

**A sample activity from the
Fenman trainer's resource:**

Continuing Professional Development

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Thank you for downloading this sample activity. You are welcome to use this material in your courses.

This sample activity is just one of 21 contained in the trainer's activity pack 'Continuing Professional Development', published by Fenman. Details of the other activities are given at the end of this document.

Continuing Professional Development

Contents:

Introduction
Activity 14: Auditing Your Assets
Full contents listing: 21 activities
About this resource

Introduction:

Anyone who wants to get on in the world must take responsibility for their own learning and development. That's where this pack comes in - it helps individuals become proactive in this vital area, giving them the skills to tackle their objectives.

You can use the activities to help individuals plan and control learning opportunities - they'll become more motivated and more effective at work. This unique pack takes away the potential loneliness of self-development and encourages a positive learning culture.

Subjects covered include:

- mentoring
- preferred learning styles
- self-directed learning
- career and personal development planning
- informal/formal forms of learning
- evaluation of learning events
- keeping a record of development.

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ACTIVITY 14

AUDITING YOUR ASSETS

INTRODUCTION

This activity takes people through an audit of their current skills, abilities and knowledge to set a firm foundation for the later CPD activities. Participants work in pairs to review significant events and elicit from these the skills that people deployed in getting good results. The activity arrives at an answer to the important question ‘Where are you now?’

PURPOSE

- To identify what skills and abilities people currently have so they can move on to what they need to acquire through CPD
- To begin CPD by answering the question ‘Where are you now?’
- To provide a vehicle for practising mentoring skills
- To generate personal action plans for improvement.

APPLICATION

This is the first of a series of five linked activities, Activities 14 and 16–19, which together describe and practise the first five stages of the CPD process described in Activity 13: The Basics Of Your CPD. The sixth stage, ‘Keep learning actively’, does not need a separate defining activity. It is one of two alternative activities in this pack which aim to establish a base-line for people’s CPD programmes; the other is Activity 15: My Survival Toolkit, which is linked to Activity 4: The Survivor’s Toolkit. The current activity can be run in isolation at any point when you want to start a group off on the CPD process. It is preferable to precede it with both involvement activities and support activities so that people can mentor one another effectively. See *Some Suggested Learning Events* (page xxiii) for suggestions on which activities to use as preparation for this one.

WHAT HAPPENS

Participants work in mutual mentoring pairs and each defines:

- successes they have had at work
- difficult tasks which form part of their current role
- achievements that they are proud of.

Working from these events, they assist one another to:

- explore each of the situations
- identify the skills and knowledge that they used to achieve results in each case
- write these on a form as a record of the person's skill set
- decide what this means for the future.

The activity ends with a brief discussion, in the full group, of the points which have emerged in the pair discussions.

TIME

Overall time required: 85 minutes

- Brief people on what will happen: 5 minutes
- Mentor pairs elicit one another's skill sets: 60 minutes
- Share and discuss in a plenary session: 10 minutes
- Participants complete an action plan: 10 minutes

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- 3 OHT masters
 - 14.1** *Auditing Your Assets – Objectives of this activity*
 - 14.2** *Three Audit Forms For Mentees*
 - 12.6** *A Mentoring Summary*
- 4 Handout masters
 - 14.3** *Successes At Work*
 - 14.4** *Difficult Tasks*
 - 14.5** *Things I'm Proud Of*
 - 14.6** *An Action Plan*
- Overhead projector and screen
- Flipchart easel, paper and coloured pens

HOW DO I DO IT?

INTRODUCTION

Introduce the activity by reminding people that the first stage of the CPD process is to find out where you are now, so that you know what you already have before working out what you want to get.



Show OHT 14.1 –
Auditing Your Assets – Objectives of this activity

Use OHT 14.1 to brief people on what you want to achieve with the activity. Show the OHT and keep quiet while people read it, then check to see if they have questions.



