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On becoming and being an entrepreneurship educator: a personal reflection

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship education has been studied intensively since 1990, yet little attention is given in the literature to the critical role and impact of the individuals that design and deliver it; the entrepreneurship educators. Who are they and what do we understand about them? Professor Alain Fayolle in 2013 challenged us to address this gap. In this article I aim to take on board Fayolle's challenge and provide a single case of my own experience on the journey to becoming and being an entrepreneurship educator.

After exploring the purpose and value of autobiographical methods, I then present the reader with my life story as an emerging entrepreneurship educator in the UK. This provides the basis for self-reflection and self-discovery to highlight key patterns of development that have shaped me as an entrepreneurship educator. Finally I provide personal thoughts on the important role of entrepreneurship educators as entrepreneurial leaders within their institutions. This paper has been

produced in the hope that it will encourage other educators to share their journeys so that as a community we can better understand the 'who' of entrepreneurship educators.

Keywords: entrepreneurial leadership, entrepreneurship educators, European entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial universities, autobiography, life story

Biographical Note

Paul is a graduate entrepreneur who has helped shape entrepreneurship and small business development for 40 years as a CEO, government adviser, academic director, professor and company founder. Paul offers a unique expertise drawn from his experiences in key stakeholder environments: academia; business and enterprise support; local and national government. Paul has worked with governments, global / national agencies, universities and colleges, business and industry partners and professional bodies across Europe and beyond. He is the 2016 European Entrepreneurship Education Laureate from Lund University and a 2015 Maserati 100 member. Paul was previously CEO of the National Centre for Entrepreneurship Education, a national body stimulating entrepreneurship across higher education. He currently advises the Welsh and Malaysian Governments, is an expert for the European Commission / OECD HEInnovate project for entrepreneurial universities and is Council Member for the Accredited Council for Entrepreneurial and Engaged Universities.

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On becoming and being an entrepreneurship educator: a personal reflection

Background

Entrepreneurship education has been studied intensively since the 1990s and continues to raise many questions for further exploration by researchers, educators, institutional leaders and policy developers alike. In a recent report published by the European Commission and the OECD the author concluded that ‘despite its promising effects on students and society, it is important to keep in mind that the field of entrepreneurial education is in a quite early stage of development. It is still regarded as an innovative but marginal pedagogical approach’ (Lackeus 2015 p. 35).

Less attention has been given to the critical role of the entrepreneurship educator. The current emphasis lies with the processes, the constituent parts, the tools and the outcomes of engagement in entrepreneurship education for the learners, the organising institutions and for the economy and society. Yet it can be argued that the voice of the entrepreneurship educator is central to this dominant discourse and this voice is growing (Jones 2015; Neck and Corbett 2018).

In 2012 the European Entrepreneurship Education Award was established to recognise the valuable achievements of individuals in helping to shape the field of entrepreneurship education (www.entrepreneur.lu.se/en/events/eeea). Its first recipient, Professor Allan Gibb, has had an immense influence on our understanding of entrepreneurship education and the training of educators.

The 2013 Laureate, Professor Alain Fayolle, acknowledged that ‘studies into who entrepreneurship educators are and what they really do in their interventions are sorely missing’ (Fayolle 2013 p. 695). The following year, the 2014 Laureate, Professor Paula Kyro,

highlighted the disconnect between the fields of entrepreneurship and the science of education and the need to build a bridge between the two and in particular to explore the ‘role of entrepreneurship education in education’ (Kyro 2015 p. 2). The 2015 Laureate, Professor Bengt Johannisson, emphasised the need for educators to be ‘bilingual’ across both disciplines.

Comprehensive reviews of literature on the subject (such as Pittaway et al. 2017), when viewed through this lens, show how little attention has been paid to *why* we do things the way we do. Even less attention has been given to knowing who we are as educators and how this has shaped our thinking and behaviour, nor how we should develop as a community.

Exploring our purpose as entrepreneurship educators

As entrepreneurship educators we all want our students to learn, grow and develop the confidence and capability to take full advantage of the opportunities in front of them whatever these may be and whenever they may arise. Isn't this our purpose? What do we want our student learners to achieve? Is it a changed mindset or a new set of skills and habits? Are we seeking to give them the opportunity to become a more entrepreneurial being and live an entrepreneurial life – mentally, psychologically, culturally and socially?

Colleagues have been focused on the development of graduate entrepreneurs as their key goal. More recently there is a shift of emphasis toward the development of entrepreneurial graduates as an outcome of higher education. This is in recognition that (a) only a minority of graduates become entrepreneurs; and (b) entrepreneurial graduates can positively contribute to organisations of all types and sizes in the private, public and voluntary sectors as these organisations seek to cope with the increasingly unpredictable and uncertain environments.

We continually seek to improve successful outcomes for our graduates. For a minority of graduates this will be to create a new value-creating venture and as institutions we should be striving to ensure that these new graduate entrepreneurs have a sound platform on which to build their future. For the majority of graduates, across all disciplines, it may be more appropriate to equip them with the mindset, the behaviours and the skills that will enable and empower them to thrive in this increasingly complex and challenging world they will be entering. They will need new ways of thinking, acting and being to create new value for their future employers and more broadly society in general. These entrepreneurial graduates are a vital outcome of higher education. Their educators are a key and essential component.

The distinction between becoming enterprising or entrepreneurial rather than becoming an entrepreneur by starting a business has been strongly made by Gibb throughout the 1980s and 1990s and is mirrored in the definitions reported by the UK's Quality Assurance Agency (2012, 2018) chaired by Professor Andy Penaluna. Here enterprise education refers to 'having an idea and making it happen' (p8) whereas entrepreneurship education 'aims to produce graduates who are capable of identifying opportunities and developing ventures...' (p. 8). This is not a universally accepted viewpoint. In the US academics have called for a narrower definitional use of the term entrepreneurship education, focused on starting new ventures, and are not seeking to adopt the UK's distinctions as above (Neck and Corbett 2018). The authors cite Bruyat (1993) suggesting replacement with 'value creation education' as this term enables students to learn 'by applying their knowledge to create value for at least one external stakeholder ...' (p. 22).

Being/Becoming an entrepreneurship educator

In 2016 I had the honour of becoming the European Entrepreneurship Education Laureate through the award offered from the Sten K. Johnson Centre for Entrepreneurship at the University of Lund in Sweden. I recognise from my own experiences there are many challenges along the journey to becoming an entrepreneurship educator. We often make many assumptions about what we should do and how. We do not allow ourselves sufficient time to look across at other educational practices in diverse subject areas. Nor do we adequately explore in depth the long-established discipline of education itself, especially in terms of its history, its practices and its development as a field from which we could learn and share experiences (Elmore 1996). This may enable a deeper understanding not simply of what we do but offer insights into what we do not do and perhaps what we should or ought to do.

As educators we do what we do with passion and pride. We experience periods of self-doubt and stress, of joy and happiness. Occasionally, and probably not often enough, we stop and reflect not on what we do but who we are, what drives us, what underpins our thinking and beliefs about why we do what we do in the way we do it and how does this 'I' impact on my teaching, on my learners?

