CHAPTER 11

TAEPDD501A – MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Whether you wish it to or not, as an advanced practitioner your personal conduct and performance becomes a benchmark for new facilitators and staff members within your organisation. You will be a role model for behaviours, standards and personal integrity to more junior and less experienced facilitators, trainers and assessors. Modelling this conduct and behaviour should not be considered an extra chore that must be constantly worked on, but simply something that you should be mindful of in your decision-making processes.

Elements in this chapter

1. Model high standards of performance
2. Determine personal development needs
3. Collaborate with peers in professional development
4. Participate in professional development activities
5. Reflect on and evaluate professional practice

ELEMENT 1
Model high standards of performance

How do we model high standards in vocational training and assessment practice? If to model professional behaviour means to display the expected traits and behaviours of a high performing individual within the field, you could answer this question by simply saying that we can act professionally, ethically, honestly and with integrity in our everyday performance. But the question remains: what can we actually *do* to demonstrate these professional values?

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1.1 Incorporate individual responsibilities and accountabilities into personal work plans in accordance with organisational and legal requirements

1.2 Model appropriate professional techniques and strategies

1.3 Apply ethical and inclusive practices in professional practice

Plan to achieve

A method of demonstrating professionalism and high standards of performance is to take the time to refine the small things that we do. While your personal approach to facilitation and the behaviour you exhibit in front of students may be exemplary and professional in every sense of the word, transferring that attitude and approach to every task you do, every conversation or interaction you have, no matter how infrequent or seemingly unimportant to your role as a facilitator, is what distinguishes a higher standard of performance.

You may have heard the saying, 'If you want a job done, ask a busy person to do it', but have you ever considered why this is? While it would seem to make more sense to give the job to someone who is doing little, there is a reason that busy people are busy. Busy people are generally good at planning and scheduling to ensure that the jobs that need to be completed are done on time. People doing nothing will often have many things they can do, but may be either procrastinating, avoiding, lazy or apathetic, and probably have a long list of things they are 'going to get around to'. Effective planning and scheduling is conducted as part of a work plan.

Prepare personal work plans

High performing facilitators will include their own responsibilities into their personal work plans to ensure that these are not overlooked, even by accident. The personal work plan is simply a version of a to-do list for work, usually put together for the week or month, which both reminds us of our obligations and responsibilities and allows us to prioritise and manage the time we assign to our tasks. Well-known US time management expert and public speaker Dr Don Wetmore (1999) notes that (in the US) *70% of business and professional people use a "to-do" list on a regular basis to administer their "have to's"*, such as client meetings, deadlines and appointments. This allows them to apportion their time more efficiently and therefore more effectively.

Figure 11.1 Having a plan ensures that you cover all your responsibilities

If this to-do list is then expanded to include routine tasks and other work responsibilities, what may seem a daunting workload may be reduced, and you may even 'find' time you would have lost procrastinating or trying to remember what else needed to be done.

Some of the work responsibilities you might have to consider when developing a more complete work plan include:

- completing pre- or post-course paperwork
- compiling learner feedback
- updating student or learner files
- providing mentoring or coaching for colleagues
- writing post-training or post-course reports, or organisational feedback
- reviewing and updating courseware or resources
- undertaking ongoing professional development activities
- maintaining professional diaries or log books
- following up learner or participant enquiries or requests
- allowing flexibility within your plan for changing priorities, rescheduling, over-runs and other contingencies or unforseen factors.

This list is not exhaustive, and your personal responsibilities will be identified within your position or job description. Your organisational position description should also contain any legal or legislative responsibilities that you may have, such as requirements under workplace health and safety or privacy laws. For this reason it is strongly recommended that you periodically review your position description, as the role you fill can often morph over time as you take on new responsibilities and delegate or remove others.

TASK 11.1

Do you have a daily work plan? Is it simply an electronic calendar upon which you schedule appointments, or a more thorough daily plan where you block out periods in which to complete assigned tasks?

Identify the tasks you have at work for an upcoming week. For that week, assign time (in half-day, two-hour, one hour or half-hour blocks, as it suits your work structure) for your jobs, tasks and sub-tasks, including any responsibilities or accountabilities for the week. You may compile this plan in any format you choose (including any format you like that you find from internet research; however if you do this, include the internet address of the site where you found the plan format).

Model professional behaviours

The idea of modelling behaviours is based in Bandura's (1997) *Social Learning Theory*, which asserts that most behaviour is learned through observation and modelling. As a senior or experienced facilitator in your organisation, how you behave in the workspace, how you approach your facilitation activities and what techniques and strategies you employ with your learners all become models for new or less experienced facilitators in your organisation. They will often aim to copy or emulate your performance or approaches as ways to improve their own personal professional practice.

During normal training days, this can mean ensuring that you always use appropriately inclusive language and practices, remembering the learner focus and using the strategies you have developed for encouraging others to also use appropriate language and behaviours in the learning environment.

When events occur that are outside our expected norms of behaviour in the training and learning environment, advanced facilitators need to be able to extend themselves and use their developed skills and expertise to address the situation. Ensuring that the correct approaches are used in these situations with regard to ethical conduct, workplace health and safety, inclusivity and the rights and agreed standards of behaviour of all learners, demonstrates to colleagues and other facilitation staff the professional standards that you uphold.

Figure 11.2 Others will observe and emulate your performance as a way to improve their own personal professional practice

This standard of behaviour should be reflected in all your work and in your dealings with learners, other facilitators, staff and clients alike. By doing so, you are modelling the highest level of professional behaviour and standards.

Ethical and inclusive practice

While ethics and ethical behaviour conceptually are subject to much discussion and philosophising, and indeed exist as a field of study within the discipline of philosophy, we shall use the following, simplified definition: ethics refers to doing the right thing. This type of ethical behaviour is referred to as virtue ethics, describing behaviour in terms of character and virtue (Athanassoulis 2004).

Ethics encompasses the process of deciding the right course of action to take when faced with a number of options, and often is seen as analogous with integrity. Individual ethics develop in our formative years, and as we grow up are influenced by our family and social environments and societal expectations, and reflect our values and morals.

The elevation of ethical behaviour, and the study of ethics itself, goes back as far as civilisation. Greek philosophers such as Socrates and Aristotle (pre-322 BC) examined ethical behaviour in terms of virtue, or being a virtuous person (Sahakian & Sahakian 1993). The premise was that doing what is right for the greater good, rather than simply doing what benefits oneself at the expense of others, brings happiness. This selflessness, as opposed to selfishness, is essentially the modern social interpretation of ethical behaviour.

