

Assessing and evaluating continuing professional development

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“Learning is a never ending process”. The above quotation is so apt as the present day technological world is the eye witness. Continuing professional development (CPD) is a platform that provides practical guidance for a teacher educator for his learning and growth. This abstract focuses on how a teacher can become a trendsetter by evaluating oneself continuously for progressive success. Continuing professional development (CPD) or Continuing professional education (CPE) is the means by which people maintain the knowledge and skills related to their professional lives. Continuing education is part of ongoing requirements for members. The paper aims to highlight some of the issues of self assessment and present some insights that enrich the efficacy and quality of our education to ensure phenomenal success.

Key words: Learning, education and self assessment.

INTRODUCTION

For a teacher educator learning is a never ending process that assures his student’s growth as per grounded and refined up gradation in education policy which is in turn an outcome of his struggle. To prosecute and execute these educational policies there is indeed a platform that provides practical guidance and theoretical overview and it is Continuing Professional Development Program (Megginson and Whitaker, 2003).

From the outset this discussion focuses on how a teacher can become a trend setter by evaluating himself and then be responsible for commonizing his pupils that are of different attitudes. Human brain has the tendency to continuous assessment of what we want to achieve or what should be the criteria behind our work. Changing traditions and changing mindsets command change in workforce competency. CPD is that which evaluates this work and takes us through this outcome. CPD can bring one into the real world, because it is the process that combines approaches, ideas and techniques that will help the educator for his own learning and growth and

encourages the employees to explore different possibilities of new techniques to teach English language. Higher Education funding Council for England defines CPD as –

“a range of short and long training programs, some of which have an option of accreditation which hasten the development of employment related knowledge, skills and understanding.”

Indiana College Network (ICN) reproduces just the sentence above as,

“CPD is a continuous process of acquiring knowledge and skills throughout one’s professional life.”

So, according to the perception, as an undergraduate and a post graduate educator it is sufficient to ensure lifelong competencies. But it is essential to maintain the

competencies, to remedy gaps in skills and to enable professionals to respond to the challenges of rapidly growing knowledge and technologies. Continuing education responds highly up on motivation that the learner gets and projects to self-directed learning skills.

Therefore, professional development includes various courses offered to improve knowledge and skills in a specific professional area such as professional certification programs, but usually not offered for academic credit (<http://www.cpd-courses.org/law-cpd>).

An ultimate motivating point in CPD is outcome based education for an educator. The first phase is to see the development of skills for an educator. The second phase is transformation of this skilled knowledge to the next generation. It is certifying a professional with the area of his work keeping up-to-date with the changes. The development commands in the area of the practitioner to upgrade knowledge and skills in the profession (James and Tom, 2007).

What is done previously and how the same is going to be accepted widely, provided with additional qualifications should be the assessment to develop and to remain update for ensured success. Whatsoever the profession either medical, Engineering, Management or law as such, CPD is a commitment to structured skills enhancement. No matter the occupation, role or responsibility within an organization is to ensure that their skills and knowledge are up-to-date. In this fast moving technological world, undertaking CPD is as important as any certification (James and Tom, 2007).

A wide variety of people, such as teachers, military officers and non-commissioned officers, health care professionals, lawyers, accountants and engineers engage in professional development. Individuals may participate in professional development because of an interest in lifelong learning, a sense of moral obligation, to maintain and improve professional competence, enhance career progression, keep abreast of new technology and practice, or to comply with professional regulatory organizations. In the education industry, the use of online sources of professional development represents a significant shift. Whereas many other industries have used online sources of continuing education and professional practices for many years, traditionally educators have turned solely to internal professional development departments, local education agencies (LEAs), and local colleges and universities for acquiring the necessary education to meet the required hours/units for renewal of their state teaching licenses.

One of the best sources to achieve CPD is to have continuous and regular participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and symposiums as well as self directed activities such as preceptorship and directed reading. Academicians participate in a recognized revalidation process in which they demonstrate their commitment to continued competent performance in a framework that is fair, relevant, inclusive, transferable

and formative. CPD is concerned with development, because its goal is to improve personal performance, and enhance career progression which is wider than just formal training courses. Self-swot analysis which elevates strengths and weaknesses helps an individual with personal professional development (James and Tom, 2007).

Annual review of individual's activities is worthy enough to generate successful results in successive generations (Napoleon, 2007). Maintaining summary sheet allows individuals' own commitment to learning and to consider best practice within the work place. It is vital that individuals record their efforts and assess the benefits of their planned activities. The activities that they undertake may not always generate the results that were intended. Time spent reflecting on how they have tackled each activity and in assessing the outcomes will enable the individual to adjust their PPDP for the following year. Moreover, by recording their activities they will be building a complete record of their professional/personal development that can form the basis for long-term career progression.

According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, CPD should:

- be continuous - professionals should always be looking for ways to improve performance
- be the responsibility of the individual learner to own and manage
- be driven by the learning needs and development of the individual
- be evaluative rather than descriptive of what has taken place
- be an essential component of professional and personal life, never an optional extra

Thus, CPD is an excellent opportunity covering a wide spectrum of vital activities that support and go a long way in enhancing one's professional life.

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