Focusing on the entrepreneurship educator

In this article I aim to take on board Fayolle's (2013) challenge, or at least in part, by seeking to understand the 'who' and provide a single case of my own experience on the journey to becoming / being an entrepreneurship educator from novice to leader and to Award recipient. This is then a life story from which I am able to share thoughts and observations. My reflections aim to highlight questions I have faced and not yet answered in the hope that this

will encourage others to offer their thoughts and perspectives. In time this can enhance the community of practitioners and educators and our understanding of who we are and our 'becoming'.

I continue this article by initially introducing the life story approach as a method for illuminating a person's life journey. I then provide a more detailed exploration of the purpose and value of autobiographical methods and their place within social sciences research with a particular emphasis on its use in professional work contexts including teaching. Following these sections I present the reader with my life story as an emerging entrepreneurship educator in the UK and use this as the basis for self-reflection and self-discovery to highlight key patterns of development that have shaped me as an entrepreneurship educator. Finally I present final thoughts on the important role of entrepreneurship educators as entrepreneurial leaders within their institutions.

The life story approach

I hope to encourage other entrepreneurship educators to do likewise so that we capture valuable diverse human experiences of becoming entrepreneurship educators – something we do not undertake often or at any transformative level. My story illustrates events, choices and actions from which I have drawn meaning and value. My belief is that these actions and intentions as an educator have made some difference in my world.

Ways of being, ways of knowing

Since the 1990s there have been calls for greater emphasis on the use of narratives and life stories as aids to deepening meaning making from experiences. Ontologically 'the world

appears differently to different people; its appearance varies with the contextual setting (temporal, geographical, engendered, ideological, cultural and so on) of the observers' and is a 'human construction' created by 'adaptable and malleable creatures' through human interactions (Moses and Knutsen 2012 p. 199). Even by sharing the same event we cannot be sharing the same human experience of that event.

Epistemologically, knowledge about our social world is 'knowledge-in-context; it is socially-situated' and hence is transactional, subjective and politically shaped (Moses and Knutsen 2012 p. 201). It is important then that methodologically tools can be applied that 'can identify these socially constructed patterns in the world, and understand them in the light of the contexts that give them meaning' even if only partial meaning (p. 201). One such approach is interpretivist narrative inquiry and storytelling through auto/biographical methods.

The main criticism to such methods is that they lack the perceived objectivity and reliability expected in the current research culture and climate. However the whole arena of interpretive auto/biography regained a foothold as an important research method (Denzin 1989) and as a 'legitimate field of study, means of communication and orientation toward truth' for trying to understand how humans give meaning to their lives – or 'narrative ways of knowing' (Pinnegar and Daynes 2012). Clandinin (2006) argues that the use of narratives helps us to derive different understandings of people to those that may emerge through the use of more 'objective' methods mainly because this approach accepts the wholeness of the individual including their 'ambiguous, messy, beautiful detail' (p. 134). It is then an appropriate approach for me to take.

Eliciting the autobiographical life story

Autobiography is a form of self-review, self-reflection and personal sense-making and has been described as the ‘quintessential expression of a life review’ and may reveal ‘how that self developed over time’ Clausen (2013 p. 195). In essence it is ‘..... the story a person chooses to tell about the life he or she has lived, told as completely and honestly as possible, what is remembered of it, and what the teller wants others to know of it.....’ (Atkinson 1998 p. 8) and through this process of creating narratives of ourselves we can begin to change who we are becoming (Wortham 2001).

Exploring the process of autobiographical understanding serves to underscore the idea that both the personal past and the self whose past it is are indeed constructions, issuing from the narrative imagination. This is emphatically not to say, however, that these constructions are fictions or illusions or lies: the imagined is not to be equated with the wholly imaginary, and poesis, the act of making meaning, is not to be understood as one in which something is made ex nihilo, out of nothing (Freeman 2007 p. 138).

How is autobiography used?

This method is used for developing insight into how people give meaning to and interpret their life experiences and events. These meanings are likely to be more authentic when given by the person who has had these life experiences and interpreted them within their own context. As we seek meaning from our own experiences it is likely that the process will reveal our stories in a non-linear fashion and often require a number of reiterations going back over events and experiences. They are then unlikely to be complete or whole and frequently open to many interpretations.

Autobiographical memory identifies the recollection by individuals of their past and particularly of specific events (Rubin 1996). Such memories relate to more or less significant events that are determined by the teller to have a value or worth in recalling and telling and hence become the 'stories we live by' (McAdams 1993) and show 'how our lives become stories' (Eakin 1999). Taking a 'life span perspective' viewed chronologically is valuable such that the links between events can be explored to build a whole life story. This is important as '.. autobiographical memory is constantly updated as life progresses the view of the personal past is also reinterpreted and reintegrated driven by age-typical concerns and fueled by significant life events' (Bluck and Habermas 2001; Habermas and Bluck 2000). Clausen (2013) argues for the identification of major 'turning points' along the way. These frequently represent 'circumstances or decisions that led in time to new opportunities or events that would influence their lives' (p. 203-205).

We know that telling life stories is a common activity amongst entrepreneurs. This is how their tacit and personal knowledge is shared (Polyani 1962, 1967). We apply these methods to entrepreneurs (Rae and Carswell 2002) and use the results in our teaching. From my personal experience of applying self-reported life stories with practising entrepreneurs in Wales it is clear that the process illuminates individual self-awareness and understanding and at a profound level. Indeed this is a role we already enact as we work with undergraduate students, postgraduate researchers, institutional managers and leaders, and practising entrepreneurs.

Applying an autobiographical approach

The autobiographer 'writes a novel, a fiction, about a third person', being who he or she was yesterday, last year or one hour ago (Elbaz 1987 p. 12). Clearly the author presents what he or she believes existed or happened and their consequences. Denzin (1989) argues that we need to do away with the distinction between fact and fiction here: 'this writing of a life is constantly being created as it is written and hence the meanings of the pieces change as new patterns are found; real persons with real lives – this feeling, thinking, living, breathing person is the 'real' subject of the biographical method.....suggests that lives have objective factually correct 'truth-like' features - to argue for a factually correct picture of a 'real' person is to ignore how persons are created in texts and other systems of discourse' (p. 23).

Autobiography and self-identity in education and teaching

The use of autobiographical methods to create stories of teachers' lived experiences and to build teacher self-identities is not new and is more widespread in primary and secondary education than in tertiary education (Blake et al. 2001; Ball and Goodson 1985).

One notable example is that written by Palmer and exemplified in his book 'The Courage to Teach' (1998). Another inspired example is by Dr Colin Jones 'A Stone That Gathered Moss: A Tale of Fear and Courage' (2015) and is one of the few published life stories of an entrepreneurship educator. Palmer's compelling axiom is 'We teach who we are' and he argues that 'knowing myself is as crucial to good teaching as knowing my students and my subject When I do not know myself, I cannot know who my students are (and) I cannot know my subject – not at the deepest levels of embodied, personal meaning' (Palmer 1997 p. 15).

