**[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey)** with [Amy Jo Kim](https://www.facebook.com/amyjokim) and [39 others](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ts).

[April 15](https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10154103022921672&set=a.200035501671.159313.791211671&type=3) · [Sydney, NSW, Australia](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sydney-Australia/110884905606108) ·

This is to my Communities of Practice buddies out there. I am wondering how you would respond to the proposition "The best person to influence the practice of a novice is someone who was most recently a novice themselves" It's some research bubbling up for which I have a real passion. I do have to admit it is more driven by intuition and firsthand experience than a body of literature or prior research *smile emoticon* Just wondering what my respected colleagues think of this proposition. Does it fit with your research, experience and vision.

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**Comments**

[Steve Isaacs](https://www.facebook.com/stevei2071?fref=ufi)

[**Steve Isaacs**](https://www.facebook.com/stevei2071?fref=ufi) Interesting... I was thinking that the influence could come from those of us who are well connected as we can open that whole world up to the novice and bring them into our world with open arms.

· [April 14 at 1:44pm](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey/posts/10154103026841672?comment_id=10154103038301672&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R9%22%7D)

[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) Thanks Steve - so connectivity is a/the key not necessarily the level of expertise? Got me thinking...

[April 14 at 1:55pm](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey/posts/10154103026841672?comment_id=10154103038301672&reply_comment_id=10154103056686672&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R9%22%7D)

[Steve Isaacs](https://www.facebook.com/stevei2071?fref=ufi)

[**Steve Isaacs**](https://www.facebook.com/stevei2071?fref=ufi) [Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?hc_location=ufi" \t "_blank) my belief is that there is a revelation that connected educators have regarding how powerful connecting is and how transformative it is to our practice - at least that's my experience!

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[Christina Preston](https://www.facebook.com/christina.preston.754?fref=ufi)

[**Christina Preston**](https://www.facebook.com/christina.preston.754?fref=ufi) I think there is much in what you suggest...I'm doing some research into peer mentoring on cognitive development and it is surprising how very young peers can help each other.

[April 14 at 2:04pm](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey/posts/10154103026841672?comment_id=10154103038301672&reply_comment_id=10154103072686672&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R9%22%7D)

[Yvonne Harrison](https://www.facebook.com/yvonne.harrison.5815?fref=ufi)

[**Yvonne Harrison**](https://www.facebook.com/yvonne.harrison.5815?fref=ufi) Affinity groups - love it!

[April 14 at 3:34pm](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey/posts/10154103026841672?comment_id=10154103038301672&reply_comment_id=10154103228081672&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R9%22%7D)

Nancy White

[Stephen Heppell](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.heppell?fref=ufi)

[**Stephen Heppell**](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.heppell?fref=ufi) Well the opposite seems to work too - have a look at[http://www.heppell.net/rfr/](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.heppell.net%2Frfr%2F&h=NAQHWnNTj)

[[](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.heppell.net%2Frfr%2F&h=nAQGWW8Bc&enc=AZNPyrk6DLrv7uKRGE0J1OksncDK-YyZveTFfhz5xlO4g-itFHWkmRTCpAizQXk269CQjHODPevLuDeo2ecAR6UtcEzpwY4JUzKom_d-6u4eqUeM4kSsKuf70VWj3Bs2PZlu-3_PiFakA2tQPfUkZMaXWvpp_SAv84__njWJtoz7DQ&s=1)](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.heppell.net%2Frfr%2F&h=nAQGWW8Bc&enc=AZNPyrk6DLrv7uKRGE0J1OksncDK-YyZveTFfhz5xlO4g-itFHWkmRTCpAizQXk269CQjHODPevLuDeo2ecAR6UtcEzpwY4JUzKom_d-6u4eqUeM4kSsKuf70VWj3Bs2PZlu-3_PiFakA2tQPfUkZMaXWvpp_SAv84__njWJtoz7DQ&s=1" \t "_blank)

[remote feedback and reflection in teaching](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.heppell.net%2Frfr%2F&h=tAQEx1UtF&enc=AZOmkKEdQT4ckflHMzJq4v2O-5HoAYU7p11Fn0hkTjA0iJsuNBBTNlNkKMc2RpjTLBX1MjDCIo-M3zSFHDwNajYioVjdHa-KH1kBfhNfFih_JPjCT1LDT8_16vCywxr5hpFD0KHhi0SpAVd-QiqpnptPQPIT8x4izroWpf3avivYpw&s=1)

This WEFLECT project is now completed. It is was led by[heppell.net](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fheppell.net%2F&h=eAQFGv7-8&enc=AZMKymLzQYGUvU4td2yofI_THi6I8_n1hPP8VMM9Bxphs6c5hpyBcCjj05qwRaNsl8tkgYa6Q3XbgrSu-SnUPtoDgEIlOFVbqI082Ewpm8lpJIXl_IWC2OiDOvCkPBdy8J19raiDWEKIQNT1nCyhWN2SsXS8eQTRbBgAVL6V_78THw&s=1) and funded by the UK's Training and…

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[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) Thanks Stephen, Very interesting...How much does it matter that you know and respect the person/expert giving the feedback? Was this feedback anonymous or was a relationship built up over the course of the project.

