C HAPTER 1

Understanding your role and where you are at present

This chapter will put you in a positive frame of mind to set about changing the culture of CPD practices in your school and give staff morale a boost at the same time. You can use the self-evaluation models as a quick and easy way to establish where you are in your school/institution in terms of CPD and begin to put together your own vision of where you would like to go. A selection of easily adaptable tools will get you off on the right foot along the road of best practice principles as set out by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Challenge the mindset of your staff to broaden their outlook on what constitutes effective CPD; boost confidence as colleagues realize just how much they have to offer as the new model of shared expertise takes hold and staff really value learning from each other. A series of ready-made PowerPoint slides will save you time as you articulate your vision clearly to the whole staff and can be effortlessly adapted to a variety of contexts. Support the practices of middle leaders/team leaders to gain extra momentum in managing and leading CPD for their own departments/teams by encouraging them to think through some key issues using the simple pro formas designed specifically for them.

Positive thinking

So – you are a CPD co-ordinator. Great! Welcome to what is perhaps the most exciting, if a little daunting, role in any school. Speaking from one co-ordinator to another, it is through our work and our vision of what constitutes creative and dynamic CPD practices that we can transform the learning culture in our schools. We can help to engage students more effectively so that they make even better progress in our classrooms and, at the same time, support staff to model life-long learning practices for pupils which will equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to lead happy, successful and fulfilled lives. What a privilege!

The need to model cost-effective approaches to CPD, rather than providing us with a constant headache, can become a driving force for those of us lucky enough to be given the role, as it forces us to think more imaginatively. The challenges we face in meeting and supporting the training and developmental needs of a diverse range of highly skilled support or teaching staff can become a catalyst for forcing us to think 'outside the box' and, by doing so, to take forward the practices in our schools to satisfying new places.

The overwhelming importance of our work to the stakeholders of the school or educational establishment where we are working is summed up succinctly by Roland Barthes: 'Probably nothing within a school has more impact on students in terms of skills' development, self confidence or classroom behaviour than the personal and professional development of their teachers' (Earley and Bubb, 2004: 17).

At a recent workshop I led for emerging CPD co-ordinators, I asked the delegates to sum up in one word how they felt about the huge responsibility of being in such a key role in their schools. The responses included such words as 'daunted', 'overwhelmed' and 'terrified'. Being in the position of CPD co-ordinator can make us feel all of those things but it can also make us feel excited, empowered and privileged, and that's why in my view it's the best job in the school.

So for those CPD co-ordinators who are still quite new to the role, those who may be interested in pursuing this as a next step in their career or who have been landed with the job, or for those who are dissatisfied with CPD practices in their school but have little idea of how to move them forward, or simply for experienced practitioners looking for some new ideas, the practical tools, advice and tips in this toolkit will provide something for everyone looking to build on current practices. The CPD co-ordinators I have spoken to who are anxious about their role in some way, have, without exception, found some comfort, motivation and a boost to their confidence in just knowing that they are not alone and that many of the experiences and challenges they face were exactly what I faced when I first began the job.

There are many interesting books on the subject of staff development written by people who, without doubt, understand the theory and the issues involved far better than I could ever hope to, but for those of us who are CPD co-ordinators out there doing the job there is little substitute for practical ideas and support from others in the same position. By sharing our ideas, as this book aims to do, we are already on the road to modelling effective CPD practices. It is as simple as that!

I have outlined in Figure 1.1 some of the challenges I faced initially when I took on the role of staff development co-ordinator in my school, many of which may be instantly recognizable to new or more experienced CPD co-ordinators. By judging your own school context against these simple indicators you can begin to gauge in practical and straightforward terms what areas of practice in your school may need some consideration to begin to shape your vision of where you wish CPD practices to go.

By spending a few minutes considering the challenges presented in Figure 1.1 and capturing your initial thoughts of how to begin to address them, you have the makings of your personal vision for CPD in your school/institution and the beginnings of a plan to effect some immediate, medium- and long-term changes. If you are not on the senior leadership team of your school, engage the support of someone who is and use the ideas or issues outlined above to open a dialogue for change; few things can be more important than this, given the potential impact on student learning and the improvement, if needed, on staff morale.

Figure 1.1 is a handy and easily referenced evaluation guide designed to get you thinking about CPD practices and how to tackle them. As a complement to it and as a more in-depth approach to considering current practices, I have found the self-evaluation table produced by London's Learning Emerging, Developing, Establishing (EDE) project (see Figure 1.2 on the CD-ROM that accompanies this book) to be invaluable in moving forward areas of my practice in school.