For some of us it may be more appropriate to explore ‘we teach who we are (becoming)’ as we discover more about ourselves and our own lives (Barcelos 2013 p. 2). Barcelos suggests that ‘who we are and how we engage with the world (and with teaching) are much stronger predictors of how our students will do than what we know about teaching and techniques’ (p. 2). In reshaping her self-identity and ‘visualising a different self’ Barcelos notes she had become more open and begun to risk and explore more in her teaching, in her classrooms and in her life (p. 5).

I like Palmer’s axiom and this has become a strong mantra in my approach to educating educators. Change should start within and the reimagining of one’s self-identity can become a powerful tool in aligning one’s inner beliefs about who we think we are with what we think we should do and why.

Using the autobiographical approach to unfold my life story

Only I can experience my life and my narrative is my reflection on my personal experiences (McKenna 2007). What appears real to me has meaning for me and influences what I do and think and how I relate and interact with my social world, i.e. it is socially constructed, highly contextualised and a world of my own making. Hence the purpose here is to ‘interpret and understand, not to predict’ and ‘to make sense of one’s work suggests beginning a stance of reflective practice’ (Watson 2001), a crucial step in developing self-awareness and in applying experiential learning (Moon, 1999).

My constructed world that I have given meaning to through self-review and self-reflection is a conglomeration of thoughts, ideas, opinions, perspectives gathered over time. I am a hybrid. Who else can know me better than myself? Others can give meaning to my life experiences and interpret these differently to me and create their own ‘truth’ about who I am. Each

individual undertaking this task would offer a different interpretation of the meaning of the same events and experiences in my life. Additionally, in recalling from memory past events and experiences, my own neural networks will reconnect in a unique way to recreate these. My mind is not a set of storage boxes that accurately and precisely capture in real time and preserve for life each individual moment of my life.

This is my story of becoming and being an entrepreneurial entrepreneurship educator. It is then longitudinal, time-bound and emphasises specific stages that have influenced the next phase of my journey. It is highly personal and full of human hopes, fears, joys and disappointments. On reflection there does appear to be a path I have been following even if at times it has not always been obvious. In contrast looking forward the next phase is rarely visible. There are some life events that have stopped me on my journey and required me to take an alternate route, or have over time gradually shifted me from one type of path to another – referred to as ‘turning points’ (Clausen 2013). Each experience is a learning opportunity and I try to offer a critical viewpoint that can help draw out broader learnings to share with the wider community.

My fear is that the reading of this article will be interpreted as self-indulgent and self-aggrandisement. It is not intended this way. I can only focus on what I write here as the author although it is impossible not to consider who the reader might be and hence I am already filtering, consciously and unconsciously, what is appropriate, relevant, meaningful and valuable to tell.

Context

This article is firmly focused on the ‘educator’ rather than the ‘education’ or the educatee.

Before proceeding further I would like to illuminate what this term ‘educator’ means to me. I

have for some time had a strong personal preference for the term educator and I have always described this term to mean ‘someone who helps others to learn’. This then is more inclusive and opens up the possibilities for all of us to be educators at different stages in our lives whether knowingly or not – as parents, as partners, as colleagues, as close friends, as lovers, as managers and leaders, as authors and presenters, and of course in recognised roles as professional facilitators, coaches, mentors, counsellors, consultants, advisers and yes, teachers – all roles in which I have had experiences. I am firmly focused on the act of learning and how to help others to learn rather than that of teaching, a distinction that often appears lost.

In higher education typically we continue to maintain and indeed reinforce our role as teachers in our practices, in how we perform in our classrooms, how we layout the spaces that enable us to perform in this role and the way we engage and communicate with our students. So many lecture theatres have performance areas that reflect the term used for this space in higher education – a theatre – with a performance area and audience seating. How do these artefacts help us to engage, enthuse and challenge our students in investing in their learning and personal development at a deep and emotional level?

I am making huge generalisations here. There is tremendous creative and innovative practice demonstrated across the globe by a diverse array of educators but from my personal experience I sense that this still remains on the peripheries rather than being mainstream, despite our collective efforts to develop educators with different mindsets, behaviours and relevant toolkits¹.

In June 2000 I launched the inaugural meeting of the UK Entrepreneurship Educators Forum to attempt to address these challenges through creating a peer community. Later, in my role

¹ Several UK and European have focused on the development of a community of entrepreneurship educators, see for example IEEP, 3EP and Conneect.

with the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship in 2006 launched the first International Entrepreneurship Educators Conference (IEEC) in partnership with the Kauffman Foundation and Enterprise Educators UK, and with colleagues such as Prof Allan Gibb and Prof Alison Price launched the International Entrepreneurship Educators Programme (IEEP) both of which are still running annually in the UK.

My life story in brief

Early beginnings

Home life as a young boy was typical for someone growing up during the 1950s in post-war Britain. I am a baby-boomer with a younger brother doing what many kids of my generation would have been doing after school – playing outside, riding bikes, games, inventing magical worlds and role playing – being someone else. No TV, no laptop, no tablet, and no mobile phone. My upbringing was deeply rooted in what I believe would have been a typical working-class environment embedded within a strong Western culture rooted in the politics and social values of the time. My father was a staunch socialist and my mother conservative/liberal. My mother was from Wales and my father's family hailed from Ireland.

Like most other parents they had high aspirations and expectations for their children. Neither had experienced higher education yet they strongly believed in its importance for 'getting on in life'. My mother was a nurse in the Accident & Emergency Department in the local hospital. My father was a carpet weaver making Axminster and Wilton carpets sold across the globe. We were brought up in a council house on a new estate where my parents remained for the rest of their lives. To them a better life for me and my brother meant achieving home ownership, strong family life, secure employment through a respected career and societal status.

After attending my local primary school I entered the local grammar school. This immediately set me on a more academic orientation to my younger brother. Career advice at the school directed me towards Civil Engineering building on my strengths in mathematics and physics, although my passion was for playing piano, clarinet and cornet in the Army Cadet Force brass band! My parents visualised me becoming a respected professional and a valued citizen of the world, a prospect that excited them. Without question I was expected to go to University. Towards the end of my time at school I was engaging with the counter-culture of the late 1960s. I was growing my hair long resulting in being thrown out of lessons. I definitely had no ambition to become a teacher.

The teenage years

Getting to University was not as straightforward as my parents would have hoped. Seeking to explore life more fully resulted in other 'distractions' hindering progress. Creative expression, musical endeavours and first love seemed to be more exciting than attending to exam revision. I was a teenager throughout the decade of peace and love when world views and values were changing radically. I was now a hippy and permanently grew my hair long, wore alternative clothes and became more aware of my own place in the world. This was a difficult period for my parents which was amplified when I failed to meet the entry requirements for University.