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[Stephen Heppell](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.heppell?fref=ufi)

[**Stephen Heppell**](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.heppell?fref=ufi) The important thing was a trust of privacy - the video ONLY went to the retired teachers and there were only a very few of them (3) for each NQT.

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[Stephen Heppell](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.heppell?fref=ufi)

[**Stephen Heppell**](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.heppell?fref=ufi) Respect came from the quality of the feedback - teaching can be a "craft" and the insights offered reflected the craftsmanship of long experience.

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[Chris Yapp](https://www.facebook.com/chris.yapp1?fref=ufi)

[**Chris Yapp**](https://www.facebook.com/chris.yapp1?fref=ufi) I met my guru W Edwards Deming when he was in his late 80s.( back in the 80s). He argued that the most expert teachers needed to be in primary not secondary schools. My experience is that Finland is probably closer to that model. Also, Sir Christopher Ball argued that the ideal pupil teacher ratio was twice the child's age. There's an interesting comparison with football academies of all places. The teams that have produced the best stream of youngsters as opposed to buying them in have put a lot of emphasis on early development. It's the part of Alex Ferguson's story that tends to get overlooked. i'll admit to part of my own story here. My Latin teacher wrote on my Yr8 report " Teaching is seldom of much efficacy except where it is almost superfluous". I hope it was meant as a compliment though my parents were never sure

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[Elizabeth Hartnell-Young](https://www.facebook.com/elizabeth.hartnellyoung?fref=ufi)

[**Elizabeth Hartnell-Young**](https://www.facebook.com/elizabeth.hartnellyoung?fref=ufi) Bron I think there's an issue with asking about the 'best' person and I think Wenger's original book shows that 'brokers' - the connectors that others are mentioning- are very important in the whole community. But surely that's the point: everyone has something to offer a novice. I wonder what the novices are thinking about this question. Eg I would be a novice in a coding community. As long as teachers/experts are learners too I'm happy.

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[Jonathan Nalder](https://www.facebook.com/jnxyz?fref=ufi)

[**Jonathan Nalder**](https://www.facebook.com/jnxyz?fref=ufi) Not sure Bron... Best person would be someone the novice has a relationship with - that could be a recent novice or someone more experienced?

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[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) Say more! How does a novice best build valuable relationships in a CoP? Can they intentionally manage this in something so organic in relationships as a CoP?

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[Jonathan Nalder](https://www.facebook.com/jnxyz?fref=ufi)

[**Jonathan Nalder**](https://www.facebook.com/jnxyz?fref=ufi) Some people's personalities will lead them to develop networks, but some will have to learn to build and value a PLN. a planned mentor program would also be key - and as with everything - the best answer is probably a mix of both - recent novices and experienced mentors both in the mix

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[Junita Lyon](https://www.facebook.com/junita55?fref=ufi)

[**Junita Lyon**](https://www.facebook.com/junita55?fref=ufi) For a few years now I have been helping novices connect to various communities of Practice. The comfort in being supported and listened too to be able to share ideas and learn new things is what draws them in. The help I received being connected myself was the catalyst to me sharing skills and ideas with others. It's a trickle down effect that works .   
Now Im working with seniors across our state who are very new to the idea of being part of a community of practice. For them they need more evidence that it will be a benefit to them . So it's quite different and needs a bit more expertise in convincing them.

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[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) I think [Junita](https://www.facebook.com/junita55?hc_location=ufi" \t "_blank) you are prime example of what I am saying. I think I remember you saying that your newness in some technological areas made you more approachable and able to talk with novices. You could very readily remember what it was like to be them. Did I get that right?

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[**Junita Lyon**](https://www.facebook.com/junita55?fref=ufi) Yes you are correct

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[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) [Junita Lyon](https://www.facebook.com/junita55?hc_location=ufi" \t "_blank) and that's a very powerful and impactful relationship!