There are obviously many ways of using such a model to support whole-school development practices. Although I have given some ideas here, your own school context will dictate how you might most successfully employ such a tool in identifying an area or areas which can form a part of your whole-school development plan to drive forward your vision successfully.

Figure 1.1 Informal self-evaluation of CPD leadership

Initial challenge/concern for author	This is the case in my school ✓ or ✗	Initial thoughts and ideas to move this forward
Perception of many staff that few opportunities for training were provided by me/the school		
Given the above, general disgruntlement and disaffection felt by some individuals regarding their own professional development		
General acceptance that external courses = professional development/training		
Lack of an adequate staff development budget to fund external courses = more disaffection and negative impact on staff morale		
Inability of CPD co-ordinator (in this case, me!) to conjure up significant sums of money to address the above		
Perception of the role of CPD co-ordinator among some staff as being one of control or having the power to deny or grant staff development opportunities		
Lack of any meaningful involvement or proactive engagement on the part of some staff in the process of their own ongoing professional development		
Reluctance of some staff to develop a professional portfolio		

Initial challenge/concern for author	This is the case in my school ✔ or ✗	Initial thoughts and ideas to move this forward
A generally ad hoc approach to the organization of development training at individual, departmental or whole school level. Little focused or meaningful matching of training/development activity(ies) to identified targets or objectives		
Lack of involvement of middle leaders/team leaders in supporting, leading or facilitating CPD practices for their subject/pastoral teams/ those whom they line manage		
Classroom observations perceived by many/some staff as a perfunctory necessity to meet performance review requirements rather than as a developmental tool/opportunity for feedback for staff		
Little recognition or effective deployment of the skills and knowledge bank already in existence across the staff of the school		
Little real evaluation of the impact of staff development on students' learning and progress in the classroom		
Lack of a clear understanding of the school's position in relation to key principles of CPD practices or the tools to establish this		
Consequently, given the above, lack of vision for CPD in the school, i.e. where are we now and where do we want to be?		

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An individual approach

Use your knowledge of staff development practices in your school to gauge your school's position across the areas of CPD and, drawing on Figure 1.2, establish whether these are 'emerging', 'developing' or 'establishing'. Record any evidence of CPD practices for each section and where this can be found if appropriate. Use this information to feed into a draft CPD action plan with clearly identified future objectives, realistic timescales and guaranteed success criteria. Include an idea of who will be involved and what their role(s) will be. Take this to your senior leadership team as a draft proposal and request their comments, feedback and support. Seek commitment to areas identified for change, that is, inclusion of key areas in the school improvement or development plan.

A consultative approach

Engage middle and senior leaders in reflecting on CPD practices in your school by sharing the self-evaluation with them and asking for feedback. Use the responses to set up some cross-curricular teams linked to senior leadership to consider and identify strengths and areas for development at this middle level. The sharing of expertise in CPD practices across these subjects/faculties will be part of this discussion and an added bonus. Use this working group to identify and prioritize areas for development. Engage them in the action planning process as above.

A networking approach

Take this opportunity to network with other schools and to learn from each other. Make the self-evaluation tool the focus for a specified number of network meetings of CPD co-ordinators in other schools either in your own locality or further afield. Working together with other colleagues will provide additional impetus to your work and open up an invaluable dialogue through which to exchange ideas and good practice.

Vivienne Porritt led the London's Learning project which created the Emerging, Developing, Establishing model. The framework is now available electronically and can be downloaded from www.lgfl.net/lgfl/sections/cpd/londonslearning/ede/.

Vivienne recommends using the EDE framework as an electronic tool and highlights two ideas for using the framework in this way:

- ✓ Paula Jones, Deputy Head of Chatsworth Infant School in Hounslow in London, uses the EDE framework electronically to traffic light aspects of the principles. This enables her to identify what is 'green for go' to spread practice across the school and what is amber and red as key elements to develop. This can be altered easily as practice changes and helps staff see development visually.

- ✓ In Waltham Forest, CPD leaders suggest using the framework to gather evidence for the statement and the choice of level. Using the framework electronically they insert 'Evidence is seen in …' and individuals and teams can then add evidence as support for Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Investors in People and school self-evaluation processes.