Ironically, it was my first love that came to the rescue. Her father was being moved to a new company role a hundred miles away and the whole family were going. This motivated me to find a way to be there. I did this by applying for a 2-year programme at a local Polytechnic (now a University) which would give me the necessary entry requirements for University. So in the late 1960s I left home as a student, got a bedsit, an old car and began to live a more

authentic life. With no disposal income more time was spent with my girlfriend's Persian and Indian parents. This was my first opportunity to understand a completely different culture, values, food and music.

My course was in 'building structures'. I could learn to make a tangible difference in the world through acquiring a useful blend of theoretical and practical knowledge. The learning experience was more student-centric to which I responded well achieving numerous distinctions and credits. I was now going to University.

The enterprising student

In the early 1970s I was able to study Civil Engineering at University. I was already a different person, more open to new ideas and curious about my place in the world. I was excited by exposure to so many cultures, experiences and opportunities and the freedom to make personal choices.

Four years later by the time of my graduation I had explored politics, activism, philosophy, social policy, globalisation, musical performance, cultural differences through an interaction with people inside and outside the university campus. I had entered new worlds, engaged in new experiences and grasped new opportunities.

I had also discovered the excitement and challenge of becoming entrepreneurial as a student.

I was lucky to share a student house with others who shared similar beliefs. The students from London created an opportunity to bring to Wales food items that were not readily available locally but were in demand by the international and domestic students seeking alternatives to the supermarkets of the day. After taking a year out from my studies to help an old school friend through a mental breakdown I returned for my final year. I struggled to pick

up where I left off and was now with a group of strangers who had already been together on the course for the previous two years.

This was the time to consider my future – as a civil engineer or graduate entrepreneur. I now looked at the civil engineering industry in a new light and although I still recognised its importance the choice for me was obvious. So with fellow students a new venture idea was born. Fortunately the university created the opportunity to market test our ideas at a monthly student marketplace. This provided much confidence and hope.

My early life gave no indication of what was to come for me and could not have prepared me for this. My parents were not entrepreneurial nor enterprising. My father was in and out of work in his later life as the carpet manufacturing town where we lived collapsed through the onslaught of cheaper imports. My mother continued to follow her vocation in nursing.

When I first told them I was setting up a food business with fellow students they were horrified and angry with me for giving up my years of education and throwing away the sacrifice they had made in getting me through. I greatly appreciated their support and realised there was a lack of understanding of what was happening in my life. How could becoming an entrepreneur not be seen as an alternative ‘career’ for me? But I was passionate about what I was doing. I persevered and eventually this viewpoint transformed when the business became a limited company and I became a company director. This was then a moment of pride for my parents.

It was this next ten years experiences that provided me with the foundation that became the driver for the life journey ahead and the emergence of my role as an entrepreneurship educator.

The graduate entrepreneur

In the UK in the late 1970s the organic food movement was beginning to grow. Demand appeared to be increasing and so it was the right time to act. With two fellow students we hired a small corner shop in the student quarter, bought some stock from London and opened our doors – and waited. It was not long before the news spread by word of mouth and simple advertising brought growing numbers of customers to our store.

Through this period I experienced the creation of a new venture with colleagues, opening up retail outlets and small warehousing facilities, growing a new business, surviving fast growth and just avoiding failure, experimenting with different legal formats and decision-making models, and recognising there is a time to exit (even when it's hard to let go). This was a challenging, exciting and unpredictable time for us all with fantastic highs and extreme lows on a regular basis. All was part of the process of learning to become entrepreneurial, taking risks, accepting the consequences of your actions, learning from failure, picking yourself up and trying again, persevering and importantly understanding that this is not a job but a way of life.

The public-sector entrepreneur

After agreeing to part company with my co-founders and leaving the business in the late 1980s I was offered the opportunity to act as a volunteer with a local development agency that supported others seeking to start a new venture. Through this activity it was suggested I apply for a business development post with a local authority. I did and was given the post – because my small business experience was seen as highly relevant and was a gap with the other interviewees who mainly represented the corporate world.

Although working in local government was difficult for me (culture, administration, bureaucracy) I soon realised that I had an opportunity to apply my entrepreneurial skills and experiences to help others through providing enterprise support services (counselling, training, advice, access to finance and expertise) and workshop space in the local area. This exposed me to many individuals and organisations in the local and national ecosystem.

I began to realise that those ten unique years as a graduate entrepreneur had provided me with highly valuable hands-on insights. Furthermore, it offered credibility to my role when faced with individuals going through similar pains and challenges. I could be more empathetic with my clients.

The triple-helix entrepreneur

After a couple of years this led to becoming the first CEO for a new enterprise company as a public-private sector partnership – a sort of early localised form of what we would now call a ‘triple helix’ model (Etzkowitz 2008). I was back to setting up and running a small business – but not one that was entirely within my control! The company was governed by a board made up of local government representatives, national development agencies, industry leaders, local entrepreneurs and business support and training providers and was chaired by the owner of a local family construction company. I quickly learnt the importance of negotiation, persuasion and influence as this was a political and sometimes highly charged arena. I was spanning the boundary between developing and displaying entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills contingent on the context within which I was operating.

This opportunity placed me in the position to be a new type of entrepreneur. Not one that created wealth for business or personal gain but one that sought opportunities, took risks, secured resources, built partnerships in order to make a tangible difference to the lives of

individuals in local communities that were motivated to improve their futures or seeking ways to get out of a deprived or disadvantaged life. The company operated across two distinct environments – a heavy coal mining area in decline and a highly rural area with few employment opportunities for young people.

I had now become a strong believer in the importance of self-development and through participation in professional development opportunities offered through the Small Business Centre at Durham University I now find myself with the opportunity to re-enter academia as a senior tutor.

The academic entrepreneur – part I

In 1990 I was invited to join Durham University Small Business Centre – a world renowned creator and innovator of enterprise and entrepreneurship learning and support initiatives, led by Prof. Allan Gibb. My previous visits always excited and stimulated me but now I was nervous. I had only ever experienced academia as a student. Now I was on the ‘other side’. What did I know about academia and its culture and practices? What would this experience be like? How would I get on professionally, personally? How would I fit alongside renowned professors and staff? Michael Scott, Tom Cannon, Tim Atterton, Dinah Bennett, Ted Fuller, David Kirby, Phil Vale were among some of key influencers at the Centre. Others such as Andrew Atherton and Leigh Sear joined me on the journey.

Because I had got to know the academic leaders through prior visits I had no hesitation in taking this risk, packing up my role as a CEO and moving with my young family from South Wales to the North East of England. We were starting a challenging and unpredictable new adventure.

For the following ten years I co-designed and co-developed and supported with colleagues the delivery of a portfolio of programmes specifically for entrepreneurs and business owners at all stages of the lifecycle development – working for myself, starting up, survival, growth, innovation, board development. I led national training programmes for business advisers and counsellors and supported international programmes for training enterprise trainers. ‘On Board’ an innovative approach to developing the directors and owners of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) won a national government Ministry award for best practice.

