

Case Study 2: Community Pharmacist



Terry

Terry is a 50-year-old community pharmacist registering in 1975. He lives in the north of England with his wife and two children. When he recorded his entry his career had always been as a community pharmacist with the same large multiple. His job involved being a pre-registration tutor for two students at his store.

The two students were very different and required different levels of support. Terry had been a tutor for a number of years and felt that over that period of time he had gained a lot of expertise in guiding his students through the competency assessments. Previously he had found that the students needed minimal support when it came to the exam. On this occasion one student, whom he felt would sail through the exam, had failed, and the other, who he had recognised needed some help, had passed.

This caused Terry to reflect on the support that he was providing his students for their exam preparation.

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Record Sheets

reflection

Name of entry: **Date Identified:**

What do you want to learn to be able to do?

Improve the way I help students prepare for pre-reg exam.

How have you identified this learning objective?

Poor performance of one of two students. I need to be sure I am contributing as well as possible to help them pass.

What methods did you use to identify this objective?

Choose...

Critical Incidents
Feedback from colleagues
Feedback from users of services/products

Who is driving this?

Bottom up: users of your services/products.
By you.

What skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours will you need to develop?

Choose...

Teaching methods and style. Preparation and analysis of questions and students. Knowledge base improvement.

To which areas of competence does this learning objective relate?

Choose...

A pharmacist who has a broad perspective: keeps abreast of issues in pharmacy outside her own immediate sphere of interest.
A person who is continuing to develop: who reflects on work processes and outcomes, evaluates her own performance and takes action to develop her expertise and knowledge.
A person who communicates clearly, confidently and assertively and who makes no assumptions about the knowledge or understanding of others.
A person who manages time well, prioritising effectively, honouring commitments to others and making her time available to staff.
A person who treats the development of team members as a priority, giving support and advice to assist them in their development.
A person who sets aside time to plan training and who sets clear objectives with the learner's input.
A person who uses a wide range of events as coaching opportunities and takes account of the needs and learning style of the learner.
A person who encourages self appraisal and who regularly provides constructive and honest feedback.
A person who reviews progress regularly and positively.

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planning

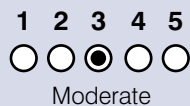
Urgency: By when will you need to meet this learning objective?

2/2/2004

Importance: What will be the impact of your learning on you, users of your services, colleagues and organisations to whom you are contracted?

My students should have high impact as their careers are dependant on exam pass. I should have some benefit as I will brooaden my knowledge base and focus on issues seen as important to RPSGB. My employess should benefit by more pharmacists being available

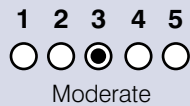
Impact on you:



Impact on the users of your services/products:



Impact on colleagues:



Impact on organisation



What activities could you undertake to meet this objective?

| Description | Action Category | Advantages/Disadvantages | Selected |
|--|--------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Discuss with university lecturers | Colleagues | They are known to me, they will understand the syllabus, but may not be able to relate to practice, should not be too time consuming. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Contact RPSGB education division for advice | Colleagues | Will have copy of syllabus – Do they issues guidance? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Source and read books and latest past papers | Structured reading | I'll know exactly what it is like but too time consuming | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Brain storm with 2003 students for ideas | Brainstorming | I already know what the students think | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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action

| Description | Date completed | Time taken | Add to CE record |
|---|----------------|------------|-------------------------------------|
| Discuss with university lecturers | 3/9/2003 | 2h 0mins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Contact RPSGB education division for advice | 30/8/2003 | 0h 30mins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

What have you learnt as a result?

By contacting the lecturers at the university and the RPSGB I'm now fully aware of the syllabus and I've also been given some past papers. I know the difference between the open and closed papers and the relevance of the calculations. I know when the exams take place and about the appeals procedure or what happens if a student fails.

evaluation

Has your learning objective been met?

Fully

Partly

Not at all

Please describe an example of how you have applied what you have learnt

Please describe any feedback you have had from those on whom your learning was to have an impact or those who have been able to observe your performance

Mark entry as completed

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Reflection

Terry stated that his learning objective was to 'improve the way he helped his students prepare for the exam'. He had a very clear vision about what he needed to learn in order to achieve this, but he didn't communicate this in his learning objective. It is very important to make this specific and measurable. With the way the learning objective is described how will he know when he has improved his help enough?

What Terry wanted to learn was:

- What exactly is in the pre-registration exam syllabus?
- Are there any exam strategies he could pass onto his students?
- What were the usual difficulties and pitfalls for this exam?
- How could he assess his students prior to the exam?

With a learning objective this specific he would know exactly when he had achieved what he had wanted to.

Planning

In planning for this entry Terry thought about the people who may be able to help him. This is natural for Terry because he prefers to learn mostly by doing things or discussing issues with peers or experts. On this occasion he chose the university and the Pharmaceutical Society to give him the information he required. This was relatively successful and he was able to get facts, such as the exam syllabus, from these bodies.

At that time Terry was unaware of other people who help pre-registration students through their exam revision. Regional education departments and teacher practitioners have a large role in supporting students through their pre-registration year. They often cover the pre-registration exam in some detail. If Terry had discussed his learning objective with others he may have found out this information. This shows the value of sharing learning objectives and brainstorming with others.

Action

Terry has been able to describe specifically what he had learnt after undertaking his chosen activities. This is a useful reminder and reinforcement of his learning. It also helps him reflect on what might still be needed and how he could apply his learning to help his students.

Evaluation

Terry rarely evaluates his entries. He likes to finish what he wants to do and move onto the next problem or learning opportunity. By doing this he doesn't get an opportunity to review what he has achieved and reflect on whether there is more to learn.

In actual fact the actions that Terry had undertaken had given him some factual information about the pre-reg exam. This had partially helped him meet his learning need. It didn't help him much with strategies used to help pass the exam and difficulties in passing the exam.

When Terry finally evaluated the cycle he realised that there was still more to do. At this stage he could have gone back to the planning stage of this cycle or started a new cycle. Terry decided that doing a mock exam himself would help him help other students. This is what he did and following this he was able to produce a 'tips and ideas' sheet for students. Doing the mock exam also increased his confidence in talking to students about their exam revision.

He now had lots of examples of helping students with their exam preparation. Feedback was received from the students, although Terry still isn't good at asking for it. Another effect of his CPD was to help Terry become a Teacher Practitioner shortly after. The knowledge that he had gained and the way he had gained it had been talked about directly in his interview and he felt that it had contributed directly to his appointment.

Summary

Terry made a very good start to this CPD cycle but failed to evaluate until after submitting his record. This was often the case for Terry who felt that it was not in his nature to look back at what he had already done or ask people for feedback. By not evaluating Terry had missed out on obtaining the most useful and practical information that he was able to use so successfully at the end.

Remember

- **Make your learning objective specific.**
 - **Communicate with others to establish how you might plan your learning.**
 - **Always evaluate – without it you can't complete the cycle and assess how successful your learning has been.**
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