

Unit 521

Information Pack

Managing Own Continuing Development



INTRODUCTION

Engaging in Continuing Professional Development ensures that both academic and practical qualifications do not become out-dated or obsolete, allowing individuals to continually 'up skill' or 're-skill' themselves, regardless of occupation, age or educational level.

Employers are increasingly aware of the importance of investing in their staff and often have structures and processes in place to provide opportunities for the training and development of their employees. Managers also need to take personal responsibility for renewing and updating their skills and knowledge throughout their working lives. Personal development is a continuous lifelong process of nurturing, shaping, and improving skills and knowledge to ensure maximum effectiveness and ongoing employability.

This pack is designed for anyone who is ready to take the necessary steps towards learning and growth. It is also a guide for leaders and managers on how to support the development of their team members. This information pack, and the tasks within it, will introduce you to principles and practices associated with managing personal development and will enable you to confidently and efficiently tackle your own development. The exercises will require you to consider theories and models that align with each topic but, importantly, you will be expected to make parallels with your own experience of personal development in the workplace.

SAMPLE

GUIDANCE

This document is prepared to break the unit material down into bite size chunks. You will see the learning outcomes above treated in their own sections. Therein you will encounter the following structures;

Purpose

Explains *why* you need to study the current section of material. Quite often learners are put off by material which does not initially seem to be relevant to a topic or profession. Once you understand the importance of new learning or theory you will embrace the concepts more readily.

Theory

Conveys new material to you in a straightforward fashion. To support the treatments in this section you are strongly advised to follow the given hyperlinks, which may be useful documents or applications on the web.

Example

The examples/worked examples are presented in a knowledge-building order. Make sure you follow them all through. If you are feeling confident then you might like to treat an example as a question, in which case cover it up and have a go yourself. Many of the examples given resemble assignment questions which will come your way, so follow them through diligently.

Question

Questions should not be avoided if you are determined to learn. Please do take the time to tackle each of the given questions, in the order in which they are presented. The order is important, as further knowledge and confidence is built upon previous knowledge and confidence. As an Online Learner it is important that the answers to questions are immediately available to you. Contact your Unit Tutor if you need help.

Challenge

You can really cement your new knowledge by undertaking the challenges. A challenge could be to download software and perform an exercise. An alternative challenge might involve a practical activity or other form of research.

Video

Videos on the web can be very useful supplements to your distance learning efforts. Wherever an online video(s) will help you then it will be hyperlinked at the appropriate point.

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SAMPLE

Defining CPD

The CPD Certification Service defines it as:

‘CPD is the holistic commitment of professionals towards the enhancement of personal skills and proficiency throughout their careers’.

CIPD explains:

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a combination of approaches, ideas and techniques that will help you manage your own learning and growth. The focus of CPD is firmly on results – the benefits that professional development can bring you in the real world. Perhaps the most important message is that one size doesn’t fit all. Wherever you are in your career now and whatever you want to achieve, your CPD should be exactly that: yours.

Personal development does not necessarily imply upward movement; rather, it is about enabling individuals to improve their performance and reach their full potential at each stage of their career.

Adopting a constructive approach to personal development planning (PDP) will help individuals improve performance. Professional development refers to the process of identifying goals and learning new skills to help you grow and succeed at work, it may lead to a promotion or change in job, or simply to doing better in a current position. Wherever it leads you, professional development includes these elements:

creating a vision of success, knowledge of the skills required to succeed, formal or informal assessments, and an individual development plan. This information pack is designed to take you through each of these elements.

Structured CPD / Active Learning

Structured CPD / active learning involves interactive and participation-based study. It is typically proactive and can include attending a training course, conference, workshop, seminar, lecture, e-learning course or CPD certified event. CPD active learning also applies to when professionals take career orientated exams and assessments (the study and revision would be considered self-directed learning, see Self-Directed CPD).