I built strong networks across Europe and beyond, getting the opportunity to engage with leading academics David Storey, Colin Gray, Monder Ram, Rob Blackburn, Bob Bennett, Harry Matlay in the UK and many more across Scandinavia, Eastern Europe and Ireland. I joined and later became the president of the Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ISBE), the UK’s largest charity for small business, where I was able to help shape and re-structure the institute to ensure entrepreneurship education policy and practice became a core pillar of its future work.

This period offered new experiences and new challenges – how to design training programmes that work; how to make sense of life’s experiences and use this to create models of development and learning; how to capture and write and share; how to build relationships with national and international stakeholders; how to secure funding to support new development; and many more learning opportunities.

I rarely worked with traditional students from the university and saw more of the world than at any other part of my life. Visits to the USA and links to Babson College exposed me to some of the ‘giants’ of the field such as Bob Brockhaus, Bill Bygrave, Gerald Hills, Jeffrey Timmons, Karl Vesper and others. Being able to engage in meaningful dialogue helped me to

learn about the subject from thought leaders and to gain insights into who these people are as educators.

This is also the time of my life that I experience fatherhood and had a unique opportunity to circumnavigate the globe with the whole family whilst taking up a Visiting Senior Research Fellow position in Western Australia for four months. This whole period taught me much and forever changed my thinking about my work, about myself. It helped me recognise the power and importance of role models and strong networks, of spending time with challenging thinkers and innovators, of making sense of experiences to conceptually and strategically enhance future actions. This period was my first formalised role as an educator in education.

The quasi-government entrepreneur

After experiences at a couple of other UK universities I was asked by the British Government to join a new organisation – the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship led by Ian Robertson. Its purpose was to stimulate more entrepreneurship across the whole UK university sector. Initially joining as Director of Research and Education and later being appointed CEO, the organisation created national programmes for students, for educators, for the growing community of practitioners, creating national awards and later offering a programme for university leaders with Universities UK and Saïd Business School, Oxford University. Building close links with the Kauffman Foundation in the US, in particular Judith Cone, provided scholarship opportunities for our young graduate entrepreneurs and US study tours for our entrepreneurship educators.

In this role I learnt quickly the importance of supporting enterprise and entrepreneurship educators in higher education. It was clear that the students attending our national start-up programmes needed to return to a learning environment that enhanced and further developed

their hopes and aspirations. This led to designing and delivering a national entrepreneurship educators programme which was later delivered across Europe working with and learning from colleagues across Finland, Denmark, Croatia, Wales and Ireland and being inspired by innovative role models such as Kaospilots in Denmark. Its legacy remains and efforts to build other European projects to establish a global programme for educators continue.

This work led to the need for action to build evidence of the state of entrepreneurship education across the UK higher education sector and to track this annually to illuminate the changing landscape. Working with Dr. Luke Pittaway an initial survey instrument was established and data collected to produce annual reports for UK national and regional Government and the sector; with Tom Cooney across Ireland and later with Dr. David Rae.

It was not long before a similar recognition materialised that the educators being inspired through national development programmes were returning to institutions that often struggled to understand the need for becoming a more entrepreneurial university. This led to the design and delivery of the Entrepreneurial University Leaders Programme (EULP), led by Prof Allan Gibb with Gay Haskins from Saïd Business School and Prof Paul Coyle, and supported by Universities UK, a programme that still continues through the National Centre for Entrepreneurship in Education (NCEE, formerly NCGE).

During this period I developed relationships with the European Commission through the Industry-University Forum. Working closely with Peter Baur and European experts this led to the development a guiding framework to support universities to assess how they could improve their entrepreneurial and innovative potential. This was the seed for the creation of HEInnovate an online self-assessment tool. Nearly 1000 universities have already registered to use this tool and the OECD are now using it as a framework for conducting their country reviews.

The academic entrepreneur – part II

In 2013 I decided to return to Wales and Swansea University where my entrepreneurial life journey was originally sparked. I wanted to support my institution on its own entrepreneurial journey. Here I lead the Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership (IfEL) and until 2017 was Director of ION Leadership a new leadership development programme for SMEs in Wales helping them to grow and contribute to the Welsh economy. Previously I had been Director of LEAD Wales, a highly successful SME development programme that added £52M to the Welsh economy and supported the creation of nearly 2,500 new jobs (Hannon et al. 2016). Now through the Business Wales Strategic Board I continue to support national policy and strategy development at the Welsh Government. My continuing relationship with the Malaysian Government, particularly Dr. Syahira Hamidon, has recently led to the delivery of a new entrepreneurial leaders programme for staff across the Malaysian higher education sector to encourage a more entrepreneurial approach in their roles.

Reflections on becoming an entrepreneurial educator of entrepreneurship

Looking in the mirror there is sense to this life journey and the hint of a pathway even when looking forward there is no clear visible path ahead. The journey has been interrupted through unexpected opportunities at key stages. For example, leaving a secure post in South Wales to re-enter academia and take up an opportunity in Durham University as a Senior Tutor; leaving my University role as a professor to join a new unknown national government-funded organisation. These junctions have always led me along a new path of discovery

because I had the courage, or the naivety, to grasp the unknown, enter a new world and open up exciting and challenging choices.

I am then the entrepreneurship educator that I am because of my life experiences and each experience continues to shape who I am becoming as an educator.

.... we teach who we are. Teaching, like any truly human activity, emerges from one's inwardness, for better or for worse..... teaching holds a mirror to the soul. If I am willing to look in that mirror and not run from what I see, I have a chance to gain self-knowledge – and knowing myself is as crucial to good teaching as knowing my students and my subject (Palmer 1998 p. 2).

This text illustrates why I needed to write two articles – ‘Philosophies of entrepreneurship education’ in 2005 and ‘Teaching pigeons to dance’ in 2006. This was the opening up of my continuing journey of self-discovery and it took several years of teaching at Durham University before I realised that this is what I really needed to do.

The first paper was a result of needing to know where what I do fits within the discipline of education. I am an educator lacking formal training in education which is not unusual across the community. I am also a practising educator seeking meaning to underpin, at a deep level, my inner beliefs about how I should educate and more importantly why.

In the second paper I was seeking to understand my role as an educator in higher education as aligned with key educational philosophies and what this meant for me in terms of my purpose and my approaches across different contexts. Although the writing of these papers was challenging the process was invaluable in helping me to gain insights about who I am as an educator and was a fundamental part of my ‘becoming’.

Learning to become

Coming into higher education from the ‘outside’ – as an entrepreneur, a business adviser, an enterprise trainer, a CEO – required me to learn on-the-job and by-doing. I was imitating observed ‘good’ practice as performed by colleagues as one way to learn how to ‘become’ – vicariously. It would also ensure I could fit within the accepted teaching practices and norms of the organisation.

Those early observations showed me how to take a group of learners on a journey of discovery, an adventure, a stimulating ride. This increased my self-confidence to experiment with andragogic approaches, to rely more on my own wits, my empathy with the learner and my focus on being learner-driven as the starting point. I began to recognise the value of guiding frameworks, schemata, visual models and the need for a new language that enabled me to communicate with my peers.

