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Joe Pacitti: 'Paying forward' philosophy is a win-win situation for us all

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Of course, the benefits are there as we all know – much research has shown that these acts of kindness make us feel good. I believe that this is a truly acceptable act of selfishness, and if we all practised it more then we can make a difference to our community and our world.

Studies suggest that this can have positive effects on our home lives, social lives and work lives. Increasingly with modern life there is significant overlap between all three and the lines between can be a little blurred.

This may mean that if we at least pick one of these themes it could be easier to adopt and improve our capacity to help, knowing that it will have wider benefits across all three areas.

Paying forward in our home and social lives maybe should be a natural and fundamentally human thing to do. But I wonder if the discipline and behaviour of doing so may be harder for people to do, or what may be more likely is that it feels awkward or a little preachy if it is talked about!

So, what if we just chose to engage in open sharing and paying forward in our work life, developing more approaches and devoting a little more time to ensure that we go out of our way to help out our own work colleagues, our customers, suppliers and wider partners? What if sharing small nuggets of good ideas and best practice, or helping people avoid the pitfalls you have encountered were all done openly and embracing the paying forward philosophy?

If this was the ecosystem we operated in then there will no doubt that all who participated would receive the gifts of return as well as giving.

This is not just a good feeling network, this is a positive improvement network which can lever significant operational and financial benefits.

My experience is that greater levels of productivity are a result, not just from a better wellbeing position as research shows, but it can help achieve that elusive improvement in productivity because we are leveraging shared expertise.

For this to work optimally it needs a safe environment, a place or ^{[[[}SEP] community where everyone who engages feels able to do this knowing that you can make a difference to someone else and they can return that favour.

My thoughts on this pay forward model founded on peer to peer knowledge sharing have developed and crystallised more over the last two years... directly correlated to taking on the role as Managing Director of Centre for Engineering Education & Development (Ceed).

I often describe Ceed as the “HANG-OUT” place for engineering technology and manufacturing businesses a place where we focus on “Crowd Learning” through a peer to peer best practice sharing model.

Not only sharing best practice but also those support conversations about things that were less successful and so help steer others away from the pitfalls, a model that surely is the ultimate business focussed pay forward community.

A Pay Forward model will introduce us to new people and increase the innovation in your activity as it naturally draws upon open innovation, another well written about approach to increasing benefits to those who embrace it.

Respecting the views of others, creating and building communities founded in trust and respect, and driving up that well-being and increase in productivity surely is something to embrace.

Politics and many aspects of society seem to be steeped in conflict scenarios, so perhaps this pay forward approach also leads us to a more tolerant community, raising our horizons and filling us with hope.

So, I feel we have it on our hands to build a strong, vibrant and trusted community moving all of us forward.

I am lucky as we move into 2020 my own organisation, or should I say our organisation (as Ceed is the sum of all its members), will be paying it forward as usual and so I want to close by wishing all of you a prosperous new year and look forward to hearing about the good stories that will emerge.

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