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[Doris Reeves-Lipscomb](https://www.facebook.com/dreeveslipscomb?fref=ufi)

[**Doris Reeves-Lipscomb**](https://www.facebook.com/dreeveslipscomb?fref=ufi) Intuitively, it makes sense that a novice would feel most comfortable with someone who's not far removed from them in experience ... and age? That's the premise that drives the partnering of young college counselors with freshmen or Upward Bound programs for first in the family to go to college students helping those slightly younger than themselves acquire the social-emotional capabilities to succeed in college. If there's too much of a gap between the advanced and novice practitioners, newcomers might not For myself, I joined a women's sailing club last Fall to grow my sailing skill. We went in as "New Salts" but the reality was that the group of 30 "novices" ranged in ability and experience. I learned valuable lessons from my peers as well as the two advanced practitioners leading the group.

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[**Doris Reeves-Lipscomb**](https://www.facebook.com/dreeveslipscomb?fref=ufi) Clicked enter before I was ready ... new learners might not ask questions or participate as readily because they are afraid of advanced practitioners' negative perceptions. I worry sometimes that I have lost sight of how many people my age are still a little afraid of computers, social media participation, etc. Nor do they want to admit to learning gaps especially if their employers might find out.

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[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) Great points there [Doris](https://www.facebook.com/dreeveslipscomb?hc_location=ufi)! Reverence can cause a gap. And you hit on one of my key issues, that is actual impact on practice and for many moving into a totally new practice. Who best supports that in the ecosystem of a CoP?

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[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) I think there is an issue that hard as they might try experts often do not remember what it was like to be a novice. I see it all the time with leaders using insider language and making assumptions about the knowledge base of the group that exceed thei...[See More](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ts)

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[Rachel Bolstad](https://www.facebook.com/rachel.bolstad?fref=ufi)

[**Rachel Bolstad**](https://www.facebook.com/rachel.bolstad?fref=ufi) There is one word I truly hate in education and it is the word "guru"!

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[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) [Rachel](https://www.facebook.com/rachel.bolstad?hc_location=ufi) I love the saying "people use the word "guru" because they can't spell charlatan"

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[**Doris Reeves-Lipscomb**](https://www.facebook.com/dreeveslipscomb?fref=ufi) Exactly Bron. Too much distance "I could never do that."

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[Rurik James Nackerud](https://www.facebook.com/rorynackerud?fref=ufi)

[**Rurik James Nackerud**](https://www.facebook.com/rorynackerud?fref=ufi) I don't remember where I heard this but I always like the notion of teaching what you've known longest as though you learned it yesterday and what you learned yesterday with the gravity of long association. It seems like a trite idea at first but in terms of mentoring....I like the sense of keeping energy of new learning in old knowledge and deep understanding and trust in new knowledge.  
  
One of my questions is what composes a wise mentor - new or old. And where can those qualities, in total, most often be found? In a newly non-novice? In a sage mentor of decades of experience? Do we need to stop seeking for mentors in the singular and live more spherically, looking for mentors of all breadths of knowledge. Accept the mix as proffering the greatest opportunity to evaluate mentored knowledge?  
  
If advice were a shoe shop we would try on a variety before buying....and if the shoe fit we would buy. In learning do we accept one mentor? Do we always need to seek sameness in mentors? What happens when we purposely, in a CoP, seek diverse Mentorship?

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[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) You just made me think [Rurik](https://www.facebook.com/rorynackerud?hc_location=ufi) that the power of the expert to impact novice practices is directly related to their relationship with novices in the CoP. Many experts have moved on from being active in a community to simply leading one and that's a very different relationship - more unidirectional perhaps.

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[Rurik James Nackerud](https://www.facebook.com/rorynackerud?fref=ufi)

[**Rurik James Nackerud**](https://www.facebook.com/rorynackerud?fref=ufi) [Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?hc_location=ufi" \t "_blank) there is a paper in that. "Where have all the good mentors gone: When experts leave the reciprocal learning environment of CoP"

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[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) [Rurik](https://www.facebook.com/rorynackerud?hc_location=ufi) I like that idea a lot. We need a joint project you and I. When your PhD is done*😆*

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[Mark Lamont](https://www.facebook.com/lamont.mark?fref=ufi)

[**Mark Lamont**](https://www.facebook.com/lamont.mark?fref=ufi) [Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?hc_location=ufi" \t "_blank) If the relationship became more unidirectional, that may suggest the expert teacher became a novice leader, therefore, the issues are more complex, related to ideas about leadership. I find it interesting when I refer to 'supervisors', 'mentors' and 'buddies' in professional learning contexts. The terms evoke different ideas, many similar to the thoughts in this interesting thread.

