

# What does CPD actually mean?

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**O**K, we all know that it means Continuing Professional Development, so let's get down to the nuts and bolts. The *Oxford English Dictionary* states that a profession is a 'vocation or calling, one that involves some branch of advanced learning or science.'

Continuation of study is a vital component of every professional regardless of industry. If you do not keep up with what is happening you will find yourself being overtaken by those people who do. Some people cannot understand why they miss out on promotions, but let's face it, it happens all the time. But why?

There are a couple of very simple answers. Perhaps the other person 'shouted louder' than everyone else. Is it because the other person took every single opportunity to promote themselves and their skills — giving value back to the organisation, giving value to colleagues (and no, I am not talking about the ingratiating opportunist who delights in telling everyone how wonderful they are without doing anything). Or did the person take each and every learning opportunity that was offered to them, or asked for? And then shared that extra knowledge with their fellow employees, the management, the company that allowed them either money or time (or in some cases both) to attend. The answer is most probably yes to all the above.

Continuing professional development is not limited to outside

study, networking or the odd breakfast meeting (although all of these are very valuable). CPD also encompasses professional reading, the time taken to discuss matters with colleagues, and the sharing of valuable information. However, there is another aspect of CPD that is perhaps overlooked, and that is additional on the job training. By taking the time to work in other areas, improving your skill base, allowing your colleagues to improve theirs (you have to have an open mind to cross-pollination of work ideas for this to be considered effective), can be one of the best ways of boosting morale within an organisation, whilst at the same time learning about new technologies, principles, standards and methods that you would not have had chance to learn before. But before you announce that you are going to move 'onwards and sideways' please make sure that the organisation that you work for supports this, and that you have the backing of all parties involved, because some people see job rotation as a slight on their ability to do the work rather than the opportunity that it actually is.

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## ALIA wants you ... join the CPD scheme now!

**D**o you want to keep pace with changing technology and knowledge in the dynamic environment of the library and information sector and network as well? Do you want to be able to call yourself a 'certified practitioner' and use the post-nominals CP? Would you like to become an Associate Fellow? If you answered 'yes' to any of these questions, then the ALIA CPD scheme is for you!

### Special rates for members

ALIA provides opportunities for you to pursue career-long learning:

- courses run by professional training providers, and at discounted rates for members of the ALIA CPD scheme;
- a comprehensive conference program; and
- more than 400 events organised by ALIA groups for ALIA groups.

See <http://alia.org.au/education/cpd/> for details.

### How to join

To join the ALIA CPD scheme you must be a financial member of ALIA. You will need to register at <http://alia.org.au/members-only/education/cpd/register.html>. As an associate or technician member you have full access to the CPD scheme at no additional fee — it is a benefit incorporated in ALIA membership.

### You have registered — what now?

The *ALIA Career-long learning user guide* [<http://alia.org.au/members-only/education/cpd/userguide/>] is designed to allow you to make choices and custom-

ise a learning program for your particular needs, work circumstances or location.

The *Summary of activities* table incorporated in the user guide [<http://alia.org.au/members-only/education/cpd/userguide/activities.html>] will assist you to select your CPD activities and will demonstrate how points are accrued. Follow the links for:

- details about each type of category
- recording requirements for audit.

You can undertake CPD at home, in-house or externally; in the city and regional areas; alone or with others; within or outside working hours.

### Tracking your CPD progress

A tracking database has been developed to help you to track your CPD activities and points as you go [<http://www.alia.org.au/members-only/education/cpd/tracking/>].

To access the database you will need to enter your name and membership number in the yellow box on the right hand side of screen and click the 'To my cpd record...' button. Once you have entered the details of your CPD, remember to 'update my record' and log out of the service to ensure that your changes have been saved.

### Documentary evidence

In addition to recording details to the tracking database, you will need to provide documentary evidence for audit purposes. Download the *CPD record sheets* at <http://alia.org.au/education/cpd/record.sheets.html>. The summary of activi-

ties table (see above), provides full details of the documentation required for each type of activity.

### ALIA career development kit

The *Career development kit* [<http://alia.org.au/education/cpd/career.kit.html>] is a good starting point to assist you to plan your CPD.

The *Kit* is designed to help you to analyse your skills and highlight the areas that you need to work on to develop existing skills and acquire new ones.

As a participant in the CPD scheme, you not only strengthen your competencies by working through the *Kit*, but you also accumulate 20 points towards your triennium.

### Need to know more?

Check the summary at <http://alia.org.au/members-only/education/cpd/userguide/cpd.html> for details on how to join the scheme, the requirements to retain your status, exemptions, post-nominals, how to become an Associate Fellow, and more. A comprehensive FAQ has also been developed and can be found at <http://alia.org.au/education/cpd/faqs.html>.

### You are not on your own

Join our e-list! [<http://alia.org.au/alianet/e-lists/>]. aliaCPD is the ALIANet e-list affiliated with this group. Follow the instructions and you will be communicating with the rest of the group in no time at all.

For more information about the ALIA CPD scheme, contact Jill Yvanovich ph 02 6215 8216 or e-mail [cpd@alia.org.au](mailto:cpd@alia.org.au). ■