

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/value-your-own-strengths>

Jennifer Carolan, co-founder and managing director of the NewSchools Seed Fund, describes how her path from teacher to ed-tech investor was a steep and long learning curve. She says the path seemed tougher because of personal insecurities and so warns against undervaluing one's own experiences when comparing them to others' strengths.



## Transcript

This path may sound like it's been oh, easy, I kind of - I was a teacher that I popped into see Kim Smith and then I went to NewSchools and now I am investing in education and - but it's been a steep and long learning curve for me.. And when I came into NewSchools, I was a researcher and I didn't have an MBA and I was surrounded by these Harvard and Stanford MBAs who would talk about leverage and value proposition and Level 5 leadership and all of this fancy MBA talk and I was so intimidated by it.. They didn't know what it meant either so don't worry.. But now I use that.. Now, you use those words.. Now, I use that.. I'll drop leverage a couple times a day now.. A couple more times this talk.. So I think that I was and I did feel when I first started at NewSchools, so this is my ninth year, like very intimidated by that.. And I guess like if I could give as you guys don't need advice, but if I could offer something that I took away from this experience is that to value what you bring to the table and value your skills and what your experience and what you have done, because I feel like I undervalued my education experience..

I was the only teacher at NewSchools at the time that had taught more than two years that was a non-TFA teacher.. And I didn't - I feel like I didn't value that enough in myself..