Distribute Handout 14.3 –
Successes At Work



Distribute Handout 14.4 –
Difficult Tasks



Distribute Handout 14.5 –
Things I'm Proud Of



Show OHT 14.2 –
Three Audit Forms For Mentees

Put people into their mentoring pairs and use OHT 14.2 to brief them on what they have to do:

- take it in turns to mentor one another through a skills audit
- use all the recommended skills and techniques when acting as mentor
 - In Activity 12: Making It Work For You, there is an OHT which can be used to remind people of the skills and techniques: it is *OHT 12.6: A Mentoring Summary*
- as mentee, work through each of the three audit forms to arrive at a list of skills
- for *Handout 14.3: Successes At Work*, they identify two events which they, or others, saw as being successful in some important way
- for *Handout 14.4: Difficult Tasks*, they identify two regular and demanding work activities which are important for the success of their organisations
- for *Handout 14.5: Things I'm Proud Of*, they identify two achievements outside work which were difficult to do and satisfying to achieve

- mentors are to question mentees to discover
 - what the mentee actually did in each case
 - what skills the mentee had to use in order to get the good results
 - what actions this now requires on the mentee's CPD programme
- mentees are to record the results of the discussions on the three forms
- they have 30 minutes each for the activity.

MENTOR PAIRS ELICIT ONE ANOTHER'S SKILL SETS

Start the pairs on the practice, telling them what time the first pair is due to finish. Since pairs will take varying amounts of time, tell them that if they finish ahead of time then they should swap roles and repeat the practice.

Tell the pairs when ten minutes are up; if they have not already changed over then the mentor is to summarise where they have got to, and then people can change roles and repeat the practice.

Some pairs may finish ahead of time; if you can speak to them unobtrusively without disturbing the others then ask them to make notes of their deductions and conclusions after the exercise.

PLENARY SESSION

Lead a short discussion on the outcomes of the practice exercise. Here are some questions for getting discussion going:

- What did you feel when you were considering your successes and the things you're good at?
- As mentor, did your mentee find it difficult to talk about what they were good at?
 - Modesty is seen as a virtue in our society, and people feel uncomfortable at any suggestion of boasting. As a result, they may find it difficult to give themselves proper credit for what they're good at, and may, by undervaluing themselves, be undervalued by others.
- What kind of skills began to emerge?
- How easy was it to get a balanced assessment of someone's level of skill?

- What conclusions do you draw from doing this exercise?

Summarise the main points people have made and record these on a flipchart. Invite participants to choose what to record for their own learning.



Distribute Handout 14.6 –
An Action Plan

Ask people to complete Handout 14.6 with their actions for the future, to end the activity.

**POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS TO THE
ACTIVITY**

An alternative approach to auditing people's skills is set out in the pair of linked activities, Activity 4: The Survivor's Toolkit and Activity 15: My Survival Toolkit.

If you intend to run Activity 20.1: So What Will You Do?, which draws together action plans overall, you may choose to omit the final action planning part of this current activity.

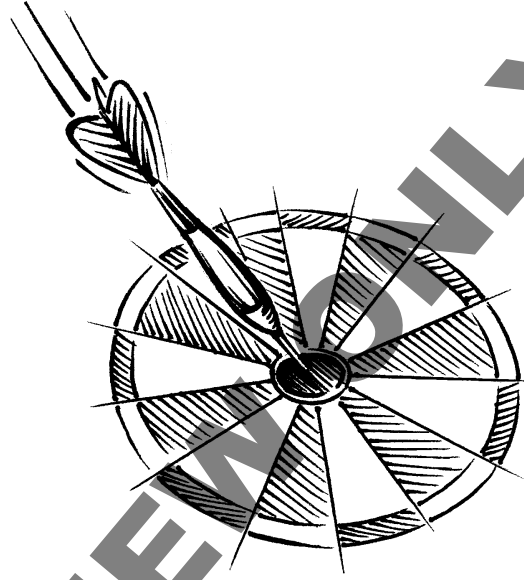
AUDITING YOUR ASSETS – OBJECTIVES OF THIS ACTIVITY



14.1

AUDITING YOUR ASSETS – OBJECTIVES

- Define 'Where you are now' by identifying your skills and abilities
- Get some more practice in helping
- Define action plans
- Have fun!



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THREE AUDIT FORMS FOR MENTEES



14.2

THREE AUDIT FORMS FOR MENTEES

- *Successes at work*
- *Difficult tasks*
- *Things I'm proud of*

For each one, mentor asks questions

- to tease out what you actually did
- to identify the skills you used
- to decide what to do next

You've got 30 minutes each



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SUCCESSSES AT WORK



14.3

Think of two events at work that you, or others, saw as real successes. Just complete the 'brief description' box for now – your mentor will help you with the rest.