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[Rachel Bolstad](https://www.facebook.com/rachel.bolstad?fref=ufi)

[**Rachel Bolstad**](https://www.facebook.com/rachel.bolstad?fref=ufi) Perhaps there is also something about the tendency to share successfully gained knowledge or expertise more openly than we share our epic fails...or the messy hard-won learning that got you to a new place in your thinking. Even though the epic fails coupled with reflection are often the things that helped us most to develop a particular expertise or wisdome we may have? Are recent novices just more likely to remember and talk about those parts because their brains haven't washed away those parts of the experience yet?

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[Lindy Orwin](https://www.facebook.com/lindy.orwin?fref=ufi)

[**Lindy Orwin**](https://www.facebook.com/lindy.orwin?fref=ufi) You could look into the research by Nick Kelly who has made an app (was at USQ now at QUT) called TeachConnect. They start using it as pre-service teachers and then continue to support one another.[http://www.stepup.edu.au/teachconnect/](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.stepup.edu.au%2Fteachconnect%2F&h=VAQGp5lLj)

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[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) Looks very useful. Follows on from the popularity of[#TeachMeets](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/teachmeets?hc_location=ufi) in education.

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[Lindy Orwin](https://www.facebook.com/lindy.orwin?fref=ufi)

[**Lindy Orwin**](https://www.facebook.com/lindy.orwin?fref=ufi) [Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?hc_location=ufi" \t "_blank) Yep sort of like an on-demand TeachMeet in your phone.

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[Jenny Lewis](https://www.facebook.com/jenny.lewis.927758?fref=ufi)

[**Jenny Lewis**](https://www.facebook.com/jenny.lewis.927758?fref=ufi) Hi Bron when i was principal at Noumea we had three leadership opportunities. One was teacher mentor and you could only be 1-2 years out of Uni assisting the newly appointed teacher. that is because nobody tells you in undergrad work what teaching is going to be like particully in areas such as Mt Druitt. The teacher mentor was recognised as having a major leadership role in the school. The second was that everyone had to accept a minimum of two leadership roles in the school even if you were new to teaching. That was because if you contributed to the improvement of self and school the kids were the winners (and how :)) The third was professional partner (AP, DP etc) Their role was to support learning in the classroom and as part of their role they did the RFF on the classes they supervised. Each stage team included the teacher mentor and their teachers and the Professional Partner. They were given three hours a week (including RFF) to do their learning and planning together.

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[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) ONG [Jenny](https://www.facebook.com/jenny.lewis.927758?hc_location=ufi) I love this so much! Everyone is an expert and everyone is a novice! I can see this being extremely powerful. The teacher mentor role us perhaps the relationship I was getting at but your other two roles have really got me thinking! Yay this is such a great thread with such amazing people contributing.

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[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) Yay to ALL OF YOU - this is such a great thread with such amazing people contributing. My mind is buzzing with all the issues you are stirring up! Juicy juicy juicy!

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[Martyn Wild](https://www.facebook.com/martyn.wild?fref=ufi)

[**Martyn Wild**](https://www.facebook.com/martyn.wild?fref=ufi) [Bron](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?hc_location=ufi" \t "_blank), I haven't read all the responses but did catch [Elizabeth](https://www.facebook.com/elizabeth.hartnellyoung?hc_location=ufi)'s. Which I agree with. You're really offering a false premise, there never is 'one best person'. Not in anything. If you think about it, our society and indeed our human nature is to be binary (i.e. best-worst) about our options. But of course this is never the case, everything is contextual, nuanced and multifaceted.   
It's as almost as we have a static filter hard wired into our brains to make it easier to make decisions by filtering on a binary premise. Our political and social tools and systems are designed this way also - bicameral parliaments; yes/no options; advisorial (winner/loser) legal system; etc.  
Just a (unhelpful) thought wink emoticon

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[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) Wow [Martyn](https://www.facebook.com/martyn.wild?hc_location=ufi) not at all unhelpful! I threw this proposition out there to surface all the surrounding issues. My issue really us that we keep holding up and celebrating experts and yes people get motivated but that wanes and their practice doesn't change. If you read my response to Elizabeth you will see that I acknowledge the complexities of CoPs and learning and that 'best' is an ill advised word - but it was meant to provoke smile emoticon

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[Edna Pasher](https://www.facebook.com/edna.pasher?fref=ufi)

[**Edna Pasher**](https://www.facebook.com/edna.pasher?fref=ufi) I love this conversation!  
My 2 cents:  
1. Look up my close friend Piero Formika who studies the value of ignorance in innovation.  
2. In a project in a high school with kids mentoring kids in mathematics we found that the best mentors were NOT the excellent students but the average ones, who understood the difficulties of the kids they mentored -better.  
3. In a project we support on reinventing libraries we have special success with dogs (!) listening to kids, who have trouble reading. The reason is of course that the trained dogs are the best listeners! The kids read aloud to the dogs and their reading skills improve! It seems that just listening is a great skill for mentors. *😊*

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[Brendan Jones](https://www.facebook.com/jonesytheteacher?fref=ufi)

[**Brendan Jones**](https://www.facebook.com/jonesytheteacher?fref=ufi) One person doesn't know everything. It takes a village....

