand that good communities are messy places.

This is key.

You want some of this mess because it will generate more new ideas and help accelerate the rate of innovation and make those members who hate top-down authority feel more comfortable.

But you also need to be able to steer (not control) the mess. This means that you have to give members a way to break into smaller groups.

STAGE 3: EARLY DAYS OF BUILDING YOUR COMMUNITY

There's no way around it, getting out of the gate is always tough.

But you don't need many members to have an impact. In fact, the bigger a given community gets, the fewer people actively participate. This creates waste and it makes it harder for you to identify and work with the top members.

It's better to extract 1 hour a day from 100 committed members than to have 50,000 mostly inactive lurkers.

So how many members do you actually need?

Most experts recommend handpicking your first 10 to 15 members so that when visitors drop by there's something interesting going on. And for many communities, once they reach around 150 members, the community itself starts to carry the conversation.

Here's how to get started:

- **Be the First Mover.** It seems obvious, but being the first one into any space gives you considerable leverage. If people want to have a conversation and your community is the only place to have it, you're already winning. If you can't be first mover in a space, then the problem you're tackling (your MTP) better be *significantly* different and arguably more visionary than the competition's.
- **Handpick Early Members.** Research suggests that your early adopters tend to become your most ardent supporters. Get the ball rolling by personally handpicking your first 10 to 15 members. Be sure to engage these folks in the community-building process. Ask for their advice. Integrate their input. And don't waste your time going after big names. As a rule, these folks are busy with their own communities.
- **Establish a Newcomer's Ritual.** You want to give members a way to feel like they belong—but they must earn it. Create a ritual and tie it to a specific membership milestone.
- **Listen.** No matter what your core vision is, you can't get anywhere without your members. So, pay attention to what they have to say and be prepared to change direction when necessary.

FINAL THOUGHTS

We forget how recently it was that our birthplace and the language we speak shaped our destiny, influencing our identity and potential.

This is no longer the case.

Today, each of us can search the world and find our tribe, wherever they happen to live in the world.

Your goal should be to find those who dream the same big dreams and believe in a better, more abundant world.

Stay tuned for Part 2!

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