

# TIRZAH TALKS

*The ExelAcademy Blog*

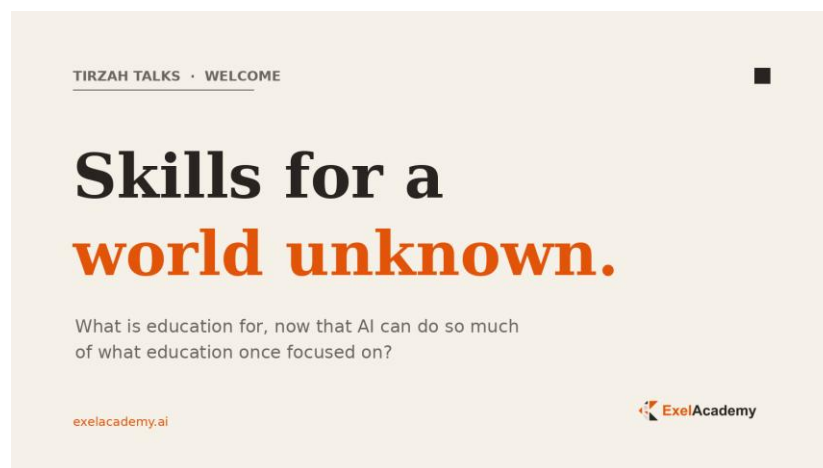
IDEAS WORTH EXPLORING · EDUCATION WORTH RETHINKING · FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

WELCOME · WHY THIS BLOG EXISTS

## Skills for a World Unknown

*Welcome to Tirzah Talks. Here's what this blog is for, what ExelAcademy is building, and the one question that sits underneath all of it.*

By Tirzah Elese Bagnulo · Founder & CEO, ExelAcademy · 6 min read



I've spent more than thirty years in education. Classrooms, leadership, school transformation, and more than fifteen years studying how the brain actually learns.

And I've reached a conclusion I can't unsee.

**The system isn't failing our children. It is doing exactly what it was intended to do.**

It was designed to prepare people to be *workers*, programming them for a world that required them to follow and comply. That world no longer exists. When a child struggles, we look for what's wrong with the child. I think we should look at the design.

Now AI has arrived. It can explain, recall, summarise, practise and personalise faster than any of us. So the question is no longer whether we *can* teach children knowledge. It's this:

**What is education for, now that AI can do so much of what education once focused on?**

That question is why I founded ExelAcademy. And it's what this blog is about.

## Where This Started

In 2015 I published *The Learning Commitment*, built on one then-uncomfortable idea: teachers are not delivering a curriculum. They are teaching a brain. And a brain does not organise itself around age cohorts, subject silos or test windows. It organises itself around relevance, emotion, experience and repetition.

That work became **Making Learning Visible**, a whole-school programme that reached some four hundred and fifty schools. Headteachers rarely disputed the science. They agreed with it. What stopped them was the structure: the fixed lesson, the books to be filled, the test every cohort was being prepared for. Even schools that wanted to teach this way couldn't fully commit to it.

AI changes that constraint. For the first time, we can move each learner through a curriculum at their own pace, toward their own interests, without giving up rigour or evidence. That is the door ExelAcademy walks through.

### THE JOURNEY SO FAR

**30+**

years in teaching, leadership and school transformation

**15+**

years studying how the brain actually learns

**450**

schools reached through Making Learning Visible

## What We're Building at ExelAcademy

ExelAcademy is an online, human-led, AI-enabled school. Not a school with some AI added on. A learning model designed from scratch around how the brain learns and the world our children are walking into.

- **ExelTutors™**. Adaptive AI tutors that personalise the routine work of acquiring knowledge, so every learner gets patient, one-to-one support at their own level and pace.
- **Concept Capsules™**. Short, connected bursts of mastery, so understanding is built and checked, not just covered.
- **ExelQuests™**. Real-world projects with real outcomes. Around 80% of learning happens here, where young people build, create, lead and solve problems that matter.
- **Human mentors**. AI serves. It never replaces. Every learner is known by people who care about them, guide them and hold the judgement no machine should.
- **Phases, not grades**. Young people progress when they are ready, not because of the year they were born.

*"AI enhances the acquisition of knowledge; human expertise transforms knowledge into wisdom through experience, reflection and purposeful action."*

THE EXELACADEMY PRINCIPLE

## What You'll Find Here

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### The human side of an AI world

Technology exists to extend human potential. It must never replace human purpose. I'll write about what that means in practice for children, parents and teachers.

### How the brain learns

Relevance isn't a motivational extra. It's a neurological precondition for learning. I'll share the science in plain language, and what it should change about how we teach.

### Human Authority

Human agency is our capacity to choose. Human Authority is our responsibility for those choices. Our children will grow up beside powerful tools. They need judgement, ethics and the confidence to own their decisions.

### Skills we can't name yet

Nobody knows exactly which jobs will exist in fifteen years. But we know what lasts: curiosity, collaboration, discernment, self-leadership, belonging. I'll explore how we build them.

## Learning by doing

At ExelAcademy, most learning happens through ExelQuests™: real projects, real problems, real outcomes. I'll share what we're learning from them, including what doesn't work.

## Building a school in public

I'm building an online, human-led, AI-enabled school from scratch. Accreditation, technology, safeguarding, curriculum. The wins and the hard lessons. I'll be honest about both.

## For parents

You have more power to change your child's education than you've been told. I'll write for you directly.

## What I Won't Do

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I won't tell you AI will save education. Or destroy it. Both are lazy, and both are 'wallpaper noise'.

I won't sell you certainty. We are all standing at a precipice of change for the human race. I'll share what I know, what I'm testing, and what I'm still working out, and together with you, we will shape what we want for our children.

## The Point of It All

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Children don't learn in their year of manufacture. They don't learn just because they have an exam or a series of lessons. Most importantly, **the brain doesn't learn boring and irrelevant stuff.**

It learns when it matters, when it's relevant, and when we have autonomy over the challenge. Young people learn when someone believes in them, and when they're given real work to do that has a real impact on themselves or others.

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**The first eighteen years of a child's life are precious. I want us to use them deliberately, to grow what is distinctly human.**

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If that matters to you too, stay. Read. Push back. Let's work it out together.

**JOIN THE CONVERSATION**

Follow Tirzah Talks for a new post every week, and share your comments and feedback in the chat section. Tell me what you agree with, what you would challenge, and what you want me to write about next.

To see what ExelAcademy is building for young people, come and take a closer look.

[exelacademy.ai](https://exelacademy.ai)



#### ABOUT TIRZAH

**Tirzah Elese Bagnulo** is Founder and CEO of ExelAcademy, a human-led, AI-enabled online school. She brings more than three decades of teaching and educational transformation, fifteen years of studying how the brain learns, and is the author of *The Learning Commitment*. Tirzah Talks is where she thinks out loud about what education is for, now that AI can do so much of what it once focused on.