

# An Introduction to the CoG Model of Professional Learning

Rachel Lofthouse  
Professor of Teacher Education,  
Director of CollectivED  
Carnegie School of Education,  
Leeds Beckett University



## The evidence base for The CoG Model of Professional Learning

The CoG Model of Professional Learning is based on an evidence base of research and practice development which Rachel Lofthouse synthesized in her PhD awarded by Newcastle University. Rachel has continued to build this evidence base through her work as Director of CollectivED at Leeds Beckett University.

<https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/carnegie-school-of-education/research/collectived/>

Please note that in this outline publication the US spelling of 'practice' as both the verb and noun has been adopted.



## Cycles of Growth (CoG) at the heart of education

As educators we have responsibility for the learning of others. We aim to develop educational practices best suited to their needs. We seek opportunities to enhance their learning and create a lasting and positive legacy of their time with us.

As educators we are also learners. We learn through our engagement with a relevant knowledge base, through our immersion in practice and through our relationships with others in our organisation, networks and communities.

The opportunities that we have for professional learning shape our practices and influence our values. Where learning is at the heart of an organisation everyone is a learner, and the learning creates momentum for Cycles of Growth.

## Cycles of practice development

At the heart of the CoG Model of Professional Learning is activity, both directed and more informal. This activity takes time. It is critical to ask ourselves the question; *Are we learning and developing or we just ever more busy?*

It is valuable to know how we can refine our activity. Professional learning and the development of practice are active interlocked processes. Cycles of practice development enable learning to be cumulative and new and effective practices to be generated. They include elements of *planning, practicing, enquiring and reviewing*. A learning cycle can start at any point.

Approaches such as lesson study, teacher enquiry and coaching typically follow this pattern. New ideas discovered through reading or CPD presentations require activation through cycles of action in order to create and sustain change. Depending on what approaches are used the use of appropriate *tools* can enhance the learning and impact. These include tools for structuring activity (e.g. action plans), capturing and analysing evidence (e.g. video and data collection proformas), curating ideas and disseminating knowledge (e.g. posters, working papers and talks).





## Creating cycles of growth

Ensuring that we are really learning from our professional development activity is critical. There are certain *attributes* held by organisation and the individual which help maximise the power of the activity.

In organisations with these attributes we learn from, and about each other. We celebrate diversity and build *solidarity* so that everyone matters and our positive engagement with each other builds understanding.

In these learning organisations we respect each other and understand the contexts which influence us. There is confidence in who we are individually and as part of a community and are aware of what shapes and motivates us. We know that both create *authentic* opportunities and valid sites for learning.

We are open to a wide knowledge base and appreciate *creativity*. Problem solving is welcomed and there is an openness to learn from others who bring fresh perspectives and lived experiences which are different to our own.

## Learning attributes supporting cycles of growth







## Changes resulting from cycles of growth

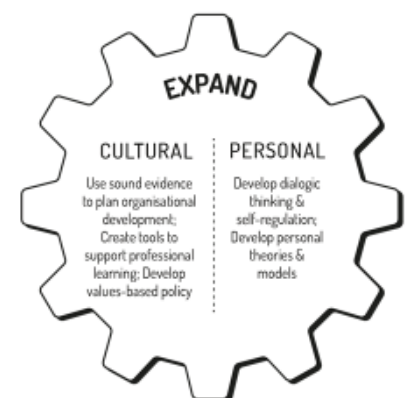
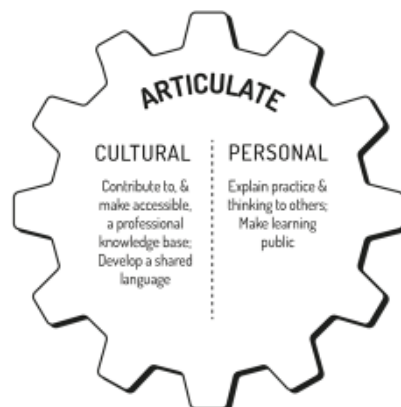
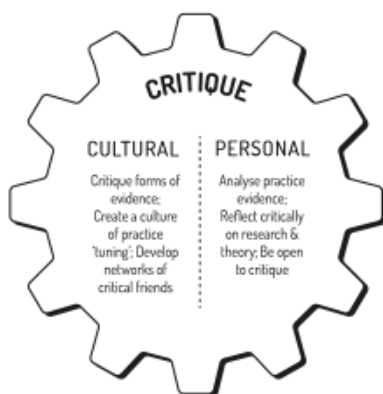
Professional learning changes professional practices and *behaviours*. In learning organisations we are able to *articulate* our ideas and share our achievements through multiple internal and external networks.

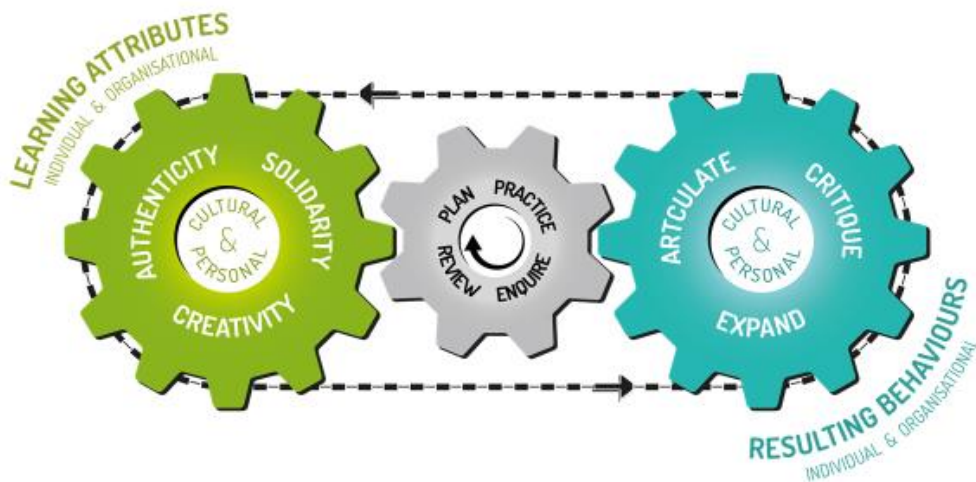
We recognise that we are learners and we ask for support and *critique* ensuring that ideas and evidence are reviewed with an informed perspective. We know that critique can be given in a generous spirit because we do the same for others.

In learning organisations we acknowledge knowledge and proficiency in others and gain confidence as we *expand* our own. The result is that our professional repertoires and expertise expand, and that the organisation becomes more effective in creating successful education for all.

These behaviours build individual and organisational capacity and act as positive feedback securing the attributes that power professional learning.

## Behaviours resulting from cycles of growth





## The CoG MODEL of PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Practice development and professional learning in education are sustained by Cycles of Growth (CoG). These cycles are strengthened by learning attributes and result in new behaviours.

## Further reading

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