I understood that the educator is like an actor able to hold the attention of an audience through storytelling and a commanding performance (Sarason 1999). This ‘performance’ is the craft of the educator. In the future I was fortunate to work with those who use drama with educators as an andragogic approach for discovering their own ‘inner’ performance potential².

My PhD fieldwork enabled me to explore more rigorously what is learnt from whom between small firm owner-managers and their key stakeholders – without a teacher in sight; something I had experienced in previous roles. We constantly learn from each other, often

² Working with Prof Allan Gibb at Durham University exposed me to a wide range of pedagogic approaches including the use of drama with entrepreneurship educators as part of the International Entrepreneurship Educators Programme (IEEP)

unconsciously, frequently vicariously and through storytelling. This furthered my belief in the value of the term educator - a much more pluralistic and inclusive concept.

Patterns of self-identity

On reflection of my life experiences I can begin to identify broad patterns in my journey of becoming that have been important in shaping me as an entrepreneurship educator:

1. Self-discovery:

- the processes of finding my life passion and becoming increasingly self-aware of who I am. I am the combination of all my previous experiences (good and bad), of all the people I have met and worked with and who have shared my journey. This 'becoming of me' makes me realise that there is a bit of all of this in me – my thinking, my beliefs, my behaviours, my hopes and fears. This has made me the educator that I am and as I meet new people in Wales I am being further shaped into the educator I am yet to become.

2. Building foundations of experience:

- the above has grown out of a diversity of opportunities in my life - becoming a graduate entrepreneur; starting, growing, exiting a small business; helping others with their entrepreneurial aspirations; my roles as a local government officer, as CEO of a local enterprise company; through incubator management training at a national level; and many other professional and personal opportunities. Such diversity has enabled me to take an empathetic approach across many contexts and to bridge a variety of worlds – entrepreneurial, government, business, charity, academia, international.

3. Engaging with education:

- relating this foundation to the formalised world of education – initially becoming a senior tutor supporting programme delivery; then programme design and recruitment; as a head of unit managing a portfolio of services and a small team. This provided the opportunity to explore and begin to understand conceptually and educationally what is entrepreneurial learning (and giving meaning to my own extensive experiences to better help other entrepreneurs) and what is an educator (trying to understand my purpose and role – a new self-identity in a new context); experimenting with the value in co-design and co-delivery of educational programmes

4. Capturing my learning:

- trying to make sense of my world – metacognition and critical reflection; sharing my thoughts, ideas and findings with others; articulating this through writing and publishing academic articles (another new role and skill) and a broad spectrum of media channels – newspaper columns, newsletters, magazines, monologues – through non-academic events and shows; the value of co-authorship and working with others in a critical and developmental partnership. Each one is an opportunity for reflection, review and sense-making.

5. Creating communities of practice and stakeholder partnerships:

placing an emphasis on human capital development to build community and institutional capacity and capability e.g.

- with incubator managers to improve incubation processes and outcomes;
- with educators to improve education practices and outcomes;
- with trainers, advisers and counsellors to improve their empathetic relationship building;

- with entrepreneurs to improve their peer learning and business growth potential;
- with academic staff to improve their andragogic practices;
- with institutional managers/leaders to improve enabling environments and cultures;
- with government agencies to enhance insight and understanding.

6. Making a difference:

- taking on a national role creates a unique opportunity to positively affect change and have an impact working across an entire sector, in this case higher education in the UK; this also carries with it immense responsibility and emphasises the importance of meaningful and value-adding stakeholder partnerships; it creates opportunities to scale up research and provide the sector with national data that provide unique overviews about the state of entrepreneurship education in the UK over time.

7. Back to my roots:

- coming back to Wales is coming home in many ways – its back to my maternal genealogical roots; its where my entrepreneurial spark was ignited; its where my journey as a graduate entrepreneur began; its where my first experience of local government happened and where I had my first experience of being CEO of a private-public sector partnership; its where I ‘cut my teeth’ on designing, developing and delivering support services to others seeking to enhance their entrepreneurial lives. This place gave me the platform from which the rest of my life journey emerged. There is a great sense of pride and hope in being able to once again experience the university from a different perspective and support the institution’s ambitions to becoming a more entrepreneurial place for students, staff and stakeholders.

Framing meaning to understand becoming

In my presentation for the Award at Lund University in 2016 I applied a sense-making framework to my life story to illustrate my becoming as an entrepreneurship educator. The approach is shown below in Figure One. The model implies a linear development. The reality is one of a highly iterative process. The purpose is to propose key aspects that have shaped my 'becoming' and so attempt to better understand my process of growth and development.

INSERT FIGURE ONE AROUND HERE

The seed from which I create the opportunity for growth and development is multiple experiences across diverse contexts. This provides me with a rich 'soup' to feed on, for example: as a student becoming a graduate entrepreneur; starting a new venture with fellow graduates in a non-existent market sector; living an entrepreneurial life full of risk and uncertainty; building empathy with diverse stakeholders from governments to charities; how to be (or not) entrepreneurial in public sector organisations; creating new partnerships that can add value; leading local and national organisations with competing/conflicting and multiple stakeholder demands and pressures.

My diverse experiences are simply that – experiences, sometimes joyous, sometimes not. Without applying reflection I am not learning from my experiences and developing insights of me – my thinking, actions, responses to crises and opportunities. Being critically reflective is challenging and I have not always found this easy to do – I am still learning. Students are

now expected to self-reflect. This requires much support and training to give them – and their lecturers – the skills to do this well (Berglund and Verduyn 2018).

Through self-reflection I can then begin to explore and give meaning to my experiences that enables me to develop as a human, in terms of self-discovery, and as an educator to improve my craft - educating. I then feel I have the confidence and capability to capture and share my learning with others with the hope that this may add some value to someone from which I too will learn. I have done this through writing, speaking, leading workshops and creating forums, networks and communities of practice – mainly for entrepreneurship educators but also for the support community. I have attempted to build connections across government, industry and academia with differing levels of success.

By engaging fully in sharing across diverse communities, locally and globally, I have had opportunities to take a leading role as an entrepreneurship educator. This has enabled me to become involved in creating new or innovative approaches and build opportunities or mechanisms through which I then have new experiences that enable the whole process of reflection and meaning-making to begin again.

I am aware that this process is highly iterative in nature, not a smooth trouble-free process and easier to present in hindsight. It is offered here as a ‘way of seeing’ and ‘becoming’ as an entrepreneurship educator. It is often challenging and moving forward often requires a personal step-change in thinking and understanding, in self-belief, in emotional strength and in opportunity. These are stimulated through new experiences, new networks, new relationships, new mentors, new thought-provoking challenges, new appetites for risk and experimentation, new cultural experiences, new visions of future possibilities. They are also stimulated by failures, negative feedback, difficult and challenging environments, poor performances.

How has this helped me to develop as an entrepreneurial educator?

