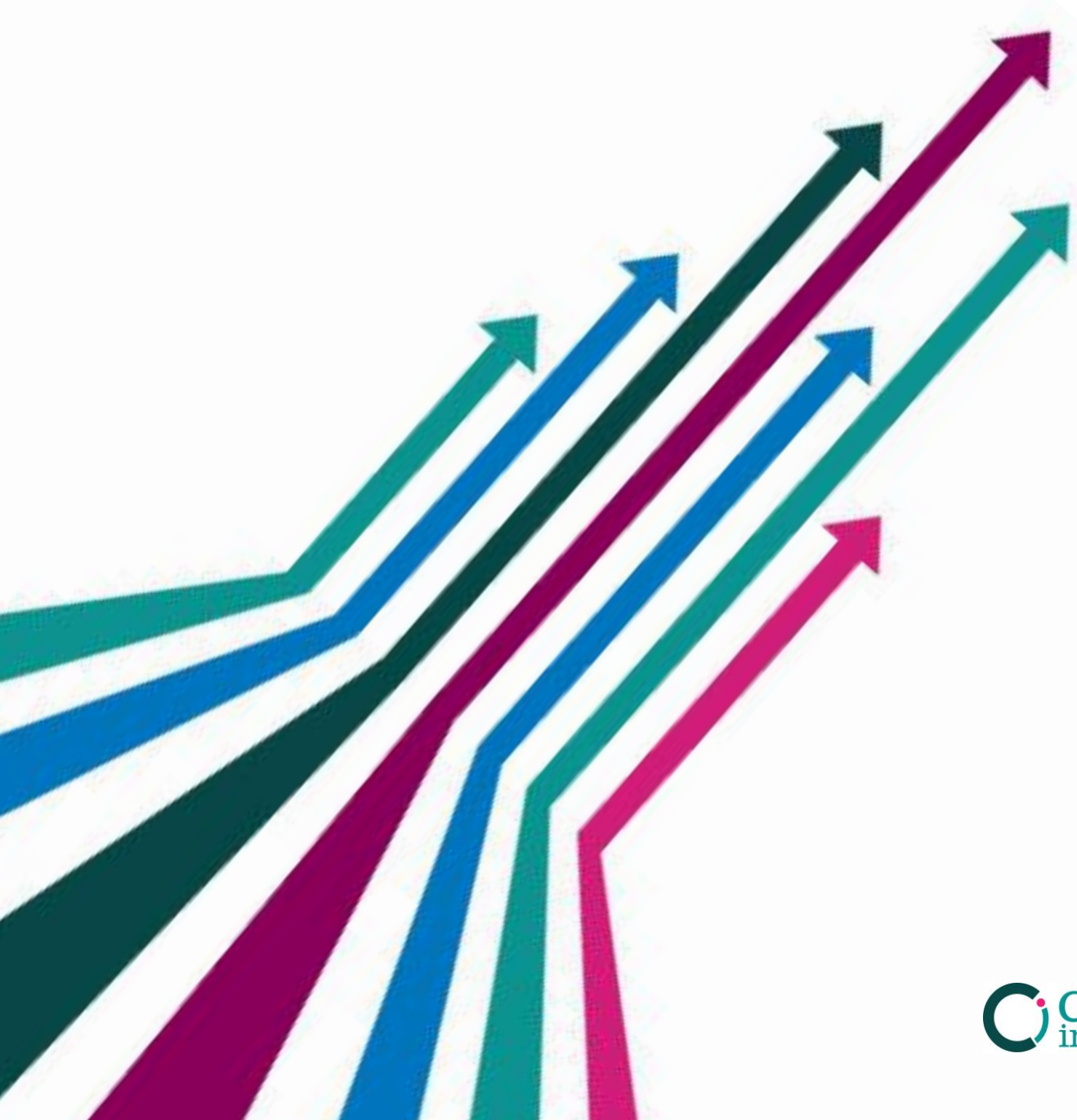




7 Ways organisations can support CPD



7 Ways organisations can support CPD

There are many benefits to employers who encourage their employees to be proactive about their CPD (see blog '7 reasons employers should support CPD'). Once you are committed to encouraging it, how can you make it a success? Here are some suggestions:

1 | Get buy-in from managers from the start

Individuals will be more likely to take self-development seriously if it is supported by their manager informally (throughout the year) and formally (through appraisals).

2 | Connect professional development closely to individuals' roles

Encourage professionals to identify the challenges they face in their work and use CPD to overcome them. Individuals will be more committed if professional development is relevant and helps them in their daily work as well as their future career.

3 | Encourage professional development to be undertaken collaboratively

Individuals should share what they have learnt with their colleagues, for example in team meetings, monthly learning clubs or a simple email, 'I thought you might be interested in...'. Recording professional development can be used to aid collaboration. Records might take the form of a draft email, for instance, or of notes for a presentation to peers. People are more motivated to learn when they do so with others.

4 | Make professional development personal

Give individuals maximum choice over what they do, when and how. Encourage them to identify their own development priorities and - in discussion with trusted colleagues - their own ways of achieving them. Use our download, '57 Varieties of CPD', to expand ideas of what might count for CPD. Focus first on users of CPD and what works for them, rather than the supply of activities such as training. When a 'market' for CPD activities exists, the supply is much easier to create and manage. Professional development must be owned if it is to be undertaken enthusiastically.

5 | Encourage regular professional development by introducing a prompt

As at least one organisation has done, the ideal may be an online menu of different types of activity, with options in each type. Individuals would choose an option every month. They would receive a monthly reminder and be required, perhaps every three months, to log the activities they have undertaken. Securing an independent mark of quality will increase confidence in these activities. Professional development suffers when it is done in a rush at the end of the year.

6 | Encourage individuals to evaluate the results of their development

Run workshops to help professionals develop simple methodologies for this - from recording how an activity changed their practice to measuring impact. Periodically evaluate these results to assess how far your professional development scheme as a whole is contributing to the organisation. Emphasising the learning outcome rather than the learning activity makes professional development purposeful and ensures the organisation benefits.

7 | Recognise good quality formal and informal professional development

Do this for example:

- through the appraisal system
- by giving annual awards for outstanding CPD
- by appointing as CPD champions those who do professional development well. They could be asked to support others, for instance by convening collaborative circles for individuals to share their learning or by mentoring colleagues in CPD skills.

Remember: recognition, especially by peers, is the most powerful motivator of all

About the CPD Futures Project

Led by Dr Michael Moynagh, CPD Futures is a research-based project that is helping to make CPD more fulfilling for professionals and more effective for organisations and the people they serve.

Details can be found at: www.cpdfutures.com