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[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) Yeah but it's not about knowing, it's about influencing practice. Who influences teachers most to dip their toes into a new practice or innovation? We keep hosting keynotes and hope for change frown emoticon

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[Brendan Jones](https://www.facebook.com/jonesytheteacher?fref=ufi)

[**Brendan Jones**](https://www.facebook.com/jonesytheteacher?fref=ufi) Influencing practice is multidimensional too. It could be a friend you trust to go on a journey together; a fellow noob wanting to try something new; a lighthouse in your space that is doing cool things; a TED talk from a pro. It's personal, and contextual. I'm not sure if that helps... gasp emoticon

[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) [Brendan](https://www.facebook.com/jonesytheteacher?hc_location=ufi) it absolutely helps! Great list of influences and influencers. So take TED talks of all the ones you watch what is it about that one that might influence you to risk take and try something new? What might set it apart?

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[Brendan Jones](https://www.facebook.com/jonesytheteacher?fref=ufi)

[**Brendan Jones**](https://www.facebook.com/jonesytheteacher?fref=ufi) The one's that get me in are people providing either the missing piece of a puzzle that I'm working on, or a different plane of thinking outside what I know. A booster, so to speak. I don't need to be told how to do it, more like that there are other paths to follow that may help me. Not necessarily in the same genre that I'm working in either. If I'm working on a Edu problem, I can get boosts from designers, artists, sportspeople, writers, gamers, etc.

[Nancy White](https://www.facebook.com/choconancy?fref=ufi)

[**Nancy White**](https://www.facebook.com/choconancy?fref=ufi) Ecosystem!

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[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) Yeah I used the word ecology. But I think there are people in a community who are more impactful on novices and the motivation to change practices. Can essay who they are or describe the attributes they need. It's not all about the singularity if experts or the amorphousness (my new word) of an ecosystem. Even in and ecosystem there are stronger and weaker dependencies and influences aren't there?

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[Nancy White](https://www.facebook.com/choconancy?fref=ufi)

[**Nancy White**](https://www.facebook.com/choconancy?fref=ufi) Maybe by removing the word expert and inserting other words: friend, learning partner, coach, co-ach, etc. I think what resonates for me in this conversation and which has been captured and amplified by your responses [Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?hc_location=ufi" \t "_blank), is the idea that we all have expertise, but we may not all have the confidence, courage, opportuniy, encouragement to be there for each other. That is the part of the ecosystem that may need nurturing. Not the expertise bits.

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[Caren Levine](https://www.facebook.com/caren.levine?fref=ufi)

[**Caren Levine**](https://www.facebook.com/caren.levine?fref=ufi) Yes! I have been thinking a lot about ecosystems lately in a variety of seemingly unrelated areas but I guess the connective tissue is communities of practice. A few random thoughts (you ALL have gotten my juices flowing on this, thanks, [Bron](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?hc_location=ufi" \t "_blank), for inviting this conversation and thanks to all who are responding!!) - different people have different things to officer novices. Part of being in a CoP, I am thinking, is also figuring out one's own self - identity, how I learn, who are my resource people, where are there gaps, how do I make room for serendipity, etc. So, in one community that I am involved with, I was responsible (as a more veteran student) for assigning new students a "buddy" to whom they could turn with questions about school, navigating the system, figuring out home-work-school boundaries, learning the secret handshakes, whatever, etc. I always extended an invitation to them to be in touch with me directly and with others as well, and that they were not limited to their "assigned" person but that person could be a go-to person who was one of their first places to start. In another community I have been studying, on emerging sacred communities, I found that a common stance has been among community leaders that their community is part of an individual's ecosystem of navigating the world and they don't assume that their community / institution is "THE" place where that person's spirituals needs are met or enacted. This is a shift from when a specific community felt that they were at the center of individuals' spiritual lives and needs. Not sure I am being clear. But the upshot is, in general, I am finding the articulation and appreciation of acknowledging ecosystems in one's development. Then the question is, how do providers of supports design from this framework, which I think goes hand in hand with notions of connectivity, relationships, and the intersections of communal and individual goals. Fascinating conversation - looking forward to more!

