



Democracy at Work Institute Development Fundamentals

Worker Cooperative Development





What is worker cooperative development?

Key ideas

- A** Low- and high-touch work
- B** Cooperative, business, ecosystem
- C** Models





Cooperative development means different things to different people.

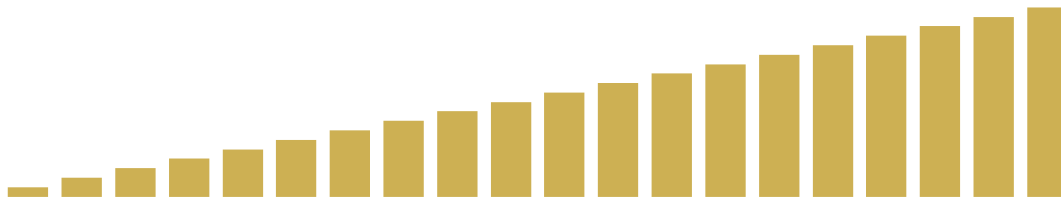




One way to see the range is by asking whether work is **high or low touch**.

I'm investing time.

I'm investing money.



Low touch

High touch

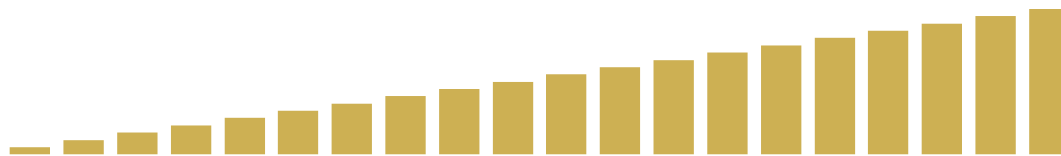


Low touch work has **broader impacts**. It can reach more people, faster, less expensively.

It tends to help people who already have resources.

High touch work has **deeper impacts**. It may be slower, more expensive, and impact fewer people.

It can help people gain access to resources.





Every development activity falls somewhere in this **high to low** range
Many are somewhere in the middle.



Low touch

High touch





What do developers do?

There tend to be three development areas.



Co-op Capacity Development

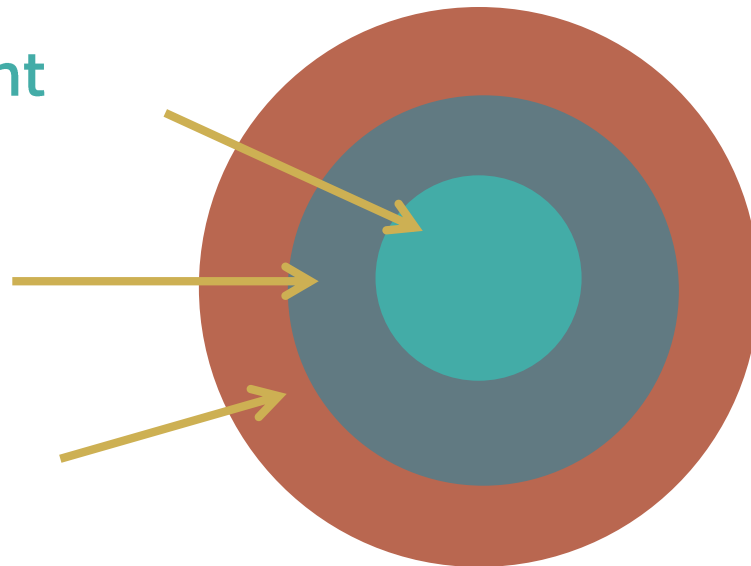
Inside the business

Business Development

The business

Ecosystem Development

Outside the business





You can think of it like a road trip.

Co-op Capacity Development

Agree on a destination.

Business Development

Tune up your vehicle.