I can now see that it is then critically important to create the environments that can expose students at an early age to new /different ideas and ways of seeing and learning about the world around them; of developing self-confidence and self-belief; of self-discovery and personal identity and values; opportunities to experiment with seeking real-time needs and challenges and executing solutions that can meet these needs; to take risks, fail and learn; to manage self-emotion and respond affectively to others' emotions; to finding ways to help others to become better reflectors and learners. This applies equally to entrepreneurship educators.

Such a sense making framework as the one described above enables me to both engage in backward reflection and explore a forward pathway. As an educator I regularly emphasise the importance of self-reflection to our learners and I recognise that I need to be highly proficient in this if I am to develop as an entrepreneurial educator – experimenting, failing, leading, growing.

If multiple experiences are the catalyst for learning, growing and leading it is critical to explore how to enhance opportunities for an educator. In the past I have taken UK educators to China, the USA and across Europe as one way of increasing insights. Taking different roles with diverse organisations has helped me to see from differing perspectives how to support others to learn and develop both inside and outside of academia.

What we do and who we are is highly contextualised. We not only need to become role models for our students and practice what we preach but equally we need to be able to thrive in a highly unpredictable and uncertain institutional environment. For many tertiary

institutions becoming more entrepreneurial presents challenges for staff including educators. This is our context and one that we need to understand and fully embrace.

Being an educator within an emerging entrepreneurial environment

More universities across the globe are seeking to become more entrepreneurial both as organisations and as places for supporting entrepreneurship development (Gibb 2012; Gibb et al. 2012; Coyle et al. 2013; Hannon 2013). The drive for encouraging universities to think and behave more entrepreneurially is now embedded in national policies across Europe and Asia and elsewhere and has led to the development of frameworks to support institutional leaders to take this agenda forward. For example, the European Commission and OECD collaborated to create 'HEInnovate', a free online tool to guide institutions to better understand those areas in which they can improve (see www.heinnovate.eu).

Often this conceptualisation has provided a corporate perspective, a business mind-set and profit motive as the overarching model of entrepreneurship, i.e. that business = entrepreneurship and explains why for at least two decades most provision of entrepreneurship education in UK universities was through business and management schools (see NCEE national surveys, 2010, 2012 available from ncee.co.uk). If our goal is to build a more entrepreneurial society and culture then this approach is too narrow (Gibb 1993). Being and becoming entrepreneurial is important for all graduates seeking to make their mark in a world full of uncertainty and unpredictability (Hannon 2013). Indeed more employers are also now recognising the value in recruiting graduates who have demonstrated an entrepreneurial flair and spirit during their education.

As educators we are so influential on the thinking, values and self-beliefs of our young students. We shape their future aspirations, hopes and fears. It is the fears that create the

doubts and stop individuals from having a go and failing. In education failure must always be avoided at all costs!

Our behaviors and attitudes are shaped by the paradigms we know, believe in, or have directly experienced. In essence, our paradigms are the way we see, perceive, or understand the world around us. For example, my accumulated knowledge and experience in relation to learning environments – my paradigm or, more accurately, collection of paradigms – informs part of my view of myself as an adult educator, explains in part why I embrace the educational approaches that I use, and serves in part as the basis of my advocacy of the cause of improving our learning environments (Hiemstra 1991).

This means placing ourselves firmly within an education context and understanding the intersection of the two worlds of education and entrepreneurship, a point made earlier by Bechard and Gregoire (2005). Johannisson (2015) refers to this as being ‘bilingual’.

When we begin to explore becoming or being an effective entrepreneurship teacher aren't we simply seeking to become a really good teacher irrelevant to what we teach? And what do we think or believe is ‘really good teaching’? Or is there something else to entrepreneurship education that makes us distinct from other disciplinary areas? Is being an effective entrepreneurship educator the same as being an effective educator in any discipline and supporting emergent graduate doctors, engineers or historians? Or is there something different/unique about our purpose?

One key difference is to do with whether we believe we are teaching an academic subject, i.e. entrepreneurship; seeking to develop a different type of graduate, i.e. a graduate with entrepreneurial capabilities to be applied across a diversity of life and career opportunities; or developing a graduate entrepreneur that aspires and acts toward the creation and development

of new ventures and organisations. For me being entrepreneurial is not simply an academic subject or a job, it is a way of life, an attitude, a state of mind, a state of being.

Entrepreneurial capacities have the potential to be learnt through the medium of any teaching subject. Thus we need to have clarity about our purpose – why are we doing this – and what outcome is being sought for the learners. And we don't all have to be the same! How to become more entrepreneurial, or enterprising, can be learnt and hence can be achieved through a wide array of subject areas across an institutional campus and beyond.

This is likely to be more effective when the educator can bring into their learning their own experiences of being entrepreneurial and act as an inspiring role model to others. So perhaps what I am really appealing for is the development and support of a community of entrepreneurial educators including entrepreneurial entrepreneurship educators. As educators this could pose challenges such as:

- Being 'bilingual' (Johannisson 2015) and understanding the education context and underpinning knowledge base of teaching and learning
- Engaging with other disciplines in co-designing, co-delivering and collaboratively researching what we do, why, how, when, where, with whom
- Being more innovative and creative in experimenting with andragogic approaches – experimenting means setting something up and testing it to see what happens as a result – this is not the same as being creative with introducing novel or new-to-me methods within a programme – indeed what we believe is novel very often is not! (Lackeus 2015)
- Having a clear vision and purpose. If we want all our graduates to be entrepreneurial when they leave us then we need to focus on achieving whatever learning outcomes are necessary for us to be able to identify the graduates as being entrepreneurial – this is embedded in every programme no matter what the subject

- Embracing diversity as a community of practice
- The above challenges us as educators (as well as our students) to be critical, reflective, self-aware, effective learners and role models for others
- Becoming entrepreneurial leaders within our own organisations

As a community are we really emphasising the need for educators to become more entrepreneurial in their approach to education – both in the sense of a leadership role and in a response to coping with the uncertain and unpredictable environment of education especially if this likely to be increasing. Entrepreneurship educators need to become *entrepreneurial* entrepreneurship educators – acting as role models, practicing what they preach, if we are to gain credibility and respect with our learners. Where are we showing that we seize opportunities, take risks, manage failure, thrive on uncertainty and unpredictability, acquire diverse resources and perpetually learn through critical self-reflection and growing self-awareness?

Educators as entrepreneurial leaders?

In his 2013 paper Alain Fayolle posed key questions:

- What does entrepreneurship education mean?
- What does education mean in the context of entrepreneurship?
- What are the respective roles of educators and participants?

Considering the development of the educator as an essential agent in the education process I am asking related but different philosophical questions:

- What does being an entrepreneurship educator mean?

- What does being an educator mean in the broader context of an entrepreneurial ecosystem?
- What are the respective roles of entrepreneurship educators, other educators, institutional managers and ecosystem stakeholders?
- What does it mean to be an entrepreneurial leader as an educator?

