

Tips to start the new year

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Ngā mihi o te wā. Happy New Year.

The start of a new working year is the perfect opportunity to implement and try new things. For me this includes checking over my ways of doing things to make sure I am working efficiently and utilising the connections I have. I am grateful to be able to work alongside kura and schools and would like to share some tips based in common questions I get asked to help kick start your new year.

MAKING CONNECTIONS WITH YOUR NEW LEARNERS

Relationships are the foundation of success and I have seen a lot of creative ways teachers have started to make connections with their learners before the school year starts. This may include a collaborative doc. where you and your learners can start to add in basic information, holiday pictures and expectations for the year ahead. A lot of teachers, classes or faculties have web pages or sites to house and share resources, timetables and course information. I think this is the perfect place to create excitement for the new year and to introduce yourself to your new learners. The use of different media such as videos and photos adds an extra dimension to engage and excite new learners. I have enjoyed recording [podcasts](#) with my colleagues about the work we do at CORE Education and I

believe podcasts about yourself and what you are looking forward to this year will help establish relationships.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING NETWORKS (PLN)

"When will I find the time?" This was my first reaction when discussing PLNs but now it is my "go to" when I need to find answers and it saves me time. My PLN can be as simple as a call or an email to a colleague or engaging with social media. For me [Twitter](#) has become a reliable source of information to connect with people and find answers and resources. With a number of New Zealand based groups such as EdChatNZ on Twitter it is easy to start following quality and then follow your passions from there. I like to follow [#tereo](#) and learn from and communicate with others, passionate about te reo Māori.

MULTI-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION

The last two tips address online safety and look after your information and data. Lately I have heard of a number of personal and work email accounts being hacked. Within these accounts we all keep private information that we can be locked out of and there is potential for harmful emails to be sent to our accounts if they get hacked. The remedy may be a painful process but absolutely essential, as prevention is the key and along with a secure password I recommend you use multi factor or 2-step verification. This verification adds an extra layer of security to your account, once you have entered your password you will be sent a code to your phone to enter before being able to access your account. Your domain administrator may need to enable this feature first and the following links provide information about how to set it up.

[Sign in to Office 365 with a second verification method](#)

[Google 2-Step Verification](#)

BACKING UP YOUR DATA

If your computer died, was stolen or lost today would you be able to restore from your backups? We have all heard it but now is the time to ensure you have your data backed up and regularly do so. It is important to have your data backed up in multiple ways and this could include external hard drives, USB drives and cloud-based storage.



Ānaru White

Ānaru White (Te Atiawa) was an Advisor with Te Ara Whītiki | Connected Learning Advisory an accredited facilitator and CoP lead for Kia Takatū ā-Matihiko. He worked alongside Kāhui Ako, kura and schools to enhance outcomes through the effective use of digital technologies. Since writing this post, Ānaru has left CORE for new opportunities.