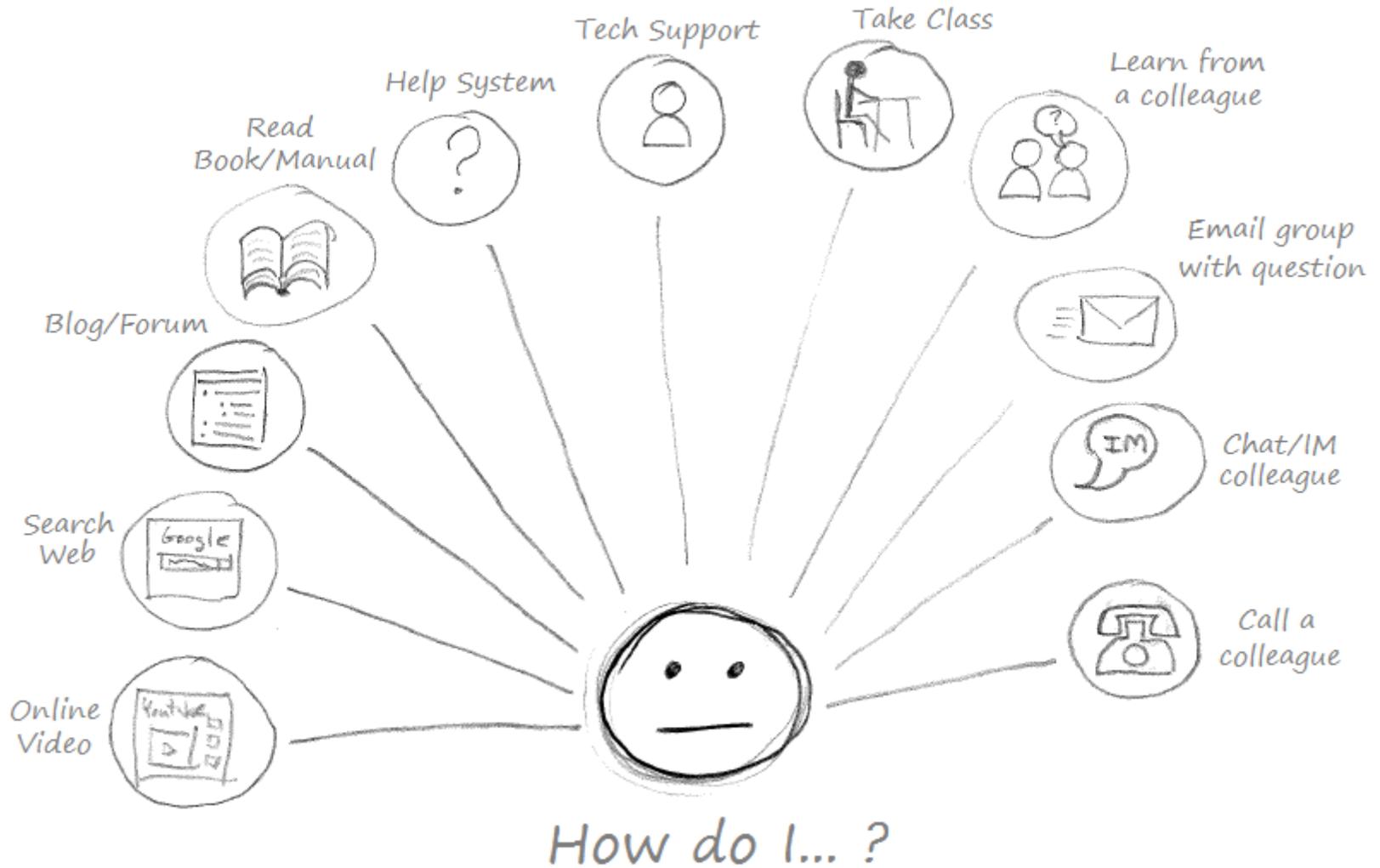