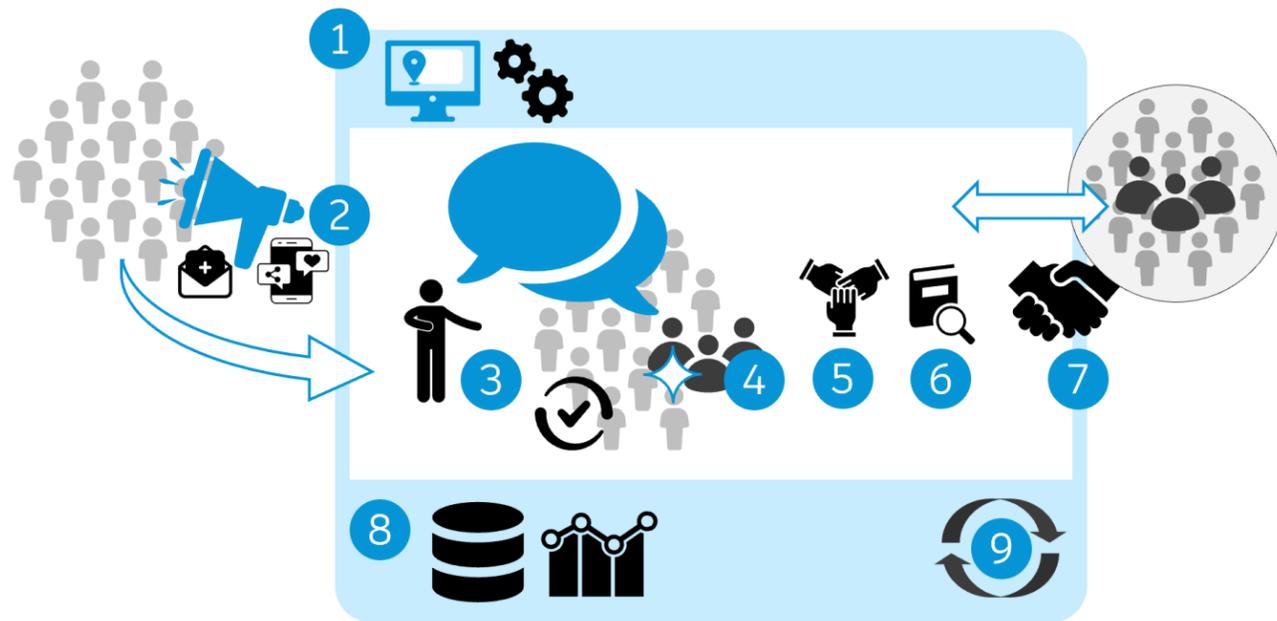
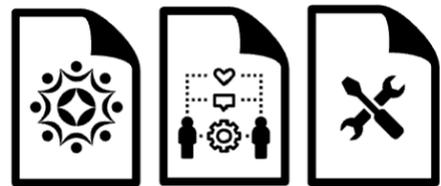


# Online Groups

Online groups are a fluid & flexible way to stay connected in conversation, share information, & learn. But it's also more challenging to form the deep personal connections that are forged in-person.



*Setting up the online conversation & engagement space is the easiest step. The real work of creating an online community is how you engage in that space, attract people, catalyze conversation, enable distributed leadership, and learn along the way.*



See: [Starting a Group](#), [Running a Group](#), & [Tools for Groups](#)

The tips in these guides also apply to new online groups.

## 1 Setup the online space

Choose [a platform](#) based on your audience and goals. Configure roles, channels, and settings. Document the group description and [ground rules](#). Seed with some initial content and questions.

## 2 Invite members and market

Once the space up and running, start inviting others by e-mail and social media. Get early members to invite their friends and contacts. Keep those person-to-person invitations going.

## 3 Welcome people and moderate conversation

It's important to orient and welcome new people. A good first conversation and connection can go a long way to more engagement. Keep on-top of basic moderation tasks like removing spam.

## 4 Spark activity and conversation

If there's no activity for 5-7 days, do something. Ask questions yourself or send a [survey](#). Share something from your work or encourage people to share. Post news, along with your reaction.

## 5 Develop other community leaders and moderators

Recruit the top contributors to help moderate conversations and get more involved in the group. This will likely involve 1:1 messaging and conversations.

## 6 Manage knowledge and member lists

As the group engages, pin and aggregate especially helpful resources that are developed or identified. Keep membership lists tight and current, and ping people who haven't been engaging.

## 7 Promote other groups inside yours

Promote other groups that are useful for your audience. It gives you a good reputation in the profession. Groups grow and improve together, through a mixture of competition & cooperation.

## 8 Steward member data and use analytics to improve

Take care of the data you collect about and from members. Study engagement trends in your group over time. What can you learn to increase the group's value? See [managing group data](#).

## 9 Learn and improve through feedback and engagement

As you engage, you may want to change community rules, platform settings, or the platforms and tools you're using. Stay flexible and do what's working.