

## Guide to CPD – Mid Career

Hopefully you have become used to the concept of continuing professional development and are actively engaged in learning. After the initial exhilaration of starting out in a brand new career, the novelty may have worn off a little and things may have started to become a bit routine. Why is CPD important at this stage in your career?

- Meeting changing needs within your role – few things are static and your employer may need you develop new skills to meet changing demands.
- To meet future career objectives – you may be considering applying for a promotion or even a career change. CPD can help you to prepare for this and give you the best possible chance of getting the outcome you want.
- To keep things interesting – If you have been in a role for a long time, things can become a bit stale. CPD is a great way of making sure that things stay fresh.
- Applying for professional registration. Once you have gained some experience, you may want to consider professional registration such as becoming chartered. An active CPD profile will be vital to this.

## How should I approach CPD in Mid Career?

As ever, CPD is personal to the individual so there is no single “right” way to go about things. As an Institute we don’t specify how much CPD you should do or what form it should take – quality definitely beats quantity. Here are a few things you may wish to think about:

### **Consider all options for CPD**

As we progress in our careers and gain expertise, the “classic” taught training course may become less significant in our approach to CPD. That doesn’t mean that CPD stops, however. There are plenty of other ways to develop such as taking on additional responsibility at work or opportunities in our personal life such as voluntary roles. If it helps us to develop, it all counts so record it!

### **Pressed for time?**

Mid-life is often busy – work pressures can combine with family commitments to leave very little time for anything else. We may need to consciously make time to properly plan and review our CPD – but it’s time well spent as it will ensure we capitalise on any development opportunities we get. This is also where thinking about the full range of development approaches and options can help – we can select those that easily fit in with our existing lifestyle without having to set aside large amounts of our precious time.

### **Giving something back**

As our experience grows we could consider helping others who are just starting out on a career in our industry by taking on a role as mentor. This could be as formal or informal as we like, as long as both parties have the same expectations. Of course, as we are developing or refining our mentoring skills, we are also participating in another form of CPD. Don’t discount being a mentee either – as we move up the career ladder, some of the challenges we face can be daunting and being mentored by a more senior colleague can be extremely valuable.

**Widen our horizons**

As experience and confidence grows, this might be the time to look beyond our own company to the wider industry and build links with people doing similar roles in other organisations. This can often be highly beneficial as it gives us another perspective on our own role and perhaps sparks ideas for more effective ways of tackling the same challenges (or alternative career directions). The Institute provides some great opportunities for networking, so make use of them!