

## Etienne Wenger, Scientific Advisor

### Communities of Practice: A Social Discipline of Learning

The complex challenges we face today urgently call for new models of how we can learn individually and collectively. We have quite rigorous models to consider the informational and cognitive aspects of learning, but we need to become more disciplined about considering its social dimensions. One model with the potential to do this is provided by communities of practice and the attendant learning theory. These communities are as ancient as human kind. Yet they represent a model of learning that is extraordinarily aligned with the new geographies of connectivity and identity emerging at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This keynote address explores some dimensions of this social discipline of learning, as well as new approaches to learning challenges it is inspiring in business, government, education, and world development.

#### Etienne Wenger

Etienne Wenger is a thought leader and consultant in the field of learning systems. He is the author and co-author of seminal books on communities of practice, including *Situated Learning*, where the term was coined, *Communities of Practice: learning, meaning, and identity*, where he lays out a theory of learning based on the concept, and *Cultivating Communities of Practice*, addressed to practitioners in organizations who want to base their knowledge strategy on communities of practice.