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[Edna Pasher](https://www.facebook.com/edna.pasher?fref=ufi)

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[Sue Wolff](https://www.facebook.com/sue.wolff.7?fref=ufi)

[**Sue Wolff**](https://www.facebook.com/sue.wolff.7?fref=ufi) Yes...in my experience...the recent novice most easily works in the novice's (Vygotsky's) ZPD (zone of proximal development)

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[Christina Merl](https://www.facebook.com/christina.merl?fref=ufi)

[**Christina Merl**](https://www.facebook.com/christina.merl?fref=ufi) Hm ... I think it depends very much on the context and personality and it therefore may be hard to generalise. Integration may best work through someone who is likely to understand the background of the novice, his/her needs, an open-minded person, a "bridge-builder", someone who opens doors ...

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[Chris Yapp](https://www.facebook.com/chris.yapp1?fref=ufi)

[**Chris Yapp**](https://www.facebook.com/chris.yapp1?fref=ufi) One size doesn't fit all. Technical skills are best learnt from experts ( generally) where personal skills are best learned from experience(generally). However context is really important.There is a strong history of outsiders and diversity promoting innovation. In a strong culture an external mentor may be more useful than an internal one. In a particular case start from the objective and map backwards..

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[Jeffrey Keefer](https://www.facebook.com/jeffreykeefer?fref=ufi)

[**Jeffrey Keefer**](https://www.facebook.com/jeffreykeefer?fref=ufi) I have been thinking about this deceptively simple question since you posed it, and want to congratulate you for initiating and facilitating such a discussion here on FB without using a focused group function to do it. There may be some lessons in that, as some (ok, me) tend to only use FB for group discussions and not for ongoing streams. Anyway, that may or may not digress.   
  
What has me intrigued with this question, [Bron](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?hc_location=ufi" \t "_blank), is that it seems to posit that those who were recently the novices have the skills and inclination to do that. It reminds me of the tension between subject matter experts and those with the expertise and wherewithal to promote learning. Anybody can talk favorably about the new experiences they had, but that does not translate to the ability to transfer that into some structured manner that would be beneficial to new members. This reminds me of my doctoral nursing students; they all have taught or mentored in some capacity in their organizations, but not a one of them felt prepared or ready to do that as they lacked structure, skills, and foundations to make that happen beyond their own personalized learning experiences.

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[Natalie Denmeade](https://www.facebook.com/natmoojoo?fref=ufi)

[**Natalie Denmeade**](https://www.facebook.com/natmoojoo?fref=ufi) Novices need both peers and experts for different reasons at different points in their learning journey, if you look at this question through the lense of the Hero's (learning) journey.  
  
Novices first need to get out of their comfort zone and start on their new adventure. This 'Crossing the threshold' requires supernatural encouragement (parents, or experts as inspiration, ) Peers also can act as inspiration at this point. ('I wish I knew how to do what my friend is doing') .  
  
The next step of ' trials and tribulations' is where the expert steps away and perhaps, unknowingly, even creates obstacles that force the learner to admit the gaps and weaknesses.   
  
The expert will fly in with miraculous support on occasion, but most of the learning is independant, with peer support and mentoring. (Think of Gandolf inviting Bilbo on an unexpected adventure and then disappearing )  
  
When the journey is complete the learner may need to prove themself to the original 'guru/expert' as a point of pride They lay their boon and stories at their feet and feel that the journey is complete. (Atonement with the father).  
  
These steps were mapped as player tracks by Richard Bartle by observing behavious in virtual worlds. He explains player progression and the game designer's aim to keep a balance between player types. He noticed patterns in an ecosystem of players that is sustainable.  
  
When I apply this to education, and particularly assessment, the benefit of peers being teachers is the increase in confidence. When I ask my students to assess each other they generally enjoy the experience and their opinions are credible and authentic. Expert assessments are much more intimidating and often seen as meaningless ritual.

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[Barb Schartz McDonald](https://www.facebook.com/barb.fb?fref=ufi)

[**Barb Schartz McDonald**](https://www.facebook.com/barb.fb?fref=ufi) I think I have to agree with those who say it depends... wink emoticon I can think of instances where your proposition is on target (possibly in more established communities) and instances where other novices may not have enough practice context to be helpful (in communities I have been building from nothing -- that is, essentially creating a new practice within a company). I suspect it's a matter of incremental movement toward the center where the novice is more helpful. However, in order to understand the need for those incremental steps, one needs the influence of the expert. The biggest ah-ha I got from attending the BEtreat was how tightly learning, meaning, and identity are tied together in practice.As others have said, thanks for the provocative question. I hope you find the germ you're seeking to do more amazing research!

