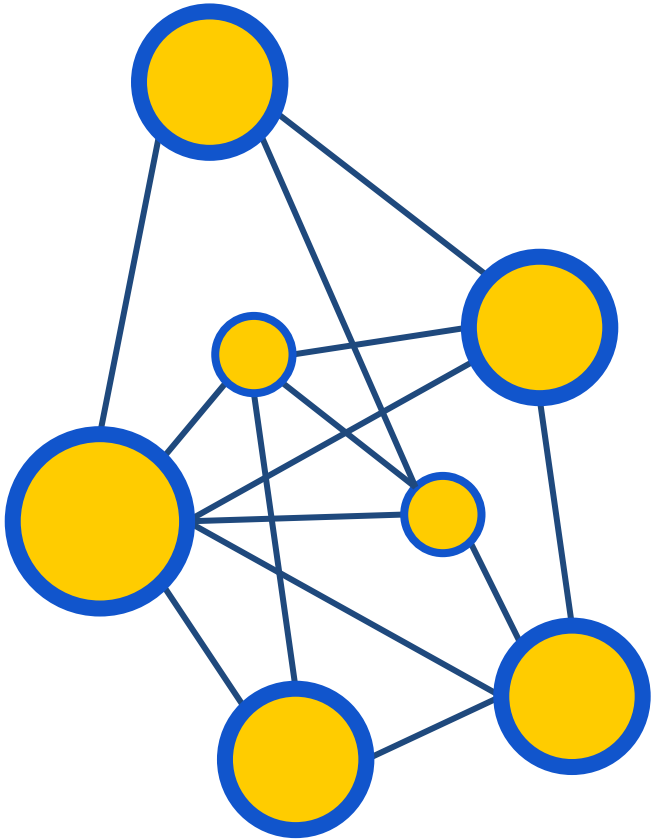
COMMUNICATION ECOSYSTEM



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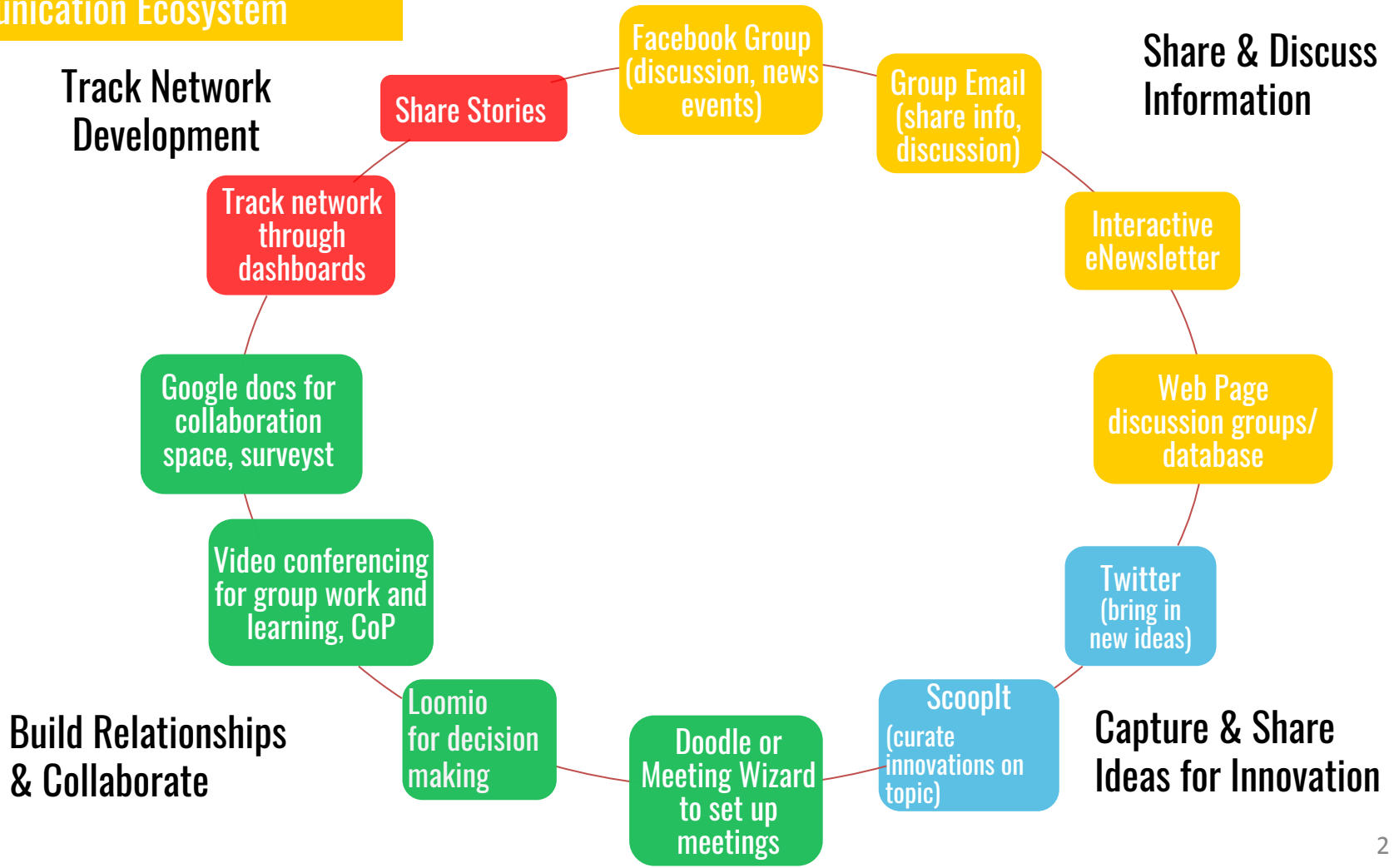
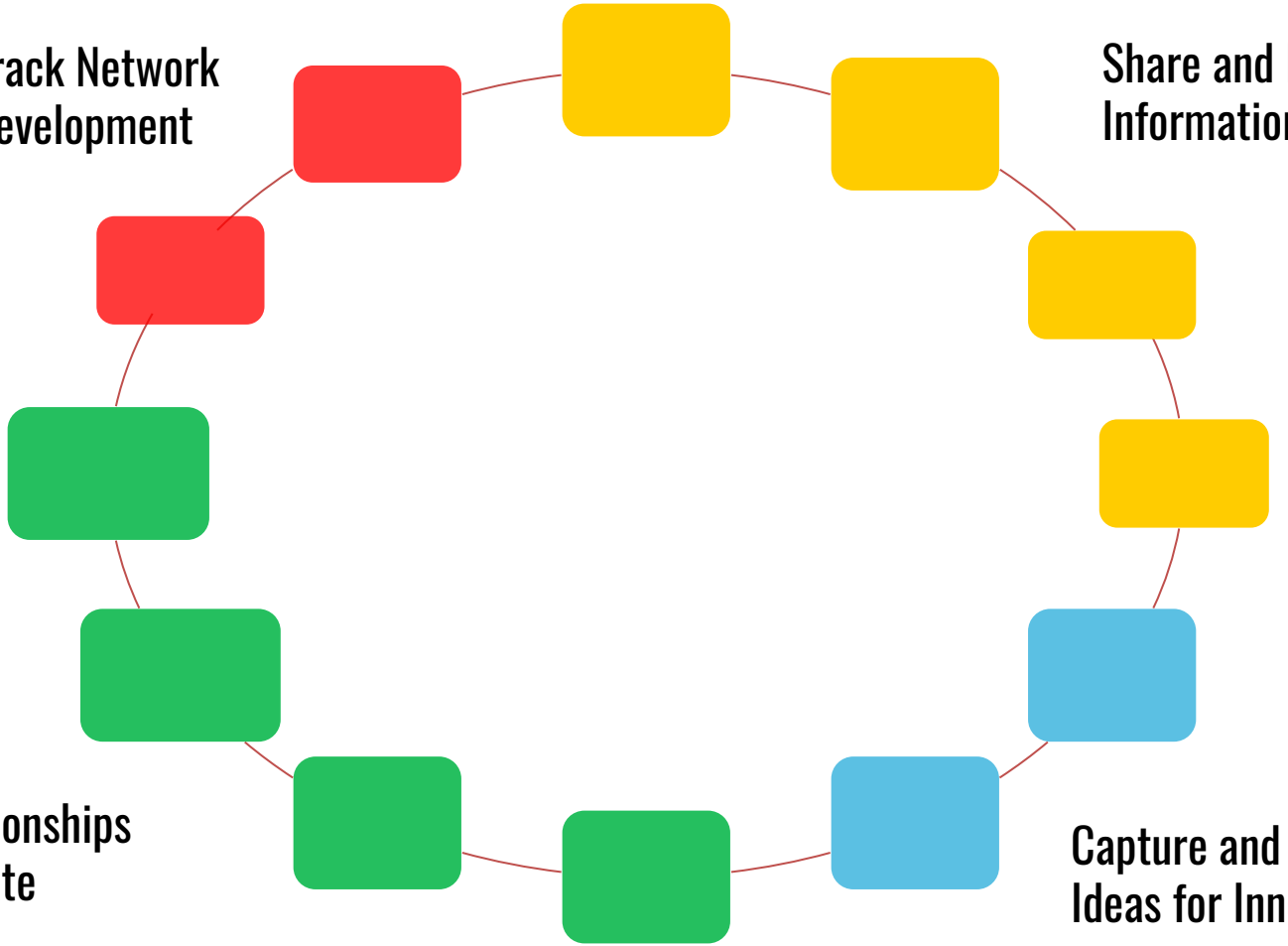
Communication Ecosystem



Communication Ecosystem Worksheet



Communication Ecosystem Directions

One of the most critical support structures for networks is a well-thought out communications ecosystem - a set of tools and platforms that enable everyone in the network to connect and collaborate directly with anyone else in the network.

This kind of communication system is quite different from the broadcast strategy of many organizations, where the organization sends out information via a newsletter and/or website but has no avenues for people to respond or build connections to each other.

A communication system that supports interaction among network participants needs to fill four functions:

1. Provide spaces and places for discussing ideas and for sharing what has been learned.
2. Ensure that everyone has access to new ideas and innovations from other communities and networks.
3. Many places for network participants to get to know each other and deepen relationships, and to work together collaboratively.
4. Ways to track network development (network leadership, network values, collaboration and collaborative skills, stages of network development, development of network support structures, network stories, etc) and use this data to enable the network to move more rapidly to a system shifting network.

Share the handout with any network participants who are interested and begin to fill out the page with blank boxes. First, identify any elements of the ecosystem that are already in place and write those in the appropriate boxes. Then brainstorm and select other tools or platforms that your network might experiment with to fill in the circle. Small groups may want to explore options before making a decision. Make sure any new platform's use is seen as an experiment. The group may need to provide training on a new tool. Make sure the group checks back with network participants to see of the platform is working for them, and if not, try another.