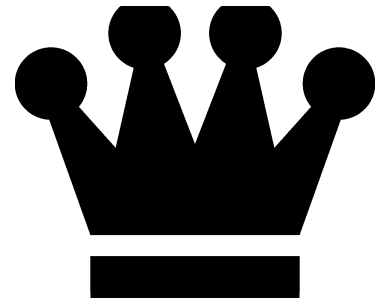


So You Want To Launch A Super User Program?



SPEAKERS

Anne Larsen
(Grundfos) and
Heather MacHale
(TheCR)

COMPETENCIES

Leadership,
Community
Management

MATURITY PHASES

CMM1, CMM2, CMM3

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Interested in knowing the purpose of a super user as defined by Grundfos?** Anne highlighted 4 key responsibilities that encompass the super user's overall purpose.
- **Want a framework to follow for setting up a super user community?** Anne had more than 8 talking points that she referred to as a basis for setting up their super user framework.
- **Wonder what the one reward is for becoming a super user?** You might be very surprised. See the *Lessons Learned* section for the answer. The answer itself isn't surprising. It's just the fact that it's not accompanied by other rewards.

OVERVIEW

- **Background Anne Larsen.** Anne is an Applications Consultant with Grundfos and lives in Denmark.
 - Grundfos manufactures sump pumps, heating pumps, etc. for beverage companies (like Coca Cola) and waste water solutions for skyscrapers etc.
 - They are a large company by Danish terms – about 20,000 people.
 - They use SAP. The SAP/CRM community has over 300 super users who support 8000 people on a daily basis.
 - They investigated the effectiveness of a super user program when they realized that many people were opening up IT service tickets whenever they had a technical error, essentially overloading the system. They discovered that 80-85% of the time, it was actually not an error. The end user simply didn't know how to use the system correctly.
 - Anne was hired from the Global HR part of the Company where she had worked with the rollout of SuccessFactors, SAP's Human Capital Management software. In that capacity, she had managed a super user community.
 - Anne was hired in this role two-and-one-half years ago and today she has 20 communities rolled out and counting. She has used a base framework (described later on in the report), but also tailored the framework to the needs of each specific community. The size and scope of the communities vary, but they are founded on the same framework.
 - The presentation that Anne used for this call is the presentation that she gives to those who want to set up a new community. It outlines the expectations of a super user.



BEST PRACTICES

- **Establish the purpose of a super user.** For Grundfos, the purpose of a super user is to be the local expert within the IT area for which the super user is responsible. To fulfill the role, it is expected that the super user must be responsible for the following:
 - ***Training and support.*** Super users train and support colleagues locally, nationally and sometimes regionally depending on the number of super users. Grundfos is located in 62 countries across all the time zones. These super users are a key contact for technical and functional support. They help end users solve issues and provide best practices for how to use the IT system and its business processes. As well, super users are tasked with helping new employees understand how to use the system.
 - ***Creating tickets.*** Primarily in the SAP community, only super users are permitted to create a ticket. Instead of having 8000 people with this ability, only 300 global super users can create tickets.
 - ***Provide feedback to IT specialists.*** The IT specialists are the ones to upgrade and maintain the system. The super users provide valuable feedback on various processes in the different countries in terms of what works and what doesn't work.
 - ***Communication.*** The super users communicate to the end users if there has been a system upgrade. They are notified of any changes or upgrades and can be ready to support users locally and nationally to help with any new features. This is especially helpful in the larger communities.
 - English is a requirement to be a super user. They act as translators for the local language of the community.



BEST PRACTICES

- **Create a framework for the super user community.** Grundfos aims to have a couple of community managers from the business side who know the business processes and then one or two from IT who are the specialists within the specific systems. They can then support each other on both the IT side as well as the process that it supports.
 - From the 20 plus communities that they have right now, there are only 4 or 5 communities that have succeeded with this desired framework. However, the communities are beginning to see the benefits of this framework, especially since the pandemic hit. This has highlighted the need for the IT and business teams to work closely together to help train and communicate super users who can eventually bring that knowledge to the end users.
 - A team is created in each of the communities using MS Teams. Here they have an inner communication and collaboration platform for the super users. This is great for discussing new upgrades before going to the open community.
 - Whenever a super user arrives, they have one point of entry because they make sure that all of the communities have links to the necessary information within their specific team. It includes links to all SharePoint sites, excellence team sites, training materials, etc. All communities have their own team.
 - They link into SuccessFactors. If they put a link directly to the area where they create tickets, it ensures that the super user can create a ticket if needed.
 - They set up a Yammer group for the bigger communities that have many end users.



