

CPD case study

Part 1 – Self Awareness

PC Heathward has served as a Community Police Constable for 5 years. She has a high level of experience in her current environment and she ensures her skills are maintained. She completed her training some time ago and decided to access the National Policing Curriculum (NPC) to see if there is anything new that she should be aware of and to consider if she is up to date.

As part of her search she finds the 'Community Policing Constable' CPD profile and the 'Core Constable' CPD profile. Within them she finds and interrogates the National Occupational Standards (NOS), and discovers that they can be used to support individuals to maintain and enhance their knowledge, skills and behaviours.

PC Heathward makes a mind-map of her role, some rough ideas of potential career progression routes/opportunities, area she thinks she can improve in and lists possible ways to get there. It helps to clarify her thinking, but doesn't ask any of the difficult questions, and is based entirely on her experience. She knows her experience is valued and valuable but she is self-aware enough to know that there are always areas for development.

She generally doesn't enjoy seeking feedback but values the informal spontaneous feedback she receives from colleagues which lets her know she is effective. PC Heathward decides to pursue her own development based on the 'Community Policing Constable' CPD profile, and because problem solving is highlighted as one possible area for development, she takes an online psychometric test a colleague recommends. The test results are encouraging but they highlight room for improvement in problem solving, memory and attention.

Part 2 – Planning

PC Heathward was interested in finding out how to improve her problem solving skills but didn't yet want to undertake a formal learning opportunity (such as the [Key Skills Assessment](#) on the subject offered by Open Learn) primarily because of the time commitment. She didn't want her CPD activities to be a burden on top of her day to day duties or time outside of work and tried to think of a small change she could make to her routine in the first instance. She enjoyed completing puzzles when she was younger but had given them up some time ago and wondered if that was a good place to start. She set herself a SMART target of:

- Complete one brain training puzzle a day using an app on my phone and see if it helps improve my problem solving skills

PC Heathward didn't need to say how long she intended to do this for, she was just going to see if the completion of the brain training puzzles made a difference to her problem solving skills at work. It's okay to start on a CPD activity without knowing how long it will take you.

Part 3 – Action

PC Heathward used a brain training app for few days and had begun to keep a log of what she was doing and where she had perceived an improvement in her abilities to solve problems.

PC Heathward's CPD routine has begun to ensure that she is using her higher order thinking skills in an environment that carries a combination of factors that accelerated her learning. A simple activity to improve her ability to solve problems has been assisting her with the multitude of decisions she made every day, in particular the complex and difficult decisions she made at work.

After a few weeks of completing the brain training puzzles PC Heathward decided to retake the online psychometric test to measure her progress.

Part 4 - Reflection

PC Heathward was pleased by her psychometric test results as they showed an improvement in her problem solving skills, however her memory and attention had only improved slightly. She reflected on how much she had enjoyed the process of quietly improving herself and noticing the positive effect it was having. She did some research of how to improve her memory and attention and discovered some more apps for her tablet. The one that suited her best involved three sets of tasks per day, took no longer than 10 minutes and measured her progress as she went.

PC Heathward began to feel that her initial CPD focus was too narrow so after reflecting on this she decided to ask her colleagues and line manager for some informal feedback. It revealed that as an experienced practitioner Heathward could demonstrate more leadership qualities, particularly when managing recruits and that she might look to find a way to better share her knowledge and experience with others.

Before adding leadership skills to her CPD objectives she wrote a brief summary of what she'd learnt and achieved from completing the brain training puzzles. She realised she had been able to improve some of her skills through the use of technology and resolved to try and do the same when planning her approach to developing her leadership skills, having discovered some podcasts on leadership skills available from Chartered Institute of Professional Development (CIPD).