Ecosystem Development

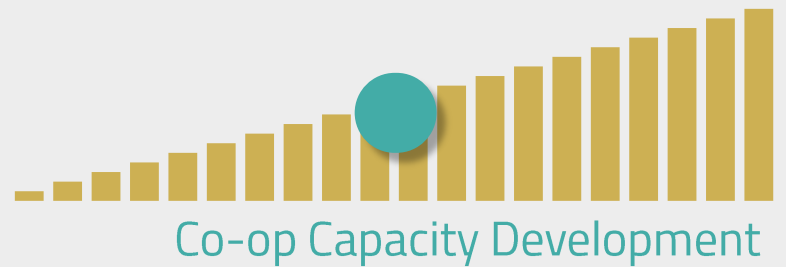
Make the road.



These areas all have **high and low touch** approaches.



Worker Cooperative Development

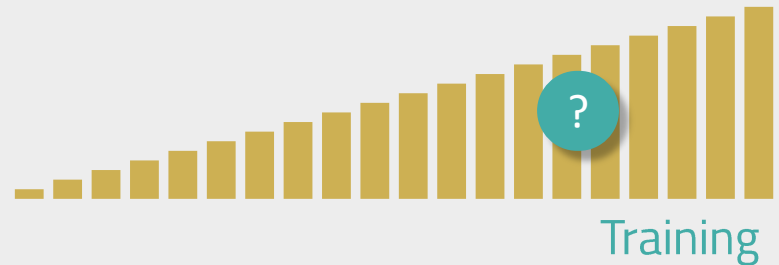
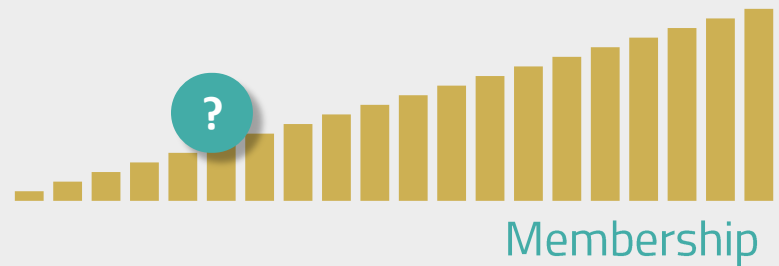


Low touch may encourage people to be democratic.

High touch might recruit and organize the people.



Co-op Capacity Development

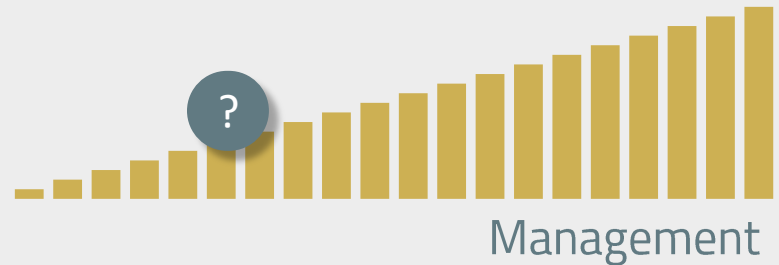


Low touch may teach people how to borrow or staff.

High touch might invest or play a temporary management role.



Business Development

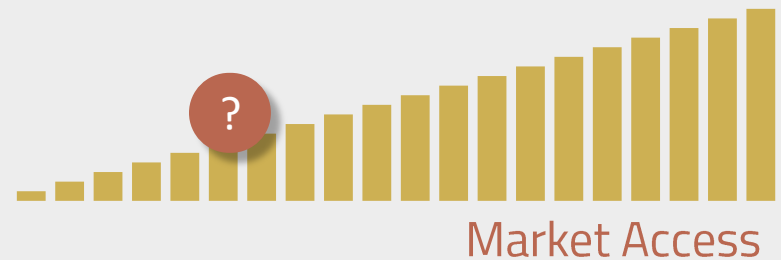
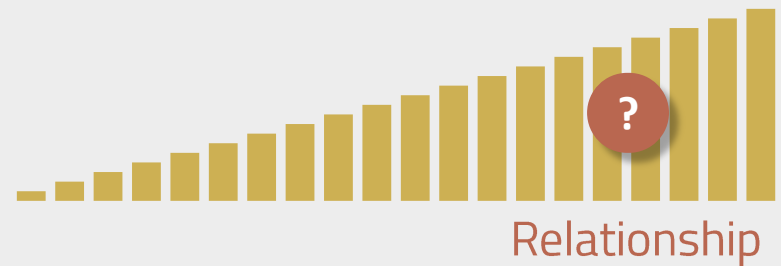


Low touch may create awareness or certifications.