BEST PRACTICES

- The super users are the ones that the end user can go to either through Skype or MS Teams. They are gradually moving from Skype to Teams. If super users can't assist the end user, they can go back into the community and ask for feedback. If not, a service ticket is then created.
- The end goal of the super user program is to ensure that the end users are using the system in the way that it was intended. It's important to follow the right processes and to make sure that the end users get all the latest information. In many cases, the end users just don't know all the latest information and/or where to find it. So, it's a way to get the information to them through the super users, the Yammer groups, the knowledge libraries and the training materials.
- They encourage the super users to communicate to the end users. Whenever they contact the super user, they also let them know where the training materials are located. They let them know about the Yammer group, as well, so that if the super user can't get back to them immediately, they have resources for their current issue, as well as resources for the future. As this becomes more and more of a best practice, peers are also able to help each other in the communities.
 - This takes time. It's been 2 years for the SAP/CRM group and they are just starting to get to the point where peers help each other.
 - Since Anne worked with SuccessFactors previously in HR, she can help them ensure that the end users get the best support possible. Then, of course, the super users are the link to the IT support ticket system.



BEST PRACTICES

- **Consider a super user on-boarding policy.** Previously, Anne would have to scrub the staff list manually on a monthly basis to update those people who had left and/or joined the company. Therefore, she set up a semi-automatic handling of on-boarding with the super user list. With on-boarding, they created an 11-minute tutorial from Anne's 1.5 hour introduction to being a super user. That is a requirement for most of their communities. Then they create a ticket in the IS service portal requesting to become a super user.
 - There is an automatic email flow where the ticket is sent to the manager with a link to the super user role description. When the manager approves that his/her employee can become a super user, they also accept the content of the role description. They don't want this to be an add-on to the super user's current position; they want it to become a part of his/her daily position. For some of the communities, KPIs have been set up as part of their performance score. This way, his/her manager acknowledges that the employee is a super user and needs to incorporate it in the performance review and job description.
 - The service desk will then send an email to the community manager for that specific community. They don't have a specific flow for this set up yet, but they are working on it. They have the final say in approving the individual as a super user.
 - In some communities, when the community manager is sent this email, a test is sent to the super users for them to take, in particular for the SAP areas so that they can prove that they know the different transaction codes and how to use them. In other words, some communities have the default on-boarding program and some have additional criteria added.
 - When the super user is approved, the IS team adds the super user to the list so that they are able to create tickets. The super user is then also added to MS Teams and the corresponding Yammer group. When all is done, a welcome email is sent to the new super user accepting him/her into the program.



BEST PRACTICES

- **Think about implementing a SharePoint or similar site.** For Grundfos, they gather all the information about all their communities on this site. It consists of the following components:
 - ***Find your local super user hero.*** This is basically the list of all super users and where they are located, their contact information, as well as the topics for which they are proficient.
 - They have set up Power Automate, an MS tool that updates the list every month. It is linked to Human Resources to keep all the super user information current, i.e. departmental changes, changes in positions, those who have joined the company, those who have left the company, etc. This also prompts the different areas to find a new super user if there has been a change. It is an automatic flow, but Anne must still take action if a super user has left the company as the steps for that process are not automated. As frustrating as it may sound, it really only amounts to half an hour each month now that the rest is automated.
 - ***The super user role.*** This outlines the role, the processes and the knowledge required. Business processes are a key component of this role. People need to be in their role for at least 6 months before they can become a super user and must have a good command of the English language. They may have the SAP knowledge, but they also need the business process knowledge specific to Grundfos.
 - There is also a community manager job description should someone be interested in this role.



BEST PRACTICES

- ***Grundfos super user communities.*** This includes all the various communities in which super users reside all across the company.
- ***I want to become a super user.*** This outlines the process described above for becoming a super user.
- ***Community news.*** All community managers are members of the SharePoint site. Even though it is a private group, it is a public SharePoint site. Everyone can see it, but only members can view the news. As members, they are alerted via email when new news is posted.
- ***Community manager role.*** Anne's goal is to establish a forum and a quarterly meeting for community managers. It's been postponed due to the pandemic as she has been helping people get set up with MS Teams. However, Anne would like to become much more involved with the community managers since many of them have never worked with communities before. It's a big learning curve and Anne joined TheCR in order to be able to help them.



BEST PRACTICES

- **Establish guidelines for starting a new community.** In order to rollout a new community, certain guidelines must be met:
 - Stakeholder buy-in, i.e. executive level buy-in. It's easier to get others on-board when there is an executive name attached to the request. Anne helps them get stakeholder buy-in.
 - Manager buy-in. Anne sends out the emails to each of the managers of those who wish to become super users so that the manager can acknowledge the official super use role description.
 - Anne has set up many default emails for all the buy-in approvals and simply modifies them to fit the situation.
 - Anne sends out the pre-and post-tests for those who wish to become super users to get an idea of who in the community would have the qualifications and/or to scout for potential future super users.
 - Anne sends out the e-learning super user tutorial and invites the super user to a kick-off meeting (one morning session and one afternoon session to accommodate the different time zones).
 - Anne will set up a super user community in MS Teams for collaboration, online training and more. It is one point-of-entry for community members including an email group.
 - Super users are given information for Yammer.
 - Anne on-boards new super users as described above.
 - Anne will also be a resource for any other business that the community may need.



