

Designing and running a CPD programme

You may need to be creative in planning and implementing a CPD programme. Some possible formats – which are not mutually exclusive – are:

- half- or whole-day workshops, run off-site with participants from different institutions and perhaps facilitated by Regional Subject Leads or Subject Learning Coaches
- learning groups meeting on an ongoing basis
- departmental groups
- one-to-one coaching sessions.

If you are responsible for running a session, you will find it useful to:

- become thoroughly familiar with the activity notes and supporting material
- read the related material in Section 3: *Learning by doing*
- photocopy any sheets needed for activities
- organise the equipment needed to play the DVD
- facilitate the discussions
- keep the group to time
- record the commitments made by each participant at the end of the session
- get the agreement of the group as to the time and place for the next session and who will take responsibility for running it
- ensure that any action points, or points to be followed up, are recorded and circulated.

You will also need to assess whether participants would benefit from working through some of the activities on the CD ROM *Resources* before (or after) exploring the video material.

Learning through CPD

Learning involves change, and change can be both painful and rewarding. It takes time to let go of long established beliefs and habits, and introduce new strategies. For some people, this can be a very risky process. It's your job to:

- create a climate in which people are eager and willing to experiment with new strategies and techniques
- encourage people to see mistakes as a positive, necessary and inevitable part of learning
- set up a process that delivers feedback and coaching
- encourage teachers and trainers to support and challenge each other, to share their experiences and to celebrate their successes.

Feedback and coaching are essential. Petty (see below) believes change is unlikely without them.

Using these resources to make things happen

These resources will support a process that:

- starts with an analysis of current practice
- explores new possibilities, using activities and video footage to stimulate debate
- invites experimentation with new strategies and activities

Teachers and trainers need support while they are experimenting

Reviews of research on in-service staff training show that training often does not change teaching. Some teachers, even though they find the training inspiring, do not try the new approach. Others will experiment but get dispirited if it doesn't work well the first time. People see the disadvantages of a new approach much more clearly than (the disadvantages) of their usual practice, and all but the most intrepid minority soon retreat back into their comfort zone.

But teachers and trainers CAN change their practice. The same research shows that teachers will change how they teach if they experiment and get feedback and coaching on this experiment: that is, feedback on whether they are making good use of the new or improved teaching strategy, and coaching on how to improve their use of it, including any help they might need to overcome the inevitable difficulties.

Geoff Petty, teacher educator and writer
www.geoffpetty.com (March 2003)

Helping teachers and trainers to develop their skills

The more you can reveal the bits you are shaky about, the better it is that you're going to learn.

Christine Harrison
King's College
University of London

- provides feedback and coaching on the outcomes
- encourages participants to revise their schemes of work and session plans.

For many teachers and trainers, making the shift to a more learner-centred style of teaching can trigger a lot of uncertainty and anxiety. For example, they may:

- believe that the new ways will take longer than the ones they are familiar with and that they will not be able to cover the syllabus
- expect that the new ways will take more preparation time than they might have available
- feel anxious about how they will cope with the uncertainty
- fear that learners won't be willing to engage in active learning
- be reluctant to try out new ideas, for fear of things going wrong in the classroom.

These fears and anxieties are very real, and need discussing in a supportive way. Talk to them about the model describing 'The four stages of learning':

- unconscious incompetence (we don't know what we don't know)
- conscious incompetence (we know we could do better)
- conscious competence (we can do things if we concentrate hard)
- unconscious competence (we can do things with ease)

See Sheet 2.1, page 2.7.

If teachers and trainers are seeking further reassurance, then you could:

- refer them to the experiences of teachers described in Section 3: *Learning by doing* of this resource
- agree that initial preparation may take longer and suggest that the investment of time pays dividends in the longer term
- reassure participants that making the change is a question of building up skills over a period of time and

that the CPD sessions are intended to support this process

- offer the reassurance that when learners are more actively engaged, their enthusiasm and commitment increases. Their learning is deeper, more thorough and longer lasting. The likelihood of them passing their exams increases.

In at least one respect, the teachers and trainers in your session are the same as the learners in their classroom: they will all learn more quickly, easily and deeply when they feel safe. Safety in this context means trusting that they will be heard with respect, that their struggles matter, and that they will get the support they need. Have a look at the suggested 'ground rules' for group work on Sheet 2.11, page 2.61 of this section. How might they apply in the sessions you run?

The GROW model of coaching

GROW² is a non-directive model of coaching. It stands for:

- **G**oals – what you want to achieve
- **R**eality – where you are right now in relation to your goals
- **O**ptions – how you might try to achieve your goals
- **W**ill – what it will take to implement the options

When you use this approach, it is not up to you to give advice or provide answers to the person you are coaching. Instead, your role is to ask questions that stimulate your colleagues to think more deeply about the challenges and issues they are facing and to help them work out their own way forward.

You'll find some examples of powerful, thought-provoking questions in Sheet 2.2

² Whitmore, J. *Coaching for Performance*. Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1992.