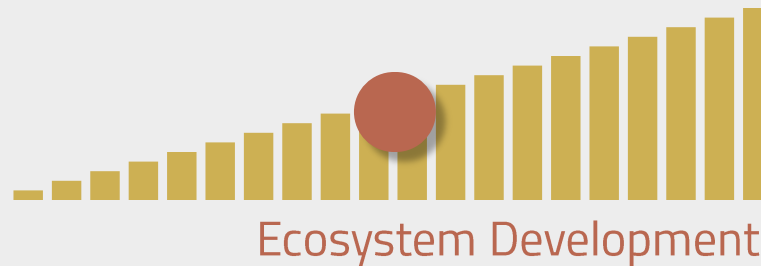
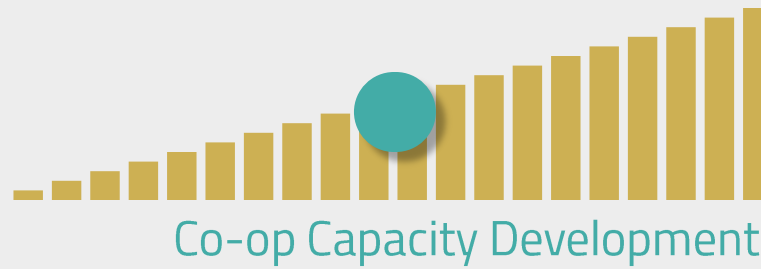
High touch might lobby for contracts and form associations.



Ecosystem Development



Worker Cooperative Development





What are some development models?

Often people think of **structures**, but don't lose sight of your desired **impacts**.

Models will dictate the **staff skills** are needed.



Developers
should ask
themselves....



What impacts do I
want to have?
For whom?



Does my staff need
to be generalists or
specialists?



Is my primary
responsibility to
certain people, or to
the cooperative?





A **low touch developer** assists many people with a variety of different needs.



General awareness is raised.
A low % of cooperatives may launch.





An **academy** gives more extended attention and creates a peer network.

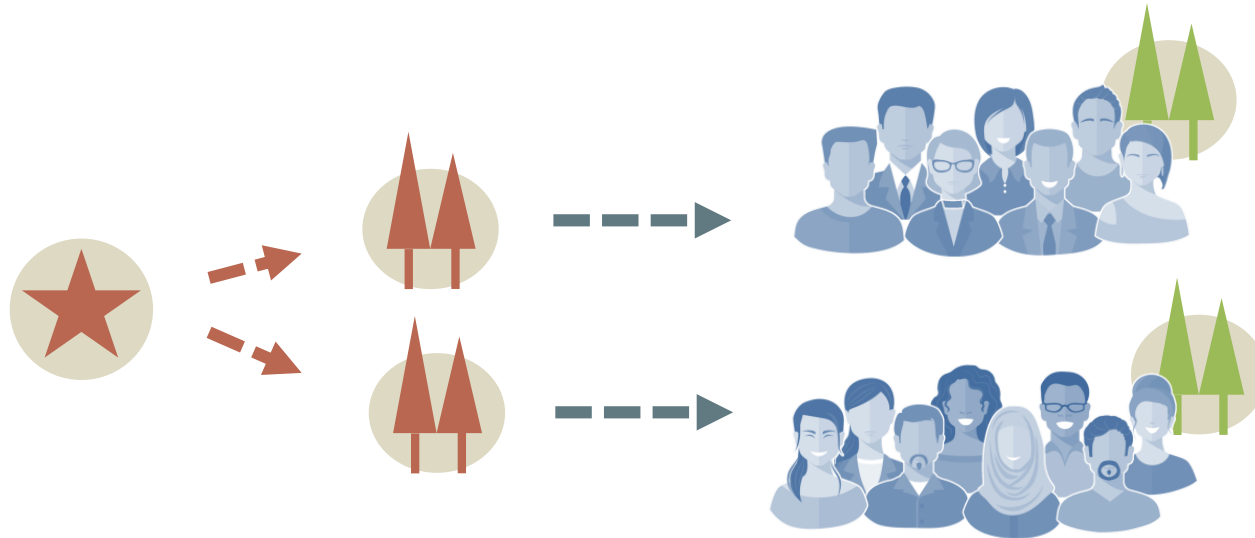


The likelihood of success is increased thorough a focus on skills training.