LESSONS LEARNED

- The responsibilities of a super user are added to the “Critical Operating Tasks” (COT) of the super user’s performance appraisal. This acknowledges that the super user will need extra time in his/her day. This ensures that it is within the dialogue of the employee’s appraisal that he/she has performed those duties throughout the year. The goal is to ensure that the manager acknowledges that this is an added task for the employee and the manager has agreed to include it as a COT goal. This way it is not an extra task, but a responsibility integrated into the employee’s daily role.
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- The reward for being a super user comes down to increased knowledge. The more knowledge that they have for the system and the processes, the better they are at handling the task in the system and the quicker they can do it. It comes down to less time doing a task which may be simple, but only simple if he/she knows how to do it correctly. There is not a monetary reward. The reward is more intrinsic, but at least they know that if they do the work, they have the support of their supervisor.
 - Anne agreed that it is impressive that super users give so freely of their time without any monetary reward. However, admittedly, only about 60% of their super users are actually fully committed. Fortunately, people do see the value of these super users and, therefore, many aspire to the role.



LESSONS LEARNED

- Anne recognizes that it is difficult to approach the subject of including super user KPIs in a manager's performance criteria for his/her staff. Anne owns the super user program framework, but she doesn't own the employee's time. She encourages the super users to broach that discussion with their managers. As such, the onus is on the super user. She helps by giving them an official section created and endorsed by HR to add to the performance appraisal. It is a generic description for a COT goal for the super user and a corresponding one for the IT supporters. For IT, it states that they will support super users locally and regionally and that they need to be active in the Yammer group. The manager doesn't go into the Yammer groups to see how active the employee has been, but the IT supporters will know, as well as the community managers. So, right now, the onus is on the super user.



RESOURCES

- Related Resources – Member Leadership Programs Resource Bundle:

<https://network.communityroundtable.com/browse/resource-bundles/memberleadership>



Member Leadership Resource Bundle

Advocacy & Super User Programs

This resource bundle is a collection of reports and related resources that will assist you in building and managing a member leadership program.

You may also hear these programs referred to as superuser, ambassador, or advocacy programs. They all have some differences based on the use case, audience, and goal of the program, but in general the best practices for running these programs are very similar!

Roundtable Reports:

Recent Reports & Case Studies

- **Community For The People, By The People: A Google Local Guides Connect Story:** This Roundtable Report summarizes a call with Traci Cappiello who spoke about how they built their community around and with their members. [You can also find the Roundtable Recording here.](#)
- **Power Up: Building Relationships with Super Users:** This Roundtable Report reviews a call led by two members, Nilsa Frago and Tuvy Le, who shared looks into their super user programs as well as how they have built, cultivated, and sustained relationships with their individual super users.
- **Cultivating Super Users to Nurture Success:** On this call, TheCR Network member Ryan Arsenault, shared about his award-winning Legends super user program.
- **Mimecast: Nurturing Super Users to Cultivate Success:** This case study is built from the award winning rewards and recognition program built at Mimecast by member Ryan Arsenault (and discussed in more detail in the above Roundtable Report).
- **Autodesk Expert Elite Advocacy Program:** This in-depth review goes over Autodesk's strategies for engagement, benefits for their program members, and ways to pivot motivations for members into actionable results through the lens of their Expert Elite Advocacy Program

Older Reports

- **Building a Successful VIP/Ambassador Program:** Facilitated by Sean O'Driscoll from Ant's Eye View who has extensive experience building advocacy programs. The report includes audio from the original call as well as an overview of AEV's Advocacy Affinity Model.
- **Lessons in Building Community Advocacy:** Google's Lasse Wasserman and Adrienne Ludwick shared the lessons they have learned building community advocacy in Google's forums and their experience managing Google's Top Contributor Program.
- **Super Users & Top Contributors: Keeping the Balance:** This was a member-led discussion that focused on the importance of identifying and creating a pathway to find the right community members for an advocacy program and the importance of an Alumni club to help phase out advocates.
- **Salesforce MVP: The Evolution of an Advocacy Program:** Erica Kuhl & Matt Brown of Salesforce shared this case study and members gave this call rave reviews.
- **Building an Employee Advocacy Program:** Members had questions and we sought out experts to help give them perspective on setting up an employee advocacy program.

