

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO DOING CPD



WHAT IS CPD?

CPD or 'Continuing Professional Development' is about ongoing learning in a professional context.

The CPD Standards Research Project defines CPD as:



"A simple, structured approach to lifelong learning. CPD is an ongoing process of intentionally developing your knowledge, skills, and competence for being the best you can be at work, and in your role."



CPD is recognised worldwide as a highly effective learning process. It is a global practice used by hundreds of millions of people across all industries, professions, and disciplines.

Note that CPD is not a formal qualification, rather the combination of all the smaller pieces of learning undertaken AFTER formal qualifications that keep formal qualifications current and relevant.

Formal qualifications would quickly become obsolete without CPD.



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WHY IS CPD IMPORTANT?

It is vital that everyone undertakes CPD in some form. There is no crystal ball with a clear vision for the future, and although CPD cannot create certainty, it is a useful tool to prepare for unseen challenges ahead.

The Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated how society can be impacted dramatically with circumstances out of our control. Yet despite the challenges that the pandemic has presented within our daily work roles, individual professionals have found methods, via ongoing learning, to continue to work effectively.



THE BRILLIANCE OF CPD

Every day is a CPD day.

Anyone, and everyone, undertakes CPD daily often without realising it. As humans, we are naturally inquisitive and curious, and seek to find solutions and answers to everyday challenges.

As CPD is an ongoing practice, rather than a one-off activity, it operates through complete personalisation of learning. We are in the driving seat when it comes to our ongoing professional education, and as a result, CPD is available to improve every skill, increase all forms of work-based competence, and boost any professionally based knowledge set.

CPD can be a dynamic and exciting process that empowers us to achieve our aspirations and move towards our dreams.



WHERE IS CPD FOUND?

Today every profession - from accountants to marketers - is represented by a professional body or institute. These professional institutes created formal CPD, steering it from something professionals just did, into an institutionalised construct in the form of CPD policies and programmes. CPD is embedded as a cornerstone of professionalism within every industry sector.

in the UK there are nearly 3000 professional bodies, institutes, and membership organisations, which combined have over 6 million individuals expected to undertake CPD as a process for keeping their professional memberships up to date.

Within this arena, CPD is generally prescribed as a mandatory annual cycle of learning. Individual professionals are expected to complete a specified amount of CPD every year.



CPD FOR YOU

You do not have to be a member of a professional body to undertake CPD. Whether you are seeking to become more employable or a social media sensation, CPD can become a natural learning process in everyday life.

The adoption of smartphones and tablets over the last 5 years to become our main devices for accessing information and news has dramatically changed our learning behaviours.

Every day we consume information, data, images and videos that increase our learning capacity. We can now use our mobile devices to becoming conscious and proactive participants in this ongoing learning.

MASTERING YOUR CPD POWER

Traditionally, there have been four categories of CPD activities that you can undertake:

Work-Based Learning	Experiential learning / learning by doing, peer review, discussions with colleagues, work shadowing, project work, expanding your role, supervision, training on the job & secondments
Formal/Educational	Attending online or F2F training courses, conferences or events
Professional Activities	Active involvement with a professional organisation e.g. giving presentations or networking. Lecturing or teaching, being a tutor, mentoring, maintaining specialist or technical skills.
Self-Directed Learning	Reflective practice through coaching, or mentoring. Reading journals or articles. Reviewing books. Updating your knowledge through the internet.

Living with Covid-19 in 2021 means we have become reliant on digital and online sources of CPD. In some ways this has made the undertaking of CPD more streamlined, but in other ways, it has dramatically restricted what we can do in terms of social learning.

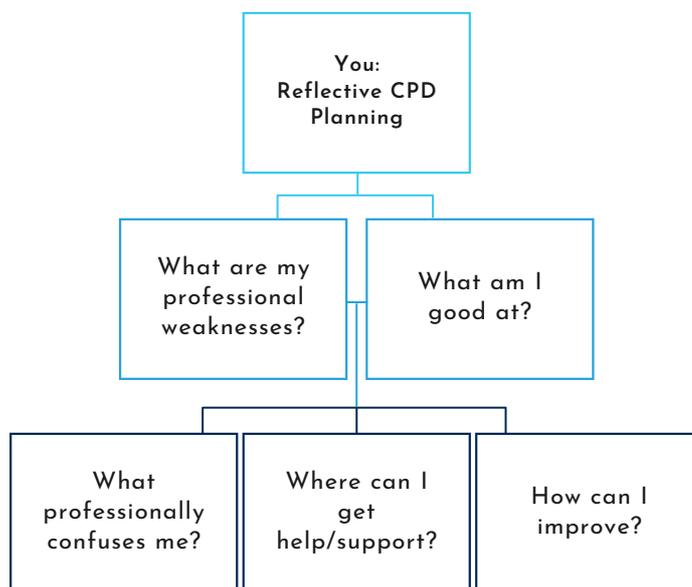
SOURCING GREAT CPD EXPERIENCES

The web is full of information and data, some are accurate, and some is fake news or outdated. To make sure you receive great CPD content and have a positive learning experience you should check that any online courses, events, or digital learning have been approved by the CPD Standards Office.

See our [directory](#) for our accredited CPD providers and keep an eye out for the [blue badge](#).

Before deciding on any CPD activity, you need to ask yourself 2 questions:

- What am I good at?
- What are my professional weaknesses?



BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE

As a learning process, there is no set blueprint or pathway for an individual to undertake CPD. In most professions CPD is celebrated as a dynamic mechanism that is self-controlled and self-directed by an individual.

In 2018, the World Economic Forum (WEF) released the Future of Jobs Report, listing various skills that will be at the forefront of business in 2022, these include:

- Analytical thinking and innovation
- Creativity, originality, and initiative
- Complex problem solving
- Leadership & social influence

By undertaking regular, focused CPD, individuals have the ability to hone and sharpen these 'human skills'. In turn, this creates a motivated, effective and resourceful professional with improved performance capability and productivity.