Points to remember

- Use self-evaluation tools to establish where your school is in terms of CPD practices.
- Use this evaluation process to establish key areas for development to be included on an action plan.
- Consult with and engage the support of your senior leadership team; key priorities for CPD should be included in your school improvement plan (SIP).
- Communicate your vision to others; articulate it clearly and confidently.

Making a start

When I first set out in my role as CPD co-ordinator I was immediately struck by the amount of power and control which staff suddenly perceived that I had. During the first few weeks in my new position I was constantly being asked to give permission for colleagues to attend a variety of external courses. Rather than feeling flattered with this new-found authority, I was completely perplexed for a variety of reasons:

- I realized that I didn't have a clue what I was doing.

- I didn't know how I could be expected to make decisions on what training was appropriate for each individual member of staff, given that there were 90 teaching staff and approximately 40 support staff in the school.

- I had a notion of cost-effectiveness, and simply saying yes to everyone who asked seemed at odds with it.

- The whole idea of the way staff were choosing a particular course to attend seemed to me a rather ad hoc process. When I asked if the course supported a particular personal or departmental target the answer was often vague.

- Staff seemed to be attending courses inconsistently across departments and, although much money was being spent, I detected that many staff were still very unhappy. This was often because some staff felt that it was always the same people attending external in-service training (Inset) and I was often informed, 'I haven't had any training for x number of years'. Whenever I asked what this meant, the reply was always the same: that the individual member of staff felt disgruntled because he or she had not been on a course during that time.

- Where did I start with what seemed to be an almost impossible task?

Many CPD co-ordinators, particularly in big primary or secondary schools, may well recognize this scenario from their own experience. Given that CPD has been very high on the government's agenda in recent years you may feel that the culture in your own school is far more forward thinking already in terms of what colleagues value as activities which constitute effective professional development. If not, or you wish to remind them, then you may find the pro forma in Figure 1.3 a useful tool in supporting staff to recognize that training opportunities and activities to help us develop our skills are happening all around us on a daily basis. One of the major challenges faced by CPD co-ordinators is the attitude of many staff who consider that going on courses is the only effective development training. By raising the awareness among staff of what constitutes effective ongoing development training we can have a very positive impact on staff morale.

One of the first things I did was to adapt the DfES list of 'Examples of CPD other than External Courses'. I enlarged the list of ideas in the light of my own school context, just as you can do for yours, and asked staff to tick off any activities in which they had been involved over the past 12 to 18 months and any activities which they felt would support their training needs in the immediate future. See the form in Figure 1.3.

This simple process had the following significant benefits:

✓ Staff began to recognize that a whole range of activities, many of which were already taking place on a daily basis, constitute effective developmental training.

✓ Attending an external course could now be seen as just one way to develop our skills, knowledge and understanding. (I sneakily put this last on the list!)

✓ Staff immediately began to feel better about the training opportunities they had been involved in as they were able to tick off a whole range of things in which they had taken part.

✓ Emphasis was placed not just on recognizing these activities but valuing the expertise of fellow colleagues and the idea that we can all learn from each other.

✓ Confidence was raised among staff as the potential for supporting each others' work, through effective deployment of the professional skills which each of us bring to our work, began to be realized.

✓ I now had an idea, albeit quite crude at this stage, of the kind of development activities which every member of the teaching staff felt would be appropriate for them to be involved in so as to develop professionally.

✓ This information could now be collated across department teams, line managers, pastoral and subject leaders, and could inform future planning for CPD; this had to be a positive step forward away from the ad hoc approaches of the past. This principle can be applied to any phase or size of school or other educational institution.

✓ All staff were actively engaged in the process of identifying potential development activities for themselves – a key element of good practice being the proactive engagement of individuals in the processes in place to develop them.

This simple pro forma provided the basis for moving forward the CPD practices in the school. In time it would be adapted to ensure that these activities were focused and targeted at identified needs rather than whims – but more of that later.

Points to remember

- Talk the talk – always use the term 'CPD activity' rather than 'course' for anything to do with developmental training and lead others on this.
- Recognize CPD as it happens in your school on a daily basis and talk it up.
- Support the work of others by encouraging creative and imaginative approaches to CPD.
- Use coaching models to disseminate good CPD practices across individuals and teams in your school.

Figure 1.3   Initial staff development pro forma

Member of staff: .... Department: .... Date: ....