A brief description of a success at work	
What I did to achieve the success	
The skills I used	
The CPD actions that this suggests	

A brief description of a success at work	
What I did to achieve the success	
The skills I used	
The CPD actions that this suggests	



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DIFFICULT TASKS



14.4

Think of two tasks at work that are challenging or difficult to do well. Just complete the 'brief description' box for now – your mentor will help you with the rest.

A brief description of a difficult task	
What I do to achieve the necessary results	
The skills I use	
The CPD actions that this suggests	

A brief description of a difficult task	
What I do to achieve the necessary results	
The skills I use	
The CPD actions that this suggests	



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THINGS I'M PROUD OF



14.5

Think of two successes, not at work, that you're proud of. Just complete the 'brief description' box for now – your mentor will help you with the rest.

A brief description of a success away from work	
What I did to achieve the success	
The skills I used	
The CPD actions that this suggests	

A brief description of a success away from work	
What I did to achieve the success	
The skills I used	
The CPD actions that this suggests	



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AN ACTION PLAN

14.6



<i>Date</i>	<i>Subject</i>
What's the overall aim that you want to reach?	
What specific objectives do you want to achieve?	
What benefits are you hoping to get?	
What are you going to do? And when will you do it?	

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INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. What Are Your Expectations?

An ice-breaking activity which makes it easy for people to contribute at an early stage and to focus their objectives for a learning event. It also reassures participants that their views will be respected and valued.

2. Were Your Expectations Met?

This activity (which is linked to Activity 1: What Are Your Expectations?) gets people's immediate reactions to a learning event as part of an evaluative process. It helps people to review their learning and gives the trainer an immediate measure of effectiveness.

3. What Have They Done To Our Jobs?

An activity which defines the context for Continuing Professional Development by eliciting a joint view of the current psychological contract between employer and employed, and agreeing the implications for the professional development of people in the learning group.

4. The Survivor's Toolkit

This gets participants to identify the skills, knowledge and attitudes which are most likely to help people survive in the current climate of change. This provides benchmarks for what they need to learn through CPD and can be used to introduce Activity 15: My Survival Toolkit.

5. What's Worked And Not Worked?

This is an activity to start a second or later module of a learning programme by celebrating people's CPD successes since the previous module, and identifying what has impeded them so that they can work out how to keep moving forward.

6. Tackling The Issues

Participants develop their ability to think creatively and generate original answers to the difficulties they meet in working on their own CPD programmes. This helps to gain people's commitment to their action plans.

SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

7. Helpers, Not Interrogators

Developing yourself on your own can be a lonely business, and this activity shows people how to give one another effective support. Participants learn and practise basic mutual mentoring skills by helping one another to explore their motivators and develop action plans for improving both their CPD and their mentoring abilities.

8. Getting The Whole Picture

This builds participants' mutual mentoring skills by giving them guided practice in supportive questioning techniques, using the issues of their CPD as topics. Everyone practises questioning and being questioned, and everyone gets feedback to help them develop further.

9. Keeping People Going

An activity to broaden and deepen people's ability to support and mentor one another by giving guided practice in some more advanced techniques of solution-focused mentoring. Again, participants get feedback to help them build a repertoire of helpful tactics.

10. Have You Got A Match?

This activity sets up supportive relationships between the participants by matching what people want to get from being mentored with the style they want to adopt as mentors. This tactic has a good record of producing mutually supportive pairs of people who continue to help one another long after the learning event has ended.

11. That's The Limit!

This enables mentoring pairs to explore what they want from one another and what limits and boundaries they want to set on their work together. It gets the mentoring relationship off to a good start

12. Making It Work For You

An activity to provide the mentoring pairs with a structure for planning how they will work together in the weeks and months after the learning event, and helps them to schedule the way ahead.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

13. The Basics Of Your CPD

An overview of the CPD process which allows people to explore and question, and provides a route map and structure for the remaining CPD activities. People work out where they are in the process and arrive at their outline plans. Like the other CPD activities, this one also gives participants some practice in mutual mentoring.

