

Faculty Reflection: Mobile Summit 2018

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Note from the editor: since the Mobile Summit conference did not run in 2019, we would like to share this take-away from last year's conference.

Last year's Mobile Summit (May 16-17, 2018) at Centennial College's Progress Campus, which was organized in partnership with Lambton College, was an informative and enjoyable experience for me. I was most impressed by the opening keynote delivered by Rob Power, President of the International Association for Mobile Learning. Rob addressed key issues and offered ideas that resonated with me, so I've chosen to highlight them here.



First, Rob noted how a *lack of perceived usefulness* is a major barrier in the adoption of mobile learning. Another is a *lack of perceived ease of use*. We're familiar with these downers: "Why do I need x when I already have y?" "It's too complicated!" "It takes too much time to set up!" "It's rife with glitches!" Thus, we need opportunities to experiment with the technology, cozy up to it, and realize for ourselves *how it can be useful*. Pretty soon we realize that it's not difficult to use after a little practice.

Rob then made an assertion that struck a chord with me as a long-time proponent of educational technology integration: we need to move past the debate over whether tech helps learning or not. Indeed, we need to accept that it can and focus on trying different ways to make this happen. Put differently, let's *focus on the intention to use it*.

Professional development is crucial here. For professors to have more confidence in their ability to use tech in the classroom, Rob argues that we need to coach them to build (1) their student engagement strategies, (2) their repertoire of instructional strategies, and (3) their classroom management skills for interactive tasks. Interestingly, he points out that effective professional development targeting these areas can sometimes be offered without using technology at all. It can be a presentation, a hands-on workshop, a one-on-one coaching

session (like the services offered by our experts in the Teaching & Learning Centre), or even an open-access module on My.Seneca.

I was happy to see some familiar faces from Seneca at Mobile Summit, including members of the Educational Technology Advisory Committee. I was also fortunate to reunite and catch up with Anne Fitterer, a wonderful professor with whom I had worked some years ago in the English Language Institute. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed this conference and would encourage my colleagues to attend in the future.

View the [June 2019 issue of the Academic Newsletter](#).

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