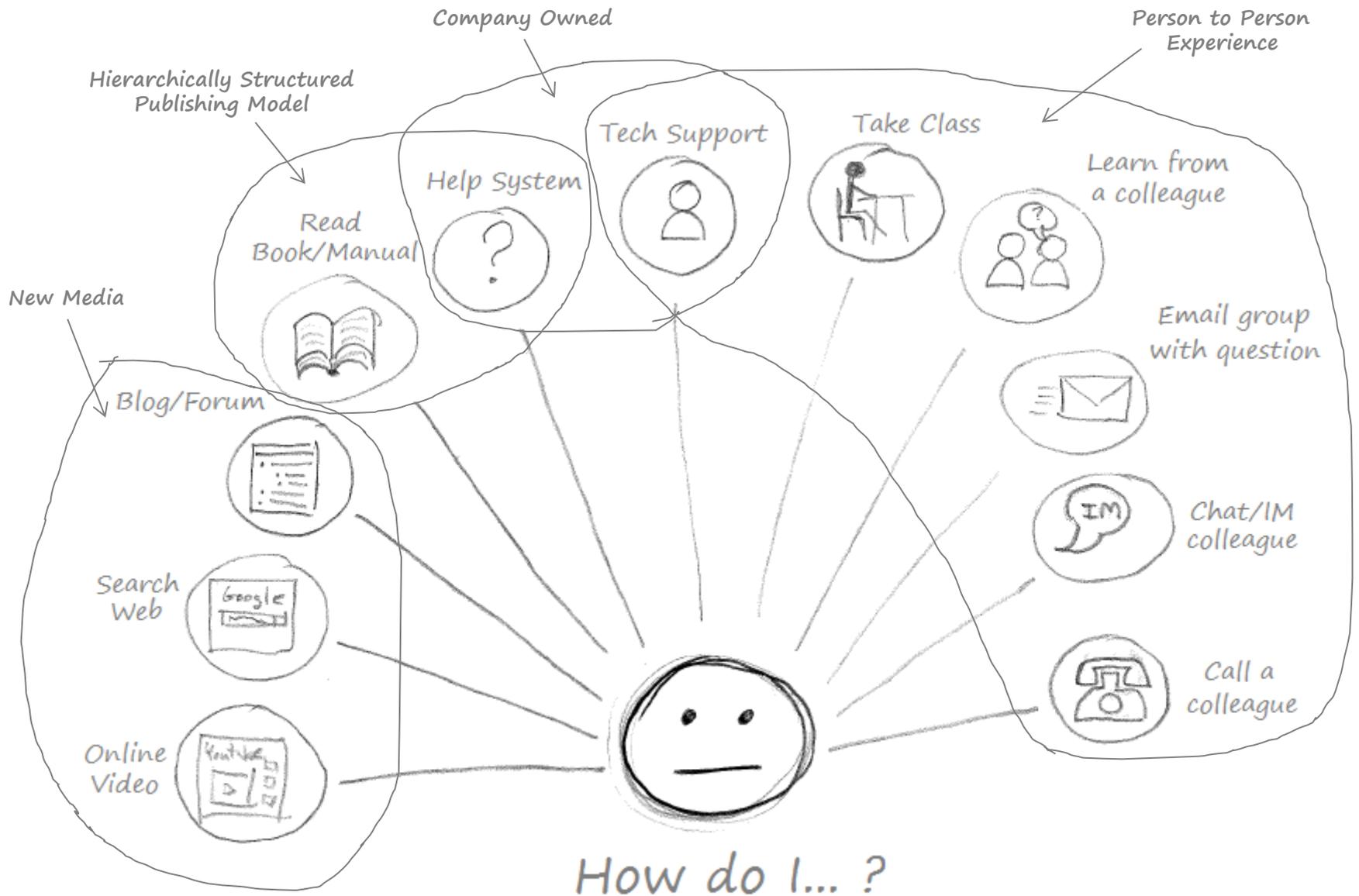# Community Knowledge Base UX Overview