14. Auditing Your Assets

This activity takes people through an audit of their current skills, abilities and knowledge to set a firm foundation for the later CPD activities. Participants work in pairs to review significant events and elicit from these the skills that people deployed in getting good results. The activity arrives at an answer to the important question 'Where are you now?'

15. My Survival Toolkit

Linked to Activity 4: The Survivor's Toolkit, this activity is an alternative to Activity 14: Auditing Your Assets, as a way of answering the question 'Where are you now?' Participants compare their current skills and abilities with those of survivors, and work from this to the start of a definition of the things they need to learn through CPD. Mutual mentors work in pairs to help one another.

16. Set Your Objectives

This activity guides participants through the process of first choosing an overall aim for their own CPD and then translating that into valid and realistic personal objectives. People refine their objectives by acting as 'consultants' to one another, which also gives them another chance to improve their mutual mentoring abilities. The activity provides an answer to the question 'Where do you want to be?'

17. Plan Your Route

People often feel that formal courses are the only way to learn. This is an exercise which shows people how to exploit the learning opportunities in all the things they already do, and how to help themselves to keep learning. Participants examine some effective ways to learn and use these as a basis for building their mutual mentoring skills. The activity leads to an answer to the question 'What will get you there?'

18. Learn In Your Own Way

After summarising the relevance of learning styles, this activity gives participants ways of exploiting their learning preferences and becoming more versatile learners. It leads to an answer to the question 'What suits you best?' There is a strong focus on people's experience, and on developing learning abilities and mutual mentoring skills.

19. Record To Prove It

An introduction to a variety of ways of recording progress in CPD, helping people to choose a method which is both congenial for them and acceptable to an employer or a professional institute. It will help them to answer the question 'How will you know you've arrived?'

20. So What Will You Do?

This draws together all the strands and gives people an overview of their CPD process after they have worked through the learning activities. Again, mutual mentors work in pairs to make sure that everyone's action plans are both comprehensive and realistic.

21. Where Do We Go From Here?

This activity reviews the programme of learning events and identifies any actions which might be taken by organisations or groups. The mutual mentor pairs also set out what they are going to do after the learning events. The activity could lead into Activity 2, *Were Your Expectations Met?*, which reviews, evaluates and closes the learning events.

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ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

WHO IS IT FOR?

This is a pack of learning activities for:

- organisations which are moving away from course-based training towards more effective (and more cost-effective) ways of developing the skills and abilities of their staff
- trainers, facilitators and consultants who want to support groups and individuals as they develop the attitudes and techniques needed for continuing professional development
- professional institutes that want their members to continue learning and improving throughout their professional lives.

HOW CAN YOU USE IT?

Even though the activities are numbered, you will probably not use all of them in the order set out here. Some could easily introduce or follow others, but the pack is 'rigidly flexible' so that you can choose whether to run a particular activity:

- as a separate stand-alone event
- together with other activities from the pack
- linked to any other resources you have.

This gives you the freedom to set up a programme for fostering Continuing Professional Development that suits your circumstances.

WHAT DOES IT CONTAIN?

Every activity has a standard format:

- an *Introduction* – what it is about
- its *Purpose* – what results it should get
- its *Application* – how and when you might use it
- *What Happens* – a description of the process
- the *Time, Materials & Resources* that you prepare and use
- a blow-by-blow answer to *How Do I Do It?*, including target timings.

Possible modifications – some more ideas on ways to use the activity.

You will find masters for all the overhead transparencies and handouts that you need for the activities, and all the activities have suggested timings. There are also some suggested learning events which use several linked activities from the pack, and a list of references and further reading on CPD.

WHAT APPROACH DOES IT USE?

All the activities actively involve the participants in the learning process and there is very little lecturing (though you will find full support for all the ideas that the trainer needs to put across). One group of activities, the Involvement Activities, is specifically designed to gain the enthusiastic commitment and participation of the learners. Activities 1–6 are Involvement Activities.

There is a strong focus on solutions and every activity aims to motivate people to determine and record actions which they will implement after the learning event.

One unusually helpful feature is the group of activities which sets out to develop people's ability to support one another throughout the learning event, and afterwards when they engage in their personal CPD programmes. These Support Activities supply a powerful resource for improving the effectiveness of both the learning event and the CPD activities which you want to foster. Activities 7–12 are Support Activities.


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