Academic year 200X/200Y This year I have been involved in the following professional development activities:	**Please tick**	**Evidence (Please select)** **When, where, what, with whom?**	**I would like to be involved in the following professional development activities next year (Please tick)**
Observing good practitioners: Observing other teachers teaching			
Shadowing a colleague			
Visiting and seeing another school in action			
Observing and working with a visiting expert			
Extending professional experience: Leading and contributing to school-based Inset			
Rotation of roles/jobs			
Developing own professional profile			
Co-ordinating/managing a subject			
Assuming the role of leader for a special initiative in school			
Carrying out action research in the classroom/school			
Contributing to a professional publication			
Gaining experience of interviewing			
Acting as a performance reviewer			
Being reviewed			
Serving as a governor			
Serving on professional committee/working parties			
Becoming a union representative			

Academic year 200X/200Y This year I have been involved in the following professional development activities:	Please tick	Evidence (Please select) When, where, what, with whom?	I would like to be involved in the following professional development activities next year (Please tick)
Leading/supervising non-professionals who work in the classroom			
Working on extra-curricular activities			
Taking part in staff conferences on individual pupils			
Working with other professionals such as education psychologists			
Working with an exam board or marking exam papers			
Networking and sharing with a group of colleagues from another school			
Team teaching			
Learning through professional practice with others			
Developing pedagogy in the context of ICT			
Peer mentoring, e.g. mentoring a NQT			
Organizing a display in collaboration with colleagues			
Working with pupils:			
Taking responsibility for a group of pupils on an off-site visit			
Developing teaching skills across a wide age and ability range			
Working with pupils on school councils			
Working with pupils to present an assembly, play, musical performance or other event			

▶

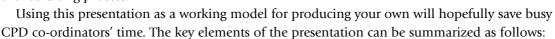| Academic year 200X/200Y This year I have been involved in the following professional development activities:	Please tick	Evidence (Please select) When, where, what, with whom?	I would like to be involved in the following professional development activities next year (Please tick)
Working with pupils preparing a school year book			
Collaborating with peripatetic teachers			
Mentoring individual pupils			
Taking time to evaluate your own practice: Inviting your peers to observe you			
Getting feedback from your own pupils			
Analyzing class and examination work			
Integrating the use of pupil websites and online communities into teaching			
Using e-mail/videoconferencing between pupils in teaching			
Negotiating targets and evaluating work alongside pupils			
Reviewing your marking			
Videoing yourself			
Other: In-house training: at departmental/whole-school level			
ICT training in-house			
International exchange or visit			
Aspiring Leader Conference			
External/county courses			

A copy of this completed pro forma should be held by member of staff and copied to line manager and CPD co-ordinator.

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Communicating your role

At around the same time that the initial CPD pro forma was introduced to staff, I was given the opportunity to 'set out my stall' to colleagues in my new role and to introduce or clarify what, for me, were the key principles of effective CPD. The most straightforward way of doing this initially, I felt, was to give a presentation to the teaching staff highlighting key issues in a clear way and at the same time challenging existing attitudes by exemplifying some new ideas for ways that we could move CPD forward.

The presentation is included here and in full on the CD-ROM (Figure 1.4) as a practical tool for other co-ordinators wishing to do the same. Although your school context and profile may be very different, hopefully all of you engaged with supporting the ongoing professional development of colleagues – whether it be in a small primary school, special school, secondary school or other institution where development is key to success – will be able to adapt, omit or insert additional slides to suit your specific purpose. You will note the reference to the DfES National Standards Framework, part of which has now been redrafted by the Teacher Development Agency. The subject leaders standards outlined here were not at the time of writing included in the redrafting process.

Using this presentation as a working model for producing your own will hopefully save busy CPD co-ordinators' time. The key elements of the presentation can be summarized as follows:

- ✓ making explicit the up-to-date role of the CPD co-ordinator

- ✓ identifying the range of possible developmental activities

- ✓ using the National Standards for middle leaders to begin to recognize their role in supporting and leading the CPD of those with whom they work (the same principle applies to any person who line manages or leads the work of individuals or teams whether it be in a secondary environment or not)

- ✓ at the same time as the above, making clear the need for individuals to be proactively engaged in their ongoing development

- ✓ promoting cost-effective, planned and imaginative approaches

- ✓ defining the role of the senior leadership team in supporting effective and consistent school practices

- ✓ demonstrating the need to link CPD to whole-school, departmental, pastoral or individual targets

- ✓ considering the impact of CPD on classroom practice.

Subsequent sections will explore in more detail each key element of the presentation and outline simple steps that can be taken to begin to effect real change in CPD culture. There will be supporting practical tools.