To expand and apply this to the learning domain, ethical practice for a facilitator deals with doing what is right in terms of all of our dealings with learners. Fair treatment, without prejudice, favour or discrimination, for everyone in our learning environment ensures not only that every participant gets the most from the learning experience, but also that our (and our organisation's) professional reputation is enhanced. Simply, it involves us acting with integrity.

TASK 11.2

As an employee of a large corporation, you often find at the end of the day when you get home from work that you have one of the company's disposable pens in your pocket. The pens are provided by the employer in the workplace for you to complete your work as part of their standing stationery order.

One afternoon as you are tidying up the training room in preparation for tomorrow's session, one of the other facilitators comes into the room and takes four reams of paper from the cupboards at the back of the classroom. When you ask what she is doing, she says she needs them for home as her daughter goes through a lot of paper on her printer doing homework assignments. She then proceeds to say, 'It's a big company . . . they won't notice a few sheets of paper—just like a few pens', and laughs it off.

This is the second time she has done this that you are aware of, in the past month.

1. With regard to the situation above, what would be the ethical thing to do?
2. What would you do next?
3. Do you think it is 'just like a few pens'? Write a few lines to explain your thinking in your answer.

Practising inclusivity

Inclusive practice is a concept all facilitators should be familiar with, however experience suggests otherwise. Each of the authors has been exposed to examples of facilitators failing in their responsibility to act inclusively, whether deliberately or inadvertently. It is an unfortunate fact that this is most evident in some industries where 'closed-shop' mentalities exist, where special interest groups or abrasive cultures have developed, or where elitism prevails. Where the attitude exists that 'if you're not with us, you're against us', or 'you're not as good as us', bias, favouritism and discrimination will be present. This practice by the facilitator is not only unacceptable but is also illegal.

Figure 11.3 The practice of bias, favouritism and discrimination by the facilitator is unacceptable and illegal

All practising facilitators, regardless of their experience, seniority or education, should familiarise themselves with the concept of inclusivity and in particular, with the legislative requirements of the various Commonwealth and state anti-discrimination Acts. As Acts are frequently changed, the facilitator needs to revisit the legislation from time to time to remain current.

Current Australian Commonwealth anti-discrimination Acts include:

- *Age Discrimination Act* 2004
- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act* 1986
- *Disability Discrimination Act* 1992
- *Racial Discrimination Act* 1975
- *Sex Discrimination Act* 1984

For more information on Australian Commonwealth and state anti-discrimination acts and laws, you can access the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) website at www.hreoc.gov.au/info_for_employers/law/index.html.

We must always remember that being inclusive is to involve and include everyone's diversity in our learning experiences and environment. Encouraging the inclusivity of diversity enriches our learning environment by providing us with alternative perspectives, experiences and approaches that benefit all participants—who are willing to accept that their opinion is not the only one that counts!

Communication is the key

How you communicate is the key to inclusivity, whether the communication is verbal or non-verbal. The way you speak, how you emphasise, how you stand and even your physical gestures can demonstrate your commitment to the ideals of inclusivity. Consider your non-verbal communication, think about your emphases, and always remember the culture and diversity of your audience.

If you sound positive but do not reflect this in your posture, gestures or movement, you are sending mixed messages to your learners. Be positive in both your words and persona.

The following examples are from *Vocational training and assessment: a complete course for TAE10 Certificate IV in training and assessment* (Hill, Hill & Perlitz 2010) for effective and inclusive communication practice in the learning environment:

- using an appropriate tone, pitch, volume, rhythm, speed and intensity
- making clear and definitive presentations of options or advice
- using icebreakers as appropriate to set the mood of the learners
- employing culturally sensitive words and terminology
- being aware of your own non-verbal messages (and any cross-cultural messages they may send)
- using appropriate terminology and language of the industry or profession, and only using jargon or acronyms where the entire audience is aware of their meaning
- using an open, warm communication style including effective verbal and body language (i.e. no crossed arms or other defensive postures)
- communicating clearly by enunciating and pronouncing your words clearly, and using unambiguous words or phrases

- using critical listening and questioning skills and techniques
- providing constructive and supportive feedback
- accurately interpreting verbal and non-verbal messages from learners
- inviting learners to paraphrase, or put into their own words, advice or instructions to confirm understanding
- ensuring that the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) requirements are appropriate to the learners' needs.

ELEMENT 2
Determine personal development needs

Personal professional development is about expanding your existing knowledge and skills. We develop professionally through attending courses, seminars and workshops that offer us new skills or knowledge, or develop or offer differing perspectives on our existing skills and knowledge.

The idea of professional development for vocational trainers is embedded in all levels of the qualification, since the first incarnation of the AQTF. This continues in the Standards for National VET Regulator Registered Training Organisations (2011) with the requirement under SNR 4 (Standard 4.4) that:

> *The applicant has a defined strategy, procedures and measures to ensure training and assessment services are conducted by trainers and assessors who:*
>
> . . .
>
> *c) can demonstrate current industry skills directly relevant to the training/assessment being undertaken; and*
>
> *d) continue to develop their vocational education and training (VET) knowledge and skills as well as their industry currency and trainer/assessor competence.*

LEARNING OUTCOMES

2.1 Assess own knowledge and skills against relevant benchmarks to determine development needs and priorities

2.2 Seek input from other relevant personnel about own development needs and priorities

2.3 Identify ways to update and maintain currency of vocational competency and prepare a vocational **currency plan**

2.4 Identify ways to update and maintain Vocational Education and Training (VET) knowledge and skills as well as trainer and assessor competence and prepare a VET currency plan

2.5 Combine vocational currency plan and VET currency plan into an overall professional development plan

Skills self-assessment

As an advanced facilitator and VET industry professional, you have at least two sets of skills and knowledge that both need to be maintained and developed: your trade or profession and your VET industry knowledge and skills as a trainer or facilitator.

You can only identify what is needed if you have a good understanding of your own level of skill and knowledge. While it is true that often 'we don't know what we don't know', we can benchmark what we do know—establishing a baseline from which we can begin. We must be honest with ourselves in our evaluation and not assume any knowledge, and also have a clear understanding of what we wish to achieve.

The first step is to identify the relevant benchmarks against which to assess our own skills and knowledge. Most registering authorities, industry bodies or associations will have standards by which particular levels of trade or professional competence are assessed, just as levels will differ between a basic tradesman and a technician, senior or master tradesman. Your organisation may also have requirements for advancement, such as undertaking supervisory or management studies. These may be sourced from organisational Human Resources (HR) departments or from your supervisors as job or position descriptions. Some basic questions you can ask to determine your own level of knowledge can include:

- Am I aware of the latest innovations and trends in my trade or profession?
- Am I aware of the latest innovations, emerging technologies and trends in my industry?
- Do I fully understand my role in compliance?
- Am I aware of any changes (proposed or being developed) to the competencies I am training, the qualifications or the training package?
- When are the training packages I am delivering due for review?
- Has legislation changed?
- Do I understand my obligations and responsibilities under the current legislation—the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (Cwlth)?
- How will the changes to national WHS model legislation affect me in my trade or profession, industry and training environment?
- How does the change from my state regulator and AQTF to the national ASQA and SNVR affect me?
- Do I understand the current regulatory framework (for my trade, industry and training)?

