

## **CPD - why is it important? How do we fulfil our obligations as HR practitioners?**

Continuing professional development (CPD) is promoted by the CIPD to support the systematic development and accreditation of its members. The aim is that the continuing search to improve knowledge and skills through exposure to new experiences benefits both the individual and the business. The CIPD actively encourages CPD along with other bodies for professionals such as lawyers, accountants and surveyors.

The world is not static and there are new developments in all areas emerging all the time, which are both challenging and exciting. Change gives individuals a chance to stretch their ability and staying up to date builds confidence and adds to credibility. For businesses, the benefits are the ability to stay ahead of competitors and the increase in profits. Therefore, through exposure to new initiatives both parties benefit.

CPD is a cycle of continuous improvement, identifying new experiences to pursue. Having gained that new experience comes the analysis of what has been learnt and how it can be put into practice at work, before considering the next new development. CPD is self-directed and requires motivation and commitment to improving one's own personal standards, which for some individuals can be a challenge in itself. Keeping up the momentum is also important and setting personal goals of what needs to be achieved within a particular timescale. For those who manage to maintain the cycle there is a huge sense of achievement.

The process can take many forms – attending seminars, academic courses and conferences, undertaking work-based activities, secondments and project management or reading books and journals. Individuals may have a particular learning style, but to develop their skills should occasionally adopt one that does not come naturally. For example an individual who learns best from active involvement with problem-solving could adopt a more theoretical style and read an article on the subject instead.

Entwined within the CIPD code of practice is the requirement of HR professionals to encourage and help the development of other individuals. Personal satisfaction can be gained from having helped someone develop new skills perhaps watching them blossom from the new confidence they have gained.

In order to fulfil our obligations as HR practitioners in encouraging CPD there are several possible solutions available - becoming a role model, mentor and coach. A role model will lead by example demonstrating to those who are interested how it is done and the benefits to be gained. As a mentor an HR practitioner can provide individuals with the benefit of their knowledge passing on valuable information of skills and abilities or as a coach positively encouraging an individual to know which paths to pursue. Any or all of these routes can be followed providing satisfaction for all.

Written by Sandra Beale of SJ Beale HR Consult. Tel: 07762 771290  
or email: [info@sjbealehrconsult.co.uk](mailto:info@sjbealehrconsult.co.uk). Website:  
[www.sjbealehrconsult.co.uk](http://www.sjbealehrconsult.co.uk)