Primary user experience considerations, vision, and goals for the future of help & learning.

How Learning Happens Now…

Tech Support
Take Class
Help System
Learn from a colleague
Read Book/Manual
Email group with question
Blog/Forum
Chat/IM colleague
Search Web
Call a colleague
Online Video

How do I… ?

How Learning Happens Now…

The Learning Experience Becomes

We get...

- Detailed analytics around all learning interactions, which will help us better focus learning resources, and identify areas for product improvements.

- Better engagement with the user community.

- Learn from the user community.

- Unified tools for creating, editing, and managing content.

Community

Learning

Environment

Our customers get...

- One place to find information.

- A highly individualized learning experience.

- A community to collaborate with.

- Greater engagement.

- Easy to use tools to contribute and share learning

- The "social capital" that comes from being recognized in a community of peers

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Learning experience isn't just about delivering existing help content in a different way, or embracing new media alone.

It's a new way of thinking — a partnership between the company and customers to form a true learning community.

Most effective learning is person to person — engaging, individual, and collaborative. To succeed we must acknowledge & embrace that reality.

The Vision:

**A bold, engaging, and collaborative environment that people will want to use as their tool of choice for learning, and will recommend to others.
We want people to say, "I don't know how I got by without it."**

Design Tenets

These are the core principles that should guide design decisions around a community knowledge base solution.

- **Community is KING!!!** *Building community comes first, all else follows.*
- **Open content is better than closed.**
- **Each learning experience is personal.**
- **Engaging learning – easy contribution.**
- **Learning is part of the products.**
- **Learning should be free.**

Focusing on the Big Picture!!!

Core application help is essential, but it's a very small part of the rapidly expanding base of community knowledge. We have to vastly widen our focus, and become participants in, and stewards of the learning community.

Our Current Focus

Community Knowledge Base

Core Help

How to make sense of it all?

Community Knowledge Base

Core Help

Most of the core help information is hierarchically structured.

There is a known information architecture.

A table of contents makes sense here.

The book metaphor works.

Community content is mostly a flat set of information, related by topics, tags, and other metadata — not an imposed structure.

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The information landscape of the learning community is like a city, not a book!

Buildings, roads, and other infrastructure make up a city – but it's their use that defines a place.

Neighborhoods, cultures, and markets are self defining & evolving entities that cannot be forced into a structure.

In the same way, learning neighborhoods will naturally come and go in the overall learning community.

Traditional 'book-centric' approaches to navigating this information landscape will quickly collapse.

We must think outside the book!

Rather, look to trends and innovations in social networks and large scale data visualization for inspiration.

What Community Learning Might Look Like...

"My Learning" Home Page

Recommendations based on your interests, background, products used, and past usage of the community knowledge base.

In Product Experience

Access community knowledge content from application.

The system knows your profile, the application you're in, and the last few commands used – allowing for more informed recommendations

Collaborative Learning Experience

Utilize co-browsing and screen sharing technologies to work with someone else remotely to learn a new skill, or solve a problem.

This could be with tech support, or any other peer in the learning community.

Knowledge Building on Knowledge

Ability to create "How To" Guides that aggregate sources of information – video, help pages, discussion threads, etc. – organize them, then add some text and other metadata to create a complete lesson.

That can then be shared with the community, consumed, edited, and further built upon.

Reporting Tools

Analytics can provide levels of reporting we can only dream of now. Understanding the activity of the community will not only inform our decisions around the learning content we provide, but will drive product enhancement planning and future direction.

With time we will be able to predict trends before they happen.

Tools for Exploration

In the theme of thinking outside the book, we must look at tools that allow for compelling and novel exploration experiences – tools that allow you to find out things you didn't even know you wanted to learn.

These could include things like advanced search technologies, recommendation engines, hypertrees, and heat maps