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[Stephen Heppell](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.heppell?fref=ufi)

[**Stephen Heppell**](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.heppell?fref=ufi) And as you know, Learner Led brings reflective practice gains to the students directly - this is more than learner voice / co-construction, it is not asking for an opinion, it is asking them to research how learning might be better. I worry that NQTs are not well enough equipped from their initial training to be able to step back far enough. For those who do, the students have a huge impact on changing and improving teaching. These web pages are indicative:  
[http://www.heppell.net/user\_led\_makeover/](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.heppell.net%2Fuser_led_makeover%2F&h=HAQFqCg_b)[Like](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ts) · [Reply](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ts) · [Storify](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ts) · [April 16 at 12:42am](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey/posts/10154103026841672?comment_id=10154106398236672&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R9%22%7D) · [Edited](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ts)

[Mark Lamont](https://www.facebook.com/lamont.mark?fref=ufi)

[**Mark Lamont**](https://www.facebook.com/lamont.mark?fref=ufi) Hopefully, a novice does not have to choose between a recent novice and a master for development, confidence and advice. I agree with others here that each can play a role. If it takes a village to educate a child, imagine what it could take to develop a teacher! smile emoticon In NSW, we are just kicking off The Reflective Teacher, a BoSTES endorsed course based on reflective practice, a growth mindset, teacher agency, heutagogy, and the planning of professional learning in CoPs. Of course, we had to develop an app to facilitate the course. The app data is rather fascinating. See [http://www.mme-moe.com/nsw-bostes-endorsed-course.html](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.mme-moe.com%2Fnsw-bostes-endorsed-course.html&h=TAQESn8J4)

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[Stephen Heppell](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.heppell?fref=ufi)

[**Stephen Heppell**](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.heppell?fref=ufi) and of course team teaching in Superclasses ([http://rubble.heppell.net/superclasses/](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Frubble.heppell.net%2Fsuperclasses%2F&h=GAQHaQmja)) is such a great way to learn to be brave from each other.

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[Yvonne Harrison](https://www.facebook.com/yvonne.harrison.5815?fref=ufi)

[**Yvonne Harrison**](https://www.facebook.com/yvonne.harrison.5815?fref=ufi) Learning so much from everyone here! Thank you all! smile emoticon

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[Knowclue Kidd](https://www.facebook.com/knowclue.kidd?fref=ufi)

[**Knowclue Kidd**](https://www.facebook.com/knowclue.kidd?fref=ufi) You are absolutely onto something big here. I'm wondering: if you build a model of "seasoned" novice teacher mentors, will it pave the way for educators to be open to the idea of students as experts, mentors and co-learners?

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[Barb Schartz McDonald](https://www.facebook.com/barb.fb?fref=ufi)

[**Barb Schartz McDonald**](https://www.facebook.com/barb.fb?fref=ufi) I have always thought that exposing teachers to social learning experiences would help them see that their students can and should have similar experiences. In the PLCs I've been studying, I have seen a little bit of evidence of this when talking to teachers. In the US, the Common Core Standards incorporate some social learning theory. I've definitely seen a rise in co-learning anyway.

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[Knowclue Kidd](https://www.facebook.com/knowclue.kidd?fref=ufi)

[**Knowclue Kidd**](https://www.facebook.com/knowclue.kidd?fref=ufi) Thanks, Barb. I was really encouraged that Allan[November Learning](https://www.facebook.com/NLearning/?hc_location=ufi) advocated using [#stuvoice](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/stuvoice?hc_location=ufi) for PD in a recent newsletter. This discussion has been so interesting in respect to how we learn in respect to utilizing peer and expert mentors. I hope, as we explore this awesome topic, we look at the gamer communities. Age has no bearing and both peer and expert advice is utilized in advancing knowledge and skill. How does this model inform the learning communities we strive to build in the EDU field?

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[Bron Stuckey](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi)

[**Bron Stuckey**](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?fref=ufi) This has been such a juicy conversation! I am going to wait a day or so for any other responses and then try to create a summary to close it off. Wow such a rich and deep surfacing of issues!

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[Stephen Heppell](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.heppell?fref=ufi)

[**Stephen Heppell**](https://www.facebook.com/stephen.heppell?fref=ufi) And by way of encouragement here are some kids last week leading a MakerSpace PD for their teachers in Madrid:

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[Mark Lamont](https://www.facebook.com/lamont.mark?fref=ufi)

[**Mark Lamont**](https://www.facebook.com/lamont.mark?fref=ufi) To your original proposition, Bron, "to influence the practice" could probably use some unpacking. Influence comes in many forms, some healthier depending on the situation.