Although not impossible, it would be highly unlikely that any trainer or facilitator could honestly say that they were fully conversant with all of the above.

Priorities

If you have identified several areas of your skills and knowledge that could benefit from professional development, set priorities based on the importance of each area to your current and future needs.

EXAMPLE: As a business management trainer you may want to do project management because it is a subject you are interested in; however completing a management diploma will help with your ultimate goal of enrolling in an undergraduate program, and as this also meets organisational requirements, you may receive financial support.

Priorities that may affect your professional development plans can include:

- organisational needs
- availability of courses or training
- employment requirements
- cost of attendance
- time required to complete
- importance to your career goals.

Note that your particular priorities will be influenced by your situation and will change from time to time, so it would not be appropriate to rank these priorities in any order here.

Figure 11.4 There may be several areas of your skills and knowledge that could benefit from professional development.

Seek input from others

Managers, supervisors, HR staff, business coaches, professional development advisors, mentors and colleagues can give valuable suggestions for your professional development. A good manager should be able to provide you with mentoring assistance and suggest options for you to achieve your professional goals, including recommendations and an assessment on your current level of skills and knowledge. These same personnel within your organisation can also provide you with assistance in determining your professional development priorities.

Ask your manager or an experienced colleague to observe you undertaking a facilitation session and provide you with some professional development suggestions as part of your critical self-reflection. For your professional or vocational development, you may choose to seek out specialists in different areas of your trade, industry or sector. This can prove valuable if you are looking to specialise or concentrate on improving your knowledge in a particular area, as it can also provide you with contacts to expand your professional network.

Currency plans

Many employers will assist staff in developing professional development plans and maintain records of professional currency. Often it is the responsibility of the employee to maintain currency in their professional knowledge and skills, and it is therefore expected that you would have some form of plan in place to address this need. The truth is that very few trainers or facilitators think much about their own professional development except when asked by their employer or colleagues.

Vocational currency plan

Maintaining your vocational currency if you are a full-time trainer or facilitator can be a tricky proposition. Often your priorities will be training delivery, facilitation, assessment and managing your students, which can leave little time for you to consider your own professional or vocational currency.

Depending on your personal and professional situation, keeping abreast of current industry initiatives and trends can be achieved in a number of ways, including both self-education and externally provided education and training.

Table 11.1 Means of maintaining vocational currency

Self-initiated development	External development
Subscription to professional, trade or industry magazines, journals and newsletters	Attendance at professional development sessions with industry bodies or professional associations
Membership of professional organisations or associations	Seminars, trade shows and conferences
Research projects	Training and education courses
Worksite visits	Local/regional communities of practice
Online training and e-learning	

Your vocational currency plan may include the areas outlined in Table 11.2.

Table 11.2 Vocational currency plan

1.	A self-assessment of current skills and knowledge
2.	The areas you have identified, such as skills or knowledge gaps, for development
3.	Opportunities for development that you have identified, such as upcoming seminars, conferences, industry expos or extra training courses
4.	Procedures for vocational development, including: 4.1 *Work-team meetings* • Offering the opportunity to share knowledge of current and emerging industry practice and factors currently affecting the organisation, sector, trade or profession 4.2 *Professional practice groups* • Facilitated meetings of practitioners, or 'communities of practice', provide forums for discussion of topics affecting or relevant to the industry 4.3 *Industry contact* • Planned meetings with trade or industry representatives to discuss development opportunities 4.4 *Training* • Courses that can improve your skills and knowledge of current practice and new products or approaches 4.5 *Job rotation* • Opportunities to refresh and revitalise skills and knowledge through spending time back in the work environment, or a range of environments associated with the trade or profession 4.6 *Conferences* • Important and relevant conferences, seminars and trade shows provide access to both programmed lectures and discussion from industry experts, and opportunities for expanding your own professional network 4.7 *Research* • Self-assigned research projects to find out more about relevant vocational subjects, such as how legislation changes may affect current practice 4.8 *Return to industry* • Where the situation allows, a short-term return to the workplace may be appropriate 4.9 *Industry visits* • Visiting local industries and organisations, talking with tradespeople, professionals or managers, viewing workplace procedures and duties

VET currency plan

While maintaining vocational currency can be a tricky proposition, there are many ways to update and maintain your VET currency, whether or not you are a full-time trainer or facilitator.

In accordance with the Standards for NVR RTOs, to continue with a Registered Training Organisation as a trainer you need to maintain your VET development.

The VET sector is constantly evolving to meet the changing needs of the workplace and broader vocational training customers—employers, employees, trainees, apprentices and those learners covered by the various state- and Commonwealth-funded return-to-work programs. Without an effective method or approach, such as a VET currency plan, important changes to legislative or regulatory requirements or in funded training programs that apply to the way we work can be missed.

Figure 11.5 Trade shows and conferences can keep you up-to-date with industry trends

To ensure your currency, your VET currency plan may include:

- an outline of your professional goals in the VET sector
- your organisation's requirements for development (points/hours)
- any identified current standards and regulatory requirements
- any identified opportunities for development including:
  - updated VET qualifications, including TAA-to-TAE, upgrade to diploma or adult education degree courses
  - VET sector engagement, such as previously noted professional seminars, expos and conferences.

Professional development plan

Anyone who has conducted a training session will understand that planning is crucial—you may have heard of the 5-Ps: *Proper Planning Prevents Poor Performance*. For most of us, this is easy to see short-term, for example during our training sessions, where failure to adequately plan can have us jumping about in a panic or just looking foolish and unprofessional (or both). What is sometimes harder to focus upon, or identify value in, is the longer-term or strategic planning.

CASE STUDY OCEAN WORLD PD OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAINERS

Greg has recently completed his Certificate IV in training and assessment and has started working in the training department at Ocean World. He has been told about the requirement for ongoing professional development (PD), but is not sure what that means and so approaches his training manager and colleagues to find out what is available.

Greg's manager, Wendy, lets him know about the organisational support available, including a monthly 'community of practice' session held on the last Wednesday of every month. These sessions, she tells Greg, are convened to allow facilitators to discuss current trends in VET or VET in the news, including learning research, legislation and regulation, industry developments or facilitation and assessment styles and techniques. She also informs Greg that Ocean World supports the development of facilitators by providing up to one paid day a month (or a half-day a fortnight) for staff members to attend external PD events. Wendy also suggests Greg talks with Amir, who recently attended professional development session with a local VET association.