An **incubator** takes a higher touch role in managing the startup cooperative.

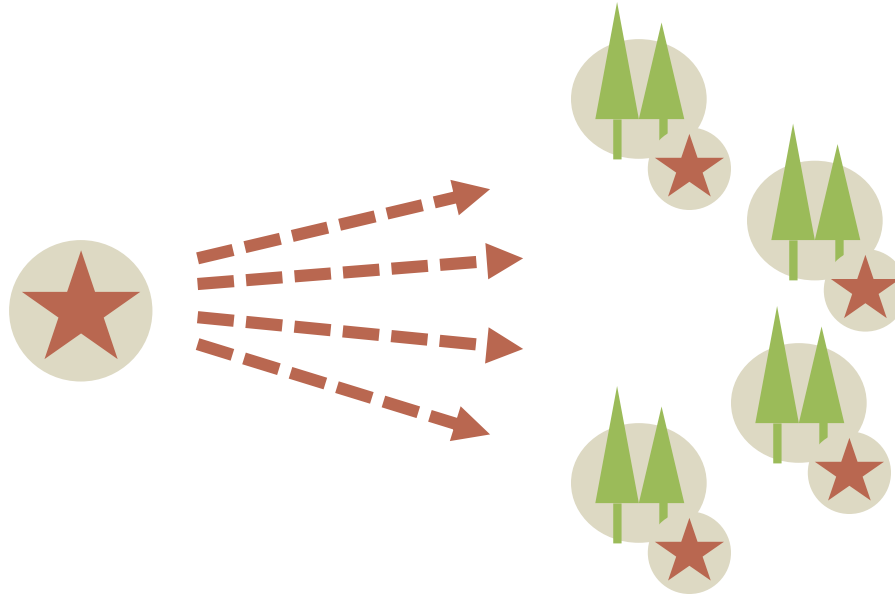


Incubators take on responsibility and risk for the startup businesses' success.





Some developers offer ongoing **back-end services** to their clients.

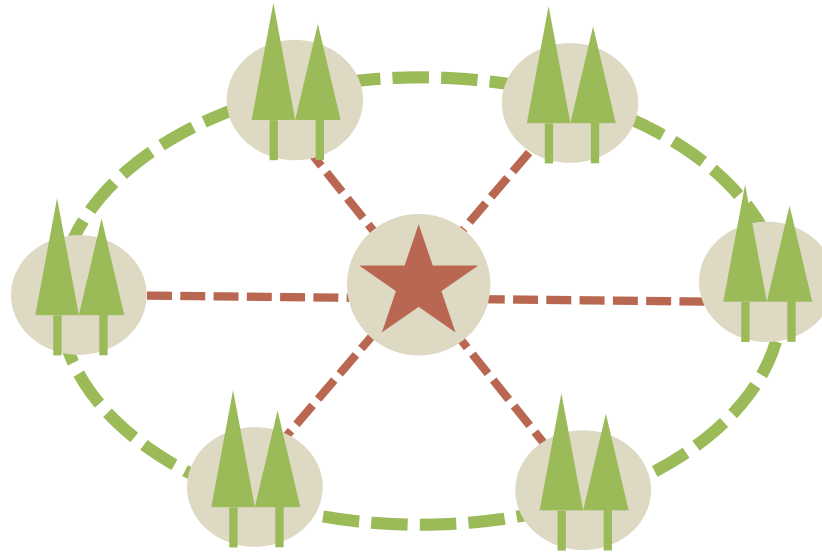


This can fill skills gaps and help operations in the short or long term.





A **franchise** model focuses on replicating success in a single business sector.



There can be marketing and network benefits if the customers are similar.





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Summary of Key ideas

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