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[Judi Fusco](https://www.facebook.com/judi.fusco?fref=ufi)

[**Judi Fusco**](https://www.facebook.com/judi.fusco?fref=ufi) I love this conversation and I truly believe that everyone has something to offer in helping others learn (novices ask great questions), and sometimes a person who is just slightly ahead of you is a great person to learn from (because you don't feel dumb asking your questions and you can see what they've just learned and they can illuminate it better), they can maybe see your confusion better too, but I think the thing about CoP that I love is that people work with all levels. This article just came across my feed in FB this morning and I think it's very important to keep in mind for why a more knowledgeable other (e.g., expert) is important. The expert does need to always try to understand the novice perspective. If the expert doesn't understand why the novice is thinking certain things, then the expert may not be able to help. Some experts try to understand the novice and some don't. [http://www.npr.org/.../why-teachers-need-to-know-the...](http://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.npr.org%2Fsections%2Fed%2F2016%2F04%2F16%2F473273571%2Fwhy-teachers-need-to-know-the-wrong-answers%3Futm_source%3Dfacebook.com%26utm_medium%3Dsocial%26utm_campaign%3Dnpr%26utm_term%3Dnprnews%26utm_content%3D20160416&h=5AQGMxHqD)

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[Gerhard Moliin](https://www.facebook.com/gerhardmlin?fref=ufi)

[**Gerhard Moliin**](https://www.facebook.com/gerhardmlin?fref=ufi) Marvin Minsky and Alan Kay also highlighted the importance of “learning by copying the way more knowledgeable and experienced people think and complete a task” (Hourcade, 2008, p. 284-285). Even though they referred to children, I can't think of a reason why this shouldn't account for adults as well.

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[Knowclue Kidd](https://www.facebook.com/knowclue.kidd?fref=ufi)

[**Knowclue Kidd**](https://www.facebook.com/knowclue.kidd?fref=ufi) Glad to see you challenging the imaginary silos we create around age and narrative of learning. smile emoticon I enjoyed watching Liz Coleman's 2009 TED talk this morning about reforming higher education. She challenges us to move away from the "expert model" to embrace a more participatory approach to both learning and civic action. Seemed relevant to this discussion.[https://www.ted.com/.../liz\_coleman\_s\_call\_to\_reinvent...](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ted.com%2Ftalks%2Fliz_coleman_s_call_to_reinvent_liberal_arts_education%3Flanguage%3Den&h=zAQHkmosG)

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[**Gerhard Moliin**](https://www.facebook.com/gerhardmlin?fref=ufi) This may be of interest to you [Bron](https://www.facebook.com/bronstuckey?hc_location=ufi" \t "_blank): "Many creativity researchers have pointed out that the discoveries of many famous people (e.g., Einstein, who could build on the work of Newton) would have been inconceivable without the prior knowledge, without theintellectual and social network that stimulated their thinking and without the social mechanisms that recognized and spread their innovations" - Fischer, G., 2014, Chapter 10: Learning, Social Creativity, and Cultures of Participation in Learning and Collective Creativity.

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[**Dean Groom**](https://www.facebook.com/dean.groom?fref=ufi) Anyone with patience and time. The issue I have is the increasing Trojan development with commercial bias/arrangements and the increasing limitations on what time practicing teachers spend outside the classroom as part of their job. I don't know any teacher who doesn't already work after hours ... And these days that is often on administration and database reporting etc., then it's 9pm and time for a wine. So much I'd like to do ... And I'm a perpetual novice in so many areas.

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[**Etienne Wenger-Trayner**](https://www.facebook.com/etienne.wengertrayner?fref=ufi) I don't know the research, but intuitively it seems that someone just a bit ahead of you may well be more effective than from someone whose level of performance is so far ahead that (1) their level of performance is almost irrelevant and (2) they may not remember what it was like to be a newbie.

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[Barbara Mavor](https://www.facebook.com/barbara.mavor?fref=ufi)

[**Barbara Mavor**](https://www.facebook.com/barbara.mavor?fref=ufi) I agree with so much here. However, I do not think it possible to generalise and the effectiveness of an individual in influencing practice depends on so much - so many different parameters - on the purpose of the engagement, on the the characters and ways of thinking and learning of the people involved, on the ability to form trusting learning relationships, on the capacity and capability of the recent novice to share what they know and know what they don't know/their limitations, on the expert to truly engage with the learning of the novice to understand and empathise with their processing. . . Some near novices will be great, some awful just as some experts are stunning and some damaging - it's about finding the right people you can connect with for the things you want - may be one person, a group or several different people for different purposes. No one answer.

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