Reflective CPD / Passive Learning

Reflective learning involves no participant-based interaction, so this form of CPD is much more passive and one directional. Examples of this include reading relevant news articles, podcasts & case studies and industry updates. Some informal meetings can be applicable to CPD reflective learning, but the learning objectives of these meetings must be made clear in an individual’s overall CPD plan.

Self-Directed CPD / Unstructured Learning

Self-directed learning involves all unaccompanied CPD activities. It covers the reading of documents, articles and publications; either in print or online. Reading relevant publications, books by leading experts, industry journals and trade magazines are all types of self-directed CPD. You could also include industry-specific news feeds or research into relevant fields.

What are the benefits of CPD?

Continuing Professional Development is essential in helping individuals, organisations or entire industries to keep skills and knowledge up to date. Providing CPD enables organisations to become a knowledge bank to key stakeholders of your organisation. CPD accredited training courses, workshops and events allow professionals to use the learning time towards individual CPD requirements.

The CPD cycle

- **Identify:** Understand where you've come from (prior learning and work experience, where you will come to that further on), where you are and where you want to be.

This requires an analysis of yourself: your present self and your aspirational future self

- **Plan:** Plan how you can get to where you want to be, with clear outcomes and milestone to track progress.

It's then a case of identifying how you can get there, and creating milestones or check in points in order to review progress. The planning stage can be started at any point throughout the year, but you may find it useful to align it with your annual development or performance review. Not all learning will be planned. This stage will ensure you have a guide to follow, not a strict plan you have to stick to focus on the outcomes you would like to achieve, rather than the time spent on activities or a detailed plan of every activity you plan to undertake.

- **Act:** Act upon your plan and be open to learning experiences.

It's likely that your plan will include a mixture of keeping up to date with your area of expertise, learning about the external environment and developing new skills. You may also be considering a change in role or organisation. Whatever your plan involves, having an actionable plan to act upon will allow you to get there.

- **Reflect:** Make the most of your day-to-day learning by routinely reflecting upon experience.

Reflective Practice is growing in use as a method for professional development. Why? Because it enhances critical thinking, deepens self-awareness and improves communication skills.

- **Apply:** Create opportunities where you can translate theory into practice and put your learning to work.

Embedding learning requires repetition, so creating opportunities where you can continuously revisit learning through application will ensure the benefits are long lasting. This might mean starting a new project at work, volunteering for new challenges outside of your comfort zone or simply a case of continually seeking feedback from those you work with.

'To learn and not to do is really not to learn. To know and not to do is really not to know' Stephen R. Covey

- **Share:** Share your learning in communities of practice to generate greater insight and benefit from the support of your community.

This stage involves sharing your learning into communities of practice in order to generate greater insight and benefit from the support of your community.

Think about the last time you had insight; you probably shared it with a colleague, friend or family member, whether it was to benefit them or simply because you were excited to have learnt something new.

Learning is inherently social process, and the learning does not end once we have applied it. There are still many lessons to be learned through feedback and iteration. Sharing learning is a great way to collaborate with others build networks and exchange ideas.

- **Impact:** Measure the overall impact your learning has had on the work you do.

Impact is created through having a robust approach to your professional development and building the habitual behaviours that support effective CPD.

Our CPD approach focuses on outputs instead of inputs. With this stage you should actually focus on how you have applied this new learning and how this supports you, your team and/or organisation. Ideally these will be measurable outcomes e.g. how and what have you done to improve services. Reduce costs, increase revenue, save time, etc.

It can also be helpful to evaluate progress against the objectives you set in the plan. We will discuss this more in the final chapters.

Video

Defining Development

Development:

'The act or process of developing; growth; progress: [Personal] development'.

(Dictionary.com)

Management Development:

This process typically includes:

1. Cognitive thinking development, idea generation, and decision-making.
2. Behavioural attitudes and values, choosing what is appropriate.
3. Environmental situations, appropriate management style'.

(The Law Dictionary)

Personal development planning is the process of:

- Establishing aims and objectives (or goals) - what you want to achieve or where you want to go, in the short, medium or long-term in your career.