

The importance of continuing professional development

We are often asked to describe the importance of continuing professional development. Why is CPD important and why does it matter?

Continuing professional development is important because it ensures you continue to be competent in your profession. It is an ongoing process and continues throughout a professional's career.

The ultimate outcome of well-planned continuing professional development is that it safeguards the public, the employer, the professional and the professional's career.

Well-crafted and delivered continuing professional development is important because it delivers benefits to the individual, their profession and the public.

- CPD ensures your capabilities keep pace with the current standards of others in the same field.
- CPD ensures that you maintain and enhance the knowledge and skills you need to deliver a professional service to your customers, clients and the community.
- CPD ensures that you and your knowledge stay relevant and up to date. You are more aware of the changing trends and directions in your profession. The pace of change is probably faster than it's ever been – and this is a feature of the new normal that we live and work in. If you stand still you will get left behind, as the currency of your knowledge and skills becomes out-dated.
- CPD helps you continue to make a meaningful contribution to your team. You become more effective in the workplace. This assists you to advance in your career and move into new positions where you can lead, manage, influence, coach and mentor others.
- CPD helps you to stay interested and interesting. Experience is a great teacher, but it does mean that we tend to do what we have done before. Focused CPD opens you up to new possibilities, new knowledge and new skill areas.
- CPD can deliver a deeper understanding of what it means to be a professional, along with a greater appreciation of the implications and impacts of your work.
- CPD helps advance the body of knowledge and technology within your profession.
- CPD can lead to increased public confidence in individual professionals and their profession as a whole.
- Depending on the profession – CPD contributes to improved protection and quality of life, the environment, sustainability, property and the economy. This particularly applies to high risk areas, or specialised practice areas which often prove impractical to monitor on a case by case basis.

The importance of continuing professional development should not be underestimated – it is a career-long obligation for practising professionals.

Sometimes it is mandated by professional organisations or required by codes of conduct or codes of ethics. But at its core it is a personal responsibility of professionals to keep their knowledge and skills current so that they can deliver the high quality of service that safeguards the public and meets the expectations of customers and the requirements of their profession.

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