Amir happily shares his experience of the event, which discussed changes in the current Hospitality training package and was of real interest as the proposed changes may affect the Ocean World training system. Based on his experience, Amir suggested that Greg should come along to the next association event and then decide if it is a worthwhile investment to join. The more Greg investigated, the more he was surprised by the number of PD opportunities available, both internal and external, to the new facilitator.

Most of us have some idea of our career goals, realistic or otherwise. Some will have the goal of being a training manager in five years. Others may want to gain experience and move into training design or business development. Some facilitators have a longer-term goal of owning their own training company or managing training for large corporations. Whatever their career goals, there is generally a gap between their ambition and the reality—between the now and the five-year mark.

Professional development plans are generally developed as a result of a staff development goal-setting exercise on a quarterly, bi-annual or annual basis with your supervisor or manager, as part of an evaluation or performance review. The purpose of this is to assist you to achieve medium- to long-term career development goals through the successful completion of identified projects.

Professional development plans provide:

- a focus for our efforts through the development of short-, medium- and long-term goals
- assistance in obtaining resources (such as training, fee support, study leave, seminar attendance)
- a communications and planning tool.

Your personal professional development plan should be designed both to demonstrate your personal commitment to setting a direction for your career, and to outline the steps you will take to accomplish those goals in the short- to medium-term. Your professional development plan may include:

- your vocational currency plan and VET currency plan, plus work and personal career objectives. These can include such things as projects you want to complete by a certain date, or other objectives such as promotion, transfer or job role change
- the organisation's professional development plan as developed in consultation with your HR or staff training personnel or manager, outlining:
  - work and personal career objectives set by you or your organisation
  - identified areas requiring development, as identified by yourself and others
  - learning opportunities and activities that can fill the above development gaps, or that can provide general or specialist development of your skills and knowledge
  - relevant work activities and projects that relate to these goals, or that offer an opportunity for you to develop or consolidate new skills or knowledge
  - links to the organisational training needs profile when an organisation requires staff 'up-skilling' as part of a strategic plan because of takeover or merger, expansion, changes in the regulatory or legislative environment, or general ongoing staff development
- a link to the organisation's strategic plan, where professional development is aligned with company or organisational imperatives.

Completing a professional development plan by setting goals in consultation with your manager demonstrates a professional attitude to your own personal and professional development, as well as a commitment to the organisation. Think about what you want to achieve prior to meeting with your manager and have some options available. Always remember to set SMART goals, as setting sky-high ambitions that you cannot possibly achieve is a waste of everyone's time.

Review regularly

Finally, you should regularly review your professional development plan to ensure that you are on track to achieving the identified goals, and update your objectives as required. This includes reviewing the progress toward achieving the goals and milestones set in your VET and vocational currency plans. It is advisable to actually set a review date for each element

Table 11.2 Professional development plan example

Professional development plan (SMART)		Name: ____________			Date prepared: ___/___/___	
Priority	**Objective (for improvement)**	**Planned action**	**By (date)**	**Assisting**	**Review date**	**Success indicators**
1	*Improve my facilitation of groups with LLN needs*	*1. Complete my TAELLN401A unit of study* *2. Review organisational LLN resources* *3. Discuss needs with learners*	*Next Course*	*Training Manager* *Learners*	*Following next course*	*LLN indicator sheets completed Positive feedback from LLN-needs learners*
2	*Improve my planning skills*	*1. Sit in with program manager when planning course dates* *2. Complete resource planning for future courses*	*2 wks*	*Program manager* *Other facilitators*	*Following third course*	*Upon successful completion of three courses over the next two months*

within your plan, and make a note to yourself in your professional diary or calendar to undertake the review.

It is good practice to review the plan at least half-yearly, although many organisations encourage facilitators to undertake their own plan review quarterly. Where you are already required to undertake a review with your manager as part of your organisational performance reviews, you may wish to undertake your own personal review in the days or weeks prior.

ELEMENT 3
Collaborate with peers in professional development

Professional development is an area where you can gain greatly from the input and feedback of others. As experienced facilitators, trainers and assessors, we are aware from our own critical self-reflection that there are often times when the views of others can vary from our own perspectives with regard to our performance and achievement.

Collaboration with peers and colleagues can provide us with the opportunity to give and receive valuable feedback and enhance not only our own performance as facilitators, but the overall performance of our organisation through lifting the levels of professional knowledge and skills of all staff members.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

3.1 Observe facilitators in facilitation practice and provide constructive feedback

3.2 Invite peers to observe and provide constructive feedback on own facilitation practices

3.3 Interview assessors in relation to the judgments they make in their assessment practices and provide constructive feedback

3.4 Invite peers to question own judgments in assessment practices and provide constructive feedback

Observe and provide constructive feedback for others

As it is important to seek out others to provide feedback on your performance, it is equally important for you to reciprocate where possible and to use your experience as a senior or advanced facilitator to observe and provide critical, constructive feedback to others within your organisation or professional network.

Some organisations have organisational professional development plans that set out regular opportunities to observe other facilitators conducting facilitation and provide them with constructive feedback. If your organisation does not already provide for programmed or scheduled facilitator observations, but is dedicated to the ideal of providing professional development opportunities to the facilitation, training and assessment staff, you could suggest to your training manager or HR representative that this activity be included.

Critical or constructive?

When providing feedback to your peers, there is some debate whether the feedback should be critical or constructive. The debate exists due to a misinterpretation of the meaning of 'critical feedback', particularly when 'critical' is interpreted as simply criticism.

Critical simply means 'thorough'—you should examine all aspects of the performance of the observed individual. Do not focus simply on presentation skills, but also look at communication, both verbal and non-verbal, work organisation, engagement, quality of resources and how they manage learners. Be critical in your observation but the feedback you provide must be constructive and never negative or hurtful, or likely to belittle or embarrass.

Constructive feedback is feedback upon which positive improvements can be constructed. Constructive feedback identifies problems or concerns while providing methods, strategies and techniques to improve or overcome them, and is the opposite of destructive feedback, which is often incorrectly associated with critical feedback.

There are six rules we can apply when providing feedback for our peers. Always remember that the purpose of feedback is to assist the individual to improve their performance, and that cannot be achieved by being negative or hurtful.

1. Ask permission

Do not offer unsolicited feedback as it may be misinterpreted or unwelcome. If you happen to observe some areas of performance that could use improvement outside of a planned observation session, ask, 'Do you mind if I just mention a couple of things I noticed?' If they agree, be constructive. If they say no, respect their choice and do not mention it further.

2. Be constructive

If your feedback does not have a constructive purpose, it is not constructive feedback. Constructive feedback should always offer an alternative method or achievable solution, and is never a forum for complaining or blaming.

3. Be positive

The purpose is to improve performance, not to hurt, humiliate or put down. In fact, negative or hurtful comments can be interpreted as bullying. Even where the observed performance is poor, highlight positive performance aspects and provide positive goals.

4. Describe, don't make judgments

When you notice behaviours, actions or performance that need to be addressed, avoid identifying performance as 'good' or 'bad', but rather focus on what can be improved. Ask the observed facilitator what they thought were their strong points or what they could do better.

5. Focus on facts, not feelings

Your feedback must be on what you observed, not how you would have done it or your feelings. If the learners reacted positively, it may have been the right technique for the situation. Remember that just because your peer facilitates differently from you, it does not mean that it is wrong or needs improvement—it is just different. Focus on how effective their techniques are, and you may also learn from the exercise.

6. Feedback should be a dialogue, not a monologue

Do not do all the talking—listen to any concerns without accepting excuses. Remind them that you are only there to highlight what you have observed.

Invite feedback from peers

Ask your colleagues to observe and provide feedback on your facilitation, and encourage open and honest comment. Being able to accept balanced and constructive feedback is as important as being able to provide it. Assessing the value of the feedback and acting upon it in a timely manner is an indicative behaviour of an advanced facilitator.

The only way to approach a feedback session is to be prepared for, and open to, the opinions of others, and to remember that the purpose of feedback is to help improve your performance. Some practitioners can find it difficult to accept feedback if the observation or opinion of the observer contradicts their own perspective or opinion of their facilitation. It is at these times when you must be most prepared to reconsider your perspective, or 'change the lens', to give yourself an opportunity to see your actions through the eyes of another.

If you are inviting a peer to observe your facilitation practice, you need to confirm the details of your session with them. Ensure that they know when and where your session will be, what it will be about and provide them with any copies of materials that you may be referring to, such as your session plans, handouts or textbooks, to allow them to follow your session structure. Also it is wise to introduce them at the start of your session so as not to distract your learners or keep them wondering who is the extra person in the room taking notes.

TASK 11.3

Make a list of things you might have to do, prepare or consider, before an observation, whether you are undertaking the observation or a colleague is undertaking the observation of you.

Interview and provide feedback to assessors

Most trainers are familiar with observations and have probably had the opportunity to sit in for one of their colleagues. Assessment tool moderation and validations often constitute part of professional development, yet not all practitioners consider the role of the assessors or consider providing feedback on the decision-making part of the assessment process. Assessing is about making decisions, decision making is a process, and processes are always open to improvement.

Approaching assessment with those making judgments is quite different to facilitation, in that it is conducted as an interview rather than an observation, simply because you cannot 'observe' a decision-making process occurring inside someone's mind. Because the process is conducted as an interview, you will need to arrange a time that suits both you and the interviewee, and a location where you can discuss the assessment, with regard paid to the privacy rights of the assessment candidate. Ensure that you have a plan of how you will approach the interview and that the assessor is fully aware of the purpose of the session, to avoid embarrassing situations and feelings of unease, which can arise if the assessor feels their integrity or ethics are being challenged.

In the interview, you can approach the assessment decision making from either of two ways: look at a selection of questions across a number of assessments, or look completely and thoroughly through a single assessment. Both approaches have arguments for and against, however it must be remembered that the purpose of this action is not to moderate or validate the assessment tool or process, but improve the decision-making processes of the assessor.

Multiple assessments approach

If you choose this approach, you need to source several assessments to compare, and again there are several permutations you can choose. You have the option of comparing assessments from within a class group, or across a number of courses (which use the same assessments); looking at all or a selection of questions from two or three assessments; or comparing assessment decisions with those made by other assessors on the same assessment.

Single assessment approach

Using a single assessment can give you the opportunity to focus less on the question-by-question decisions and more broadly on the process of making the decision, but will not provide the assessor with the feedback that can arise from being exposed to the approaches used by other assessors in similar contexts.

There are a number of options to suit your circumstances, and the choice of approach you select will depend upon personal and professional factors, such as the available time and resources.

The decision-making process

Contemporary approaches to decision making generally identify six or seven steps to effective decision making. This process is broadly applicable to all types of decisions, and is even applied at an academic level by many universities in generating theories. The most commonly employed is a six-step approach, which is outlined below.

1. Define the problem or question

Many of us jump in and begin our decision making in assessment from step three, believing that the question and sample answers are already defined. This may be accurate 98% of the time, but there are always times when decisions are not so cut and dried. When a learner's answers or responses to an assessment are unexpected, redefining the problem can help in developing other interpretations, which in turn can provide insight into the learner's perspective.

2. Generating potential solutions

Once you have framed the question, look at all possible answers that may result. Is there more than one? Often in competency-based training, there are different ways of doing things that are still correct, and you should either generate your own hypotheses (possible actions/answers) or look at a range of learner-provided responses with suitable variation.

3. Evaluating the solutions

Look at each possible solution and what makes them different (where difference exists). Is there a clear correct or incorrect response? Does the response meet, or partially meet, the requirements determined in your re-definition of the problem or question?

4. Make the decision

On the basis of your evidence and evaluation, is the candidate competent? At this stage it might also be valid to consider whether there has been partial competency demonstrated.

5. Evaluate the decision

You must ask yourself whether, if challenged, you could defend the decision. Your reasons for making the decision must be sound. Where there is uncertainty in your decision, re-evaluate it against the question or situation and in the context of the responses of other candidates who have completed the assessment. In the light of previous decisions, is this one off-target, or does it cast the previous decisions in a different light?

6. Communicate your findings

The assessor feedback that is provided to the learner is an important part of the assessment process. When there is a difficult assessment decision to be made, there must be accompanying feedback to the learner. When you are looking at the decision-making processes of the assessor, these feedback notes will provide you with an insight into their choices at that time.

If you are aware of these six steps, you will have options available to deal with the out of the ordinary assessments, and this will help you to develop a better overall decision-making paradigm.

Figure 11.6 A good decision-making process leads to better decisions

Invite feedback on your assessment judgments

When we are required to make many assessment judgments every day, work or time pressures can make it something of an automated process in which we look for certain indicators upon which to determine competency. Not all assessments are straightforward, and the risk is that we may develop less-than-optimum habits.

As we have already established, we can all benefit from an external appraisal of our practices, and the same applies to our assessment decision-making process. Now that you are aware of the process and have contributed constructive feedback for others, where you are involved in assessment decision making, invite other assessors to interview you and provide feedback on your assessment decisions.

TASK 11.4

This is a personal reflection activity.

Do you recall the last time you had to make an important, difficult or challenging decision at work? For the last time you made such a decision, document how you approached it.

1. Did you make the decision by yourself, with a colleague, or by having a meeting and brainstorming with others?
2. Did you use a decision-making framework such as the one included here, or some other?
3. Would such a framework have been of assistance to you in making your decision?

ELEMENT 4
Participate in professional development activities

Professional development is a requirement for maintaining currency in almost every vocation today, and currency is critical in training and assessment. Opportunities for professional development are often plentiful if we are open to them, and most organisations provide these in-house, or give time and support to staff wishing to attend development sessions external to the workplace or during normal work time.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

4.1 Select and implement development opportunities to support continuous learning and maintain currency of professional practice
4.2 Participate in professional networks to support continuous learning and maintain currency of professional practice
4.3 Engage in processes that include observing peers in training and assessment practices and providing them feedback
4.4 Invite peers and others to observe and provide feedback on your own training and assessment practices
4.5 Use technology to maintain regular communication with relevant networks, organisations and individuals

Identify and engage in development opportunities

As facilitators, we have an obligation to remain current in both our VET facilitation and assessment practice and also our vocational knowledge and skills. As this requirement is entrenched in both industry and the standards for VET RTOs (as we established in Element 2 of this chapter), we need to use the understanding of our own needs that we have developed through feedback from others and personal reflection, with guidance from our own professional development plans, to select appropriate opportunities in which to participate.

There are several factors that we need to consider when weighing up our options. Ask yourself a few of the following questions.

What will I, or do I expect to, gain from attending?

List what you hope to gain by attending the event or activity, with consideration to any networking opportunities as well. This can allow you to assess the value of the opportunity and, where it is a recurrent event, you can make recommendations regarding the value of attending to colleagues or others in your professional network.

Does the event or activity actually present me with an opportunity to enhance my skills, knowledge or practice?

It is true that sometimes, great opportunities for professional development occur in some fantastic locations. Ask yourself whether it is the subject matter that is most appealing, or the location.

> **EXAMPLE:** If you are going to a seminar on facilitation techniques on the Gold Coast, knowing full well that what is on offer is all very familiar to you, you are actually going on a junket and not for professional development. It is quite hypocritical that when it is someone else going on such an organisationally-supported 'junket', such as local politicians, councillors, even our own managers or supervisors, we complain bitterly—yet more often than not, we see nothing wrong when taking such an opportunity, even justifying it to ourselves in any number of ways, commonly; 'I deserve this', 'I've worked hard for this', or 'It's my turn'.

Is organisational support available?

Your organisation may provide you with support, in the form of paid leave to attend, assistance with travel and accommodation expenses, and even attendance fees. Consider approaching your manager, HR department or staff development officer and enquiring about any organisational assistance on offer.

Many government and larger private organisations will provide professional development funds up to a pre-determined limit, on the basis of time served with the company or an amount per annum, as part of employment contracts or enterprise bargaining agreements.

Do I have the time, or can I make the time, to attend?

Despite a busy work schedule, some opportunities may be one-off events that are simply too good to pass up. You may be able to secure support from your organisation, but if the event is sufficiently important and there is no opportunity for organisational support, consider taking time-off to attend. It is also good practice to ensure that you arrange for a colleague to cover your work commitments while you are away.

Participate in professional networks

Throughout this book, in different areas, we have highlighted the many benefits that are available from your engagement with a professional network. Whether your professional network includes others from within your own organisation or extends to other organisations and professional associations and bodies, your professional network can:

- provide opportunities for business, work or professional development
- broaden your professional horizon by offering multiple perspectives

- provide professional opinion, encouragement, advice and support
- keep you abreast of potential or possible upcoming changes in the industry
- improve or increase your industry and facilitation knowledge and skills
- allow you to share or enhance your skills and knowledge through mentoring or coaching opportunities
- keep you in contact with leaders or experts in the field
- give you the opportunity to make friends!

As a more senior facilitator, you should take the opportunity to step up and become involved, facilitating development sessions for others and adding to the group dialogue with your own experiences and knowledge.

Engaging in observation and feedback opportunities

In Element 3 of this chapter we discussed observing and providing feedback to colleagues on their practices in both facilitation and assessment. While the benefits that can be drawn from this activity in terms of feedback for the observed facilitator are unquestioned, this observation can also prove to be a positive development session for your own practice. The opportunity to engage in observation of fellow practitioners should offer benefits in both directions.

We become accustomed to doing things a certain way within our own practice and work environment, so the process or scope of in-house observation can be limited by the existing culture within our organisation. Without the opportunity to introduce external perspectives, we run the risk of unintentionally strengthening an existing culture within our facilitation practice.

Figure 11.7 The opportunity to engage in observation of fellow practitioners should offer benefits in both directions.

In any organisation, cultures of practice develop that are a result of many factors—such as the style of leadership and management within the organisation, industry pressures, personalities and the size of the organisation—plus a number of smaller, less tangible contributing factors, such as the willingness of a particular middle manager to adequately resource a training event, or the attitude of a senior line manager toward implementing cost-savings measures. This culture can impact on how we facilitate, and even what we see and how we see it, when we observe others. This is where a broader professional network can be of assistance.

Consider becoming involved in processes where you undertake observation and feedback sessions for other trainers and facilitators in different areas or departments of your organisation, or other allied training organisations with which organisational relationships exist, such as partnering agreements or memoranda of understanding.

Naturally, some sensitivities associated with commercial interests may need to be addressed, however this should not be insurmountable given adequate planning and consultation prior to the observation process. Any such process should begin with an invitation to observe through your professional network, and include some type of planned approach that engages and consults the immediate manager or supervisor of the facilitator to be observed.

Some concerns that managers or supervisors may have, and that you must address if present, include health and safety considerations, such as your presence in the training environment necessitating an induction session; protection of any intellectual property associated with training resources developed or owned by the organisation; client privacy and confidentiality; learner confidentiality; and interruption to other training programs.

Invite peers and others to observe and provide feedback

Continuing with this approach, you may also offer other facilitators from within your professional network the opportunity to observe your facilitation or assessment practice and invite them to provide feedback. In this case you must include your immediate management in the process of planning and conducting the observation as a designated professional development session.

Importantly, when dealing with colleagues or peers from other organisations, you have a responsibility to your employer or organisation to preserve confidentiality regarding business matters. We have already mentioned learner confidentiality, but in a broader business context this would include such things as discussing current, future and prospective clients and any upcoming business opportunities.

As both of the above opportunities represent a learning event for you, any such activities should be documented as professional development sessions.

Use technology to maintain regular communication

Email has become one of the major forms of communication for business. It allows for the transfer of documented material and resources at great speed across the globe. Professional networks use email and email lists to maintain contact and provide information to network members or associates.

Specifically designed, computer-based networking sites for business (enter 'business networking' in your search engine) have developed to provide professionals with social media-like interfaces that allow them to link to one another and share their professional profiles, experience, education and opportunities.

Electronic media conventions

Differing conventions apply to each of the common technologies we employ to communicate professionally. The key is to remember that this is *professional* communication we are discussing, not social communication. Our communications must always reflect this and must not become too familiar, and never insulting, rude or inappropriate.

SMS and text messaging

When texting or sending an SMS for work purposes, it is best not to abbreviate or use 'text talk' in reply to work colleagues, clients or other professional contacts. However, there are some exceptions. As SMSs are character limited messages, you may employ abbreviations that are acceptable in general correspondence—such as for days of the week, common business terms such as ASAP (as soon as possible) or WRT (with regard to). It is best to use these only when you expect that the receiver will understand the meaning of the initialisation. Never use smiley faces or other emoticons in professional communication.

Grammar and correct spelling are also important when using SMS for professional contacts, unless you are familiar with the recipient on a personal basis, as it can provide a poor impression of you to the other person. Ensure that you use the correct spelling—do not write 'your working' when you should say 'you're working', or 'to hard' when you mean 'too hard'. These mistakes may seem small but attention to detail is often critical within a business network.

It is also worth considering whether what you need to send, or how you intend to connect with your network, is not better done via a different means. If you need to send a lot of information, or a lot of text, you should consider responding via email if possible.

Email

Using the telephone to maintain contact with others in your professional network can be problematic. Just as you cannot take calls during your training day, your contacts may be involved in facilitation or assessment, in a meeting or otherwise engaged in work when you call. For maintaining communication with your networks and professional associations, email is the most obvious and often preferred mode. Email allows for non-immediate or non-urgent contact with other members of your network, and should therefore be considered as the primary method of contact.

Figure 11.8 Email should be the primary means of contact for your professional network

A standard has developed for email and most people are familiar with the rules that apply, but apart from knowing that ALL CAPS = SHOUTY AND ANGRY, there are a few other points worth considering before emailing. The following 'email etiquette' is an amalgamation of several sources, including a few from the authors' personal experiences.

Email etiquette

1. **Keep professional email on subject** unless the recipient is a personal friend. In this case, you should probably keep it for home and use your personal email.
2. **The subject line should describe the content.**
3. **Use an appropriate tone.** Sarcasm, parody and irony do not translate well into text on a page, and are very easily misunderstood. They do not belong in professional communication.
4. **Do not use too many CCs.** Send your email message to the people it is intended for, and to nobody else. Only 'copy in' those who have to know about it.
5. **Spelling and grammar are important.** This is not a text message, so 'text talk' is not appropriate. Use a spellchecker at least, but remember to set your language to 'Australian English'—American English is not our language. Also, spellchecker cannot perform miracles. Poor spelling and grammar makes you stand out in a bad way.
6. **Check your addresses.** Check and double-check that the right person is getting the email. You may not want the whole office to know.
7. **Remember it is not private** and your business email belongs to the company. You can use your private email to keep in touch with your professional network.
8. **Email is still legally 'in writing'**, and can rarely be undone once you press 'send'. Never write anything in an email to any professional network contact that is embarrassing to you or your recipient, or that is inappropriate, bigoted, illegal or stupid.

9. **Email is not for arguments.** Remember point 8. Add 'We'll discuss this later' and talk to the recipient.
10. **Be careful what you forward on.** Forwarded and replied-to email software builds long email trails. Too late you may realise that you have accidentally emailed a long thread that included too much information or some embarrassing comment about somebody along the way.

ELEMENT 5

Reflect on and evaluate professional practice

Reflecting on personal performance provides us with an insight into our own behaviours, approaches and problem-solving and decision-making processes. Further, through developing our reflective approach we become better practitioners. In a journal article on developing reflective practices, Roberts (2009) notes:

> *Schön (1983) argues that reflective practice is a key attribute of being a professional... Whilst the concept of reflective thinking is generally first attributed to Dewey (1933), it is Schön who developed the link between reflection and professional thinking, suggesting that this is how professionals deal with complex and often ambiguous problems.*

By making reflection a part of our practice, rather than something we do as an afterthought or only when reminded about it, we improve not only our daily practice, but our ability to deal with more complex issues when they arise.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

5.1 Research developments and trends impacting on professional practice and integrate information into work performance

5.2 Use feedback from colleagues and clients to identify and introduce improvements in work performance

5.3 Document professional development activities, learning and planned changes in behaviours in accordance with the organisation's systems and processes

Research developments and trends

Undertaking research is not as simple as it sounds, and the ability to research effectively is a skill that universities invest a great deal of effort developing in their students. Most universities offer introductory courses to students wishing to develop research skills as part of undergraduate study, and some offer abridged versions of this information free to anyone via their websites.

Researching effectively relies on you being able to find relevant information on the topic of interest.

> **EXAMPLE:** An amateur mechanic is looking for information on a certain type of car. A simple Google search would return more than 2.38 billion pages on makes and models of cars, but much of this information is irrelevant if we are seeking specific information on the 1965 Jaguar E-Type. However if we search on only '1965 Jaguar E-Type' we may actually also miss information that could be valuable, depending on the functionality of our search engine and the options we employ. We may not pick up pages that list 'Jaguar XE 1965', for example.

Being effective in our research also hinges on the ability to refine searches once we have large amounts of information. Advanced options in internet search engines allow us to sort by many methods (see Table 11.3).

Table 11.3 Internet search methods

'Search in results' allows you to search for more information only in the pages you have already filtered	Search 'Jaguar', then in results search for '1965'
Individual words in any order	*'Jaguar' 'E-type' 'XE' '1965'*
Exact phrases	*'Jaguar E-Type'*
Either/or words	*'Jaguar OR E-Type'*
Excluded words	To exclude information on the convertible version, *'-convertible'* or *'-cabriolet'*

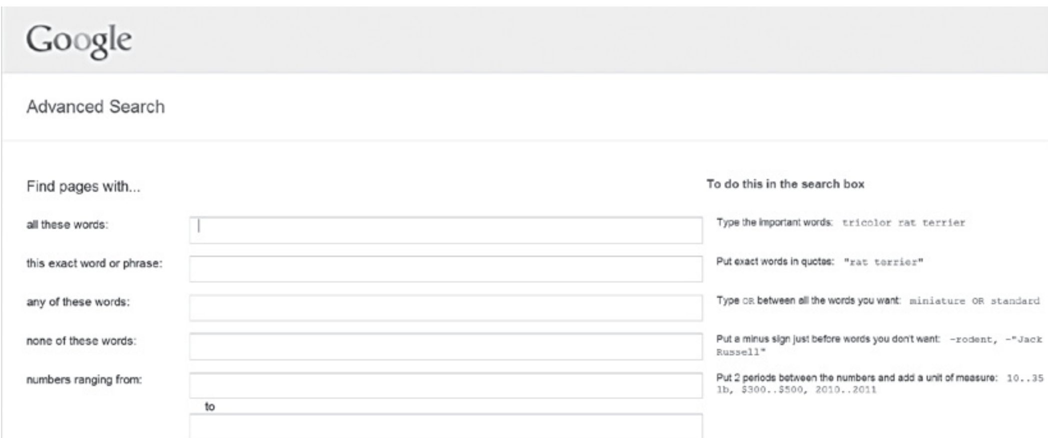

Figure 11.9 The advanced search option in Google

Occasionally you may find that your results do not find what you expect. You may need to consider synonyms for the words you are searching for: if you are looking for 'reflective practices', you might also try searching for 'self-reflection' or 'contemplative practice'.

Resources

There are many sources of information online to assist you in your research, both with the techniques in conducting the research and with actual information, both VET-related and vocationally relevant. As mentioned in Chapter 4 (Element 1), the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) provides regular information on VET research, without charge to registered users, and registration is free.

TASK 11.5

Identify, list and briefly describe two sources of information that can keep you up-to-date with industry and VET developments.

Integrating research results into your practice

While it may not be practical every time, there may be findings from your research that you can integrate into your own facilitation practice. Before you do, you must seriously consider whether there will be any benefit in including these approaches, techniques or methods in your context. There are many anecdotal examples of practitioners who try to impress by implementing or incorporating cutting-edge techniques and methods only to negatively impact their facilitation practice. If you can see an upside to including this in your facilitation practice, consider also modifying the technique or method to suit your context.

Use feedback to identify and introduce improvements

We have gathered feedback from a range of sources on our facilitation and assessment practices, and now we must compile it into some useful information from which we can develop remedies or plans for improvement.

Where feedback identifies issues that can be dealt with on the spot or in the short term through simple changes in wording, behaviour or approach to certain areas, we can devise and implement strategies for these immediately. We could easily implement changes to the way we address people within certain cultural groups, or introduce a new resource that incorporates new industry information.

However, there are times when feedback can alert us to systemic or program issues that affect the way we facilitate, that may need to be addressed over a longer period or demand more change than can be implemented by the next session. In such cases it is advisable to again develop a planned approach to introducing such changes, such as organising extra training or attendance at development sessions for yourself. These plans can then be added to your facilitation and professional development plans.

Document professional development activities

After undertaking a professional development activity, whether time back in the workplace for your vocation or time spent attending a VET seminar, document your experience or findings for future reference. Your organisation may have specific requirements for documenting this activity, and you need to check with your administrative personnel or management to ensure that these requirements are met.

It may prove useful to keep track of these activities, and others that you feel are of professional benefit, in your own training or professional diary. This can then be referred to if you later find that organisational records are incomplete, or for your own needs.

ASSESSMENT 11.1: Questions

Assessment instructions	Answer the following questions thoroughly by providing full explanations and workplace examples where relevant. Note that the key action words are italicised for emphasis. Information to answer the underpinning knowledge questions may be located in other chapters of this book or in the further readings posted in this chapter
1.	*Source* and *include* a copy of your oragnisation's professional development processes or procedures. *Describe* the different resources your organisation provides to you in terms of assistance for professional development.
2.	*List* at least two professional networks (including associations) with which you are associated, and *describe* what benefits they provide to you in terms of professional and vocational development.
3.	*Describe* how your professional development impacts upon the objectives and goals of your organisation.
4.	There have recently been several major changes in the regulatory landscape of VET in Australia, as well as an economic shift. In no more than four paragraphs, *describe* one of these changes and how it has affected your organisation's VET practice.
5.	*List* and *describe* four professional development activities you have undertaken in the past twelve months. *Include* details such as who provided the activity, where and when it was held (date) and topics covered.

ASSESSMENT 11.2: Workplace project

Assessment instructions	Evidence from this project will be assessed in accordance with the portfolio checklist decision-making rules provided by your assessor. While it is expected that the majority of evidence will be collected from your workplace activities, additional simulated activities may need to take place in order to provide sufficient evidence. Critical aspects of evidence for the 3 units: • TAEDEL502A Provide advanced facilitation practice, • TAEASS501A Provide advanced assessment practice, and • TAEPDD501A Maintain and enhance professional practice are intended to be assessed in the context of a 'practicum'. A holistic assessment covering these three units should be considered. It is recommended that the tasks from this chapter are collected as evidence by the assessor. Ensure that you complete the tasks as defined within the chapter and hand them in at the completion of your assessment.
Evidence required	The candidate must demonstrate evidence of the ability to: • model appropriate professional techniques and strategies • contribute to their own professional development plan • network and use technology to gain information and other support • participate in professional development activities and maintain currency of skills and knowledge in VET sector as well as vocational area • document, reflect and discuss with peers evidence of feedback from at least 10 hours of facilitation practice and interviews with assessors covering the assessment of at least 10 candidates.
Range and conditions	As this requires evidence to be collected over time, evidence should be gathered in the workplace wherever possible and placed into a portfolio. Where no workplace is available, a simulated workplace must be provided to meet these requirements.
Materials and resources required	Access to computer/internet/appropriate software to generate documentation of LLN activities. Assessment must ensure access to training products, such as training packages and accredited course documentation.
Assessor intervention	There is no requirement for assessor intervention with this project, however, assistance in clarifying assessment tasks is permitted.
Reasonable adjustments	In the event that you have difficulty understanding the assessment tasks due to language or other difficulties, your assessor will attempt to make reasonable adjustments to the assessment format in order to afford you every opportunity to achieve competency.
Decision-making rules	Facilitator guide/McGraw Hill website provides benchmark answers, templates and checklists.

Competency map

Element	Performance criteria		Task	Assessment	Relates to page
1 Model high standards of performance	1.1	Incorporate individual responsibilities and accountabilities into personal work plans in accordance with organisational and legal requirements	11.1	11.2	340–342
	1.2	Model appropriate professional techniques and strategies	11.2	11.1(2), 11.2	343
	1.3	Apply ethical and inclusive practices in professional practice		11.2	344–347
2 Determine personal development needs	2.1	Assess own knowledge and skills against relevant benchmarks to determine development needs and priorities	11.4	11.2	347–348
	2.2	Seek input from other relevant personnel about own development needs and priorities		11.1(1), 11.2	349
	2.3	Identify ways to update and maintain currency of vocational competency and prepare a vocational currency plan		11.1(1)(2)(3), 11.2	350–351
	2.4	Identify ways to update and maintain Vocational Education and