Cases

• teacher seeking opportunities to upgrade and expand her subject knowledge

• lawyer working with a pharmaceutical company who needs to acquire a working knowledge of molecular biology

• chemist wanting to specialise in environmental chemistry
Instruction dilemma for networked CPD

- formal learning, institution-based, teacher-led, designed - proves not (always) effective
- informal learning, networked, student-led
- but: what is role of instruction, you can’t just leave professionals to their own devices

Solution

• rely on self-regulation (research by CGA)
• rely on support from carefully selected peer learners (my own group at OUNL)
• ?

Peer Support

- network is a large resource, turn non-existent and weak links into strong ones
- create small communities of helpful peers (in so-called ad-hoc transient communities, AHTGCs)
- (I come back to kinds of support)

Finding peers

- not all peers are equally suited to offer help
- use technology to match needs to peer
- use peer profile as user model
  - deliberately: portfolio
  - accidentally: traces left online, online learner identity

Technology: Recommender Systems

• algorithm matching profile of target learner to profile of peer (classical recommender)

• algorithm that looks for peers in the entire network that are strongly linked to others that are similar to me, but not yet to me (collaborative filtering)

Technology: Latent Semantic Analysis

• statistical analysis technique that matches target learner’s question to portfolios of all peers

• and ranks peers in order of suitability

• create dialogue in small group (AHTG)

Technology: Game Theory

- use the assumptions of the theory rational choice behaviour as implemented in game theory
- use them to recommend peers, for example for knowledge creation and innovation (co-authorship)

Technology: Analysis of Tags and Tag Sets

• match for dissimilarity to provoke breakdowns in conversations, forcing you to reassess cherished beliefs

• by comparing user created comments, as in content curation sites (Scoop.IT)

No Technology: Trust as an Enabler

- peer collaboration presupposes the willingness to collaborate
- trust ‘at first sight’ proves to be a significant predictor of willingness
- a carefully crafted portfolio is instrumental in establishing trust ‘at first sight’.

Thank you!

Thanks to my PhD students and colleagues!
Slides at Slideshare.net, username: pbsloep