



Buttercups CPD Bulletin

From Diane King - December 2011

Welcome to the latest Buttercups Bulletin on CPD
(Continuing Professional Development)

I mentioned last time that over the next few bulletins we would be considering in more detail each of the 4 possible stages of the CPD cycle.

These stages are known as Reflection, Planning, Action and Evaluation. You can start at any stage of the cycle, although entries do often start at the first stage of reflection.

This time we are going to look at the stage of **Reflection**

So what exactly is reflection?

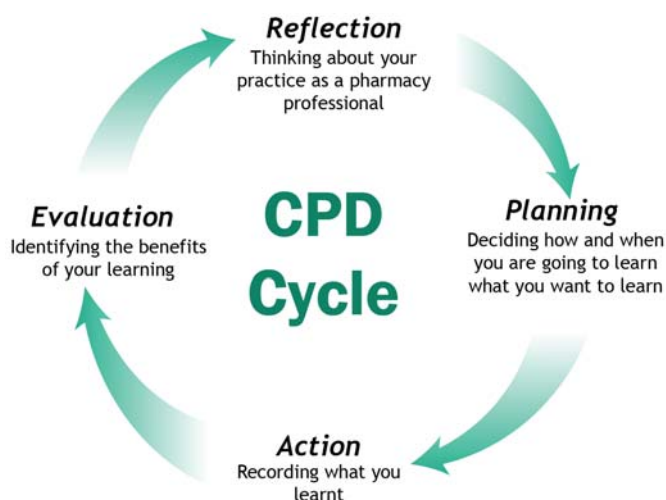
When we think of reflection we tend to think about the image we see when looking into a mirror or shiny surface. In the CPD context it means giving due consideration to the way we do things in the work environment.

It involves giving thought to our individual short, medium and long term professional goals and considering any changes we need to make to achieve those goals.

Some people consider it a chance to take a step back from their work and see how things are currently, with a view to how they or their employer could change things for the better.

It may be that we wish to expand the services we offer. For example we may decide we would like to start offering services to care homes or blood pressure monitoring but do not currently have the knowledge or skills to do this. It may be that we are aware that the profession is going to start operating a new service and we want to be ready for when it does. The New Medicines Service would be such an example.

It is also important to reflect if things don't go as well as we hoped. For example if another healthcare professional asked us a clinical question and we didn't know enough to answer them fully. Such occasions are sometimes referred to as "critical incidents". We should use them as a spur to develop our knowledge or skills in a particular area. We want to be in a position to answer that query next time.





Sometimes a conversation with a patient or a colleague can cause us to reflect, as can things we hear on the radio, read or see on the TV or the internet.

Areas for development can come to light if our organisation conducts audits, uses the appraisal system or uses competency grids. (These are a form of checklist used by some organisations to ensure all staff within a specified group can perform all the essential tasks needed for their role.) For example there may be a list of competencies needed by all dispensary staff, and when the grid is completed for all staff within the team, it comes to light that one staff member does not know how to deal with product recalls. This could well be a suitable subject for CPD for the staff member concerned.



If we are making this reflective trigger into a CPD entry then we need to detail what new knowledge or skill we wish to learn. We need to say how this will be relevant to our area of work. We also need to state the method or methods (there may be more than one) we used to identify what we needed to learn.

Once we have decided by the process of reflection what we need to know or be able to do we can move onto planning how we could go about learning this new knowledge or skill.

But we will leave planning until the next CPD bulletin.