These have been and are important questions for me along my journey to becoming/being an entrepreneurial leader as an entrepreneurship educator. I hope that in this paper I have been able to illustrate how, through my own life journey, the entrepreneurial educator and education leader can emerge. In my case this is serendipitous, organic, and opportunistic and has been more about the journey's experience than any specific or planned destination and probably mirror's Sarasvathy's theory of effectuation (2001) that emphasises the importance of knowing yourself, what you have, who you know and what step you next take, to then have the self-belief to take that step and learn from the experience no matter the outcome.

I have further considered what this means for educator development across the community.

There have been and are a number of entrepreneurship educator development programmes at local, national, European and international levels. These have inspired and developed existing scholars in challenging their thinking, boosting their confidence, enhancing their practice and providing insights into the practical use of a diversity of tools. Neck and Corbett (2018) report the strongly expressed need for further educator development:

Having a professional trained educator is key and virtually none of our colleagues have that training..... If you want learning to be constructivistic, it is no place for amateurs..... Either we commit to significant professional training so we can deliver truly experiential ('progressive') learning or else we fool the students and ourselves OR we go back to more behavioristic learning tools. (p. 25)

Neal Thornberry, a former associate professor at Babson College, USA, proposes that we all need to 'lead like entrepreneurs' (Thornberry 2007). This is irrespective of one's job title or position in the organisation's hierarchy. His model usefully proposes four types of entrepreneurial leader based upon their internal/external orientation, and their preference for being an activist or a catalyst in the organisation. Activists take a lead role as 'lead entrepreneurs themselves' whereas catalysts orientate toward stimulating 'the entrepreneurial actions and energies of others' (p. 59). Both activists and catalysts can focus their drive and energy internally within the organisation or externally across the whole enterprise or in the broader ecosystem.

I believe this framework can be usefully applied to ourselves as a community of entrepreneurship educators in becoming entrepreneurial educators as leaders in our organisations; leaders in seeking insights, in change, in development, in andragogic innovation, in engagement with stakeholders, in creating new opportunities for entrepreneurial learning, in new ways of thinking about who we are, what we do, how we do it, and who with.

What is evident is the need for entrepreneurship educators to become more entrepreneurial as individuals within their organisations and be leaders in their team or Centre or Faculty. This is no different to any other educator facing a challenging and changing environment. This implies rethinking the way that novice entrepreneurship educators are trained and prepared for life in an academic context and for experienced educators how they develop their capacity for becoming better entrepreneurial leaders shaping and influencing the future for entrepreneurship education in higher education.

This is not new thinking. For at least a decade and more writers have been discussing the need for entrepreneurial leadership and new types of educators including the entrepreneurial

educator. Here I am seeking to reinforce such thinking and to encourage more action. Further I am suggesting that the notion of the entrepreneurial leader is relevant to and important for the future of entrepreneurship educators and the future of entrepreneurship education in higher education. I am further suggesting that it is important for all educators in higher education if we are to stimulate the mindsets of our students and act as valued role models for encouraging the development of entrepreneurial leader behaviours: from entrepreneurship educators to entrepreneurial entrepreneurship educators to entrepreneurial educators as leaders.

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader” John Quincy Adams (1767-1848), 6th American President.

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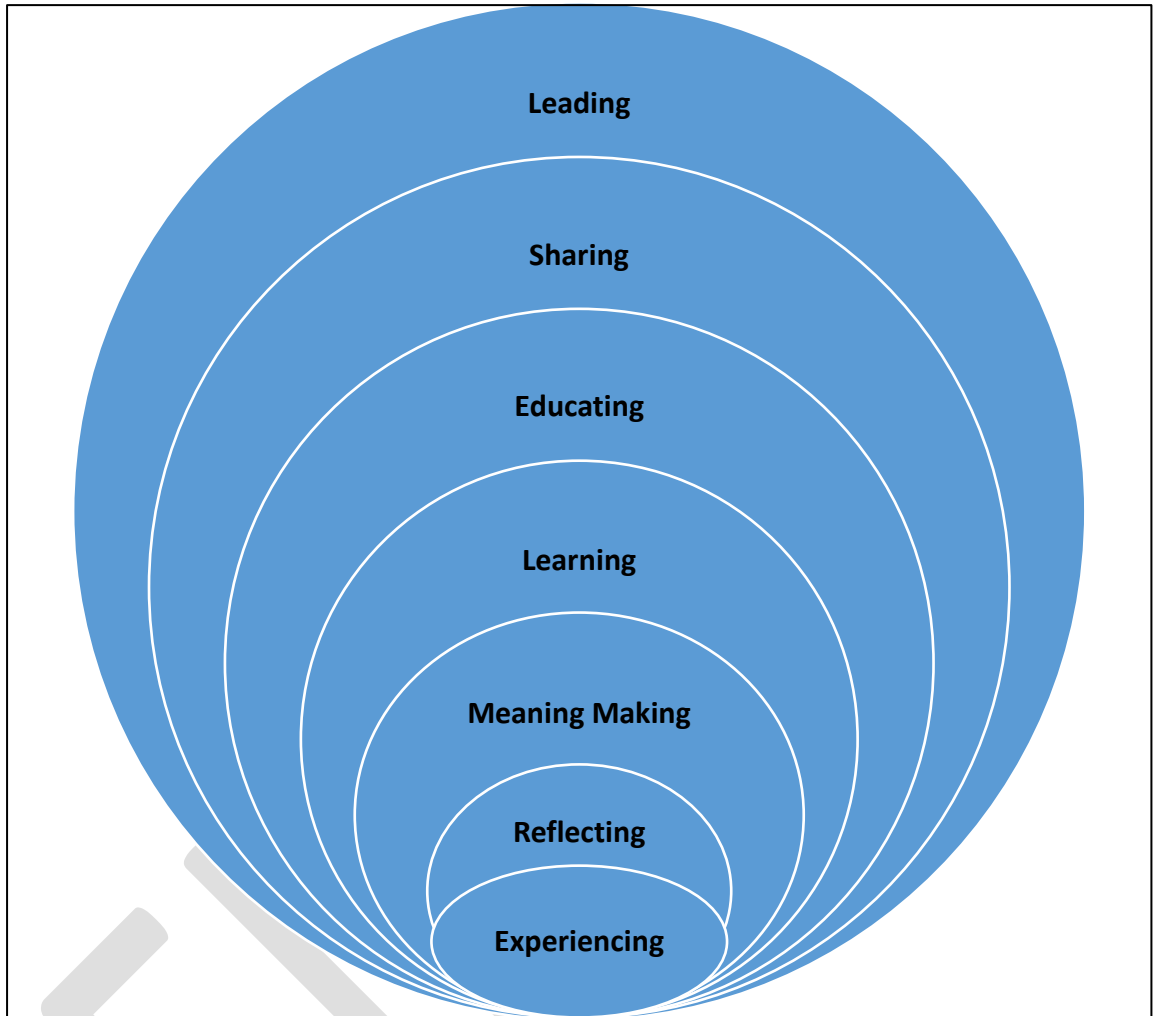


Fig. One: A Sense-making Framework