

# STORIES OF SUCCESS: PROFESSIONAL CULTURE



“Be part of something bigger”

At the Association for Science Education Becki told a very personal story to a fascinated audience of primary science educators.

A few years ago, I was given the role of Science subject Leader and my first task, or, the only one I knew I could do, was to sort the cupboard. There were no instructions for becoming a Science Leader, other than googling ‘what should a Science Leader do?’ I was a lone Science woman in a community of other subject leaders, but they all had their own agendas. I was part of a fabulous community in school who were happy for me to ‘do whatever I wanted with Science’...but I didn’t know what I wanted to do...I didn’t know what I didn’t know. I didn’t know what was possible. The lid needed lifting for me.

Early on in my Science Leader journey, I received an email about becoming a part of a local network cluster for Science. I remember rolling my eyes, moaning about having to attend and the ‘work that came with it’. Looking back, I recognise that those small networks and little nudges, were a significant part of my journey as a Science Leader, but also as a teaching professional. I was encouraged and nurtured. I had a place to put the world of Science Leadership to rights and for people to appreciate me and understand my frustrations. At the time, I don’t think I quite realised all



In conversation  
with Becki Price -  
A Science Across  
the City Science  
Influencer

this enough to appreciate it, but I kept going because I came away with great science CPD for my school.

I had quite a major accident, broke my leg and was out of action for around 6 months, but on returning to the network meetings I remember being presented with flowers. I was taken aback and thought, how do they know? Do I matter that much to this group? Is this what a professional community is like?

**This point was an absolute shift in my thinking.**

I wasn’t a lone Science Leader anymore; I was part of something bigger. My eyes had been opened to a community of fellow leaders who all had similar headaches and successes to me.

Over a number of years, I have become a part of a bigger Science family. This journey involved being nurtured, valued, praised, challenged and introduced to a wider world that can make a big difference to a lone Science Lead. We’ve shared ideas so no one’s workload is too high, and no wheel reinvented.

I was still a lone Science Leader in my school, but I’ve been doing the role, better, deeper, with more impact.

---

**Daniel Pink, a best-selling US author, claims that it is innate human behaviour to want to be part of something bigger and when we are, we thrive**

---

**Communities of practitioners.  
Which Science groups  
are you a part of?**

**So what has been the impact of  
Science Across the City in your school?**

As a Science Leader I think I have gone very much from a tick list to that deeper understanding. I've gone from tick list to 'so what?' What are we doing and why? What is important? Leading to a deeper understanding of what Science is and why it is that way. We are definitely not perfect. I'm not a perfect Science teacher and I know other staff would say the same, but I think we've got that deeper knowledge of why we want things to be the way they are and what's important and not so important.

**So what do you do next?**

I am now a Science Influencer and work more within the science community influencing practice in local schools. Before I was more internal and focused on my own setting. It has opened my eyes to all the opportunities and organisations that I didn't know existed. Now I work closely with my own cluster of four schools and we've spent the autumn term building professional relationships. I am here to help, not be a hindrance and through that relationship now they are participating more.

**So what has been the most important part of  
Science Across the City for you?**

You can only learn so much if you stay in your little bubble. There has to be an opportunity to come



out of that bubble and join a like-minded network support bubble. I didn't know it existed. I needed someone to say let's take you out of your bubble and find you a new bubble. Being part of an external community gives worth to what you are trying to do, and it challenges you to do it better. It makes you feel useful and validated and you're motivated to go above and beyond.

I've now been exposed to the world of primary Science and all the various elements that come with that; the pedagogical understanding and the ideas and resources. The possibilities are endless. I think it was part of the small cluster project that facilitated all of that, which, in turn, improves the quality of Science teaching and learning.

Definitely being more involved in the landscape of STEM and now that I have got the knowledge of what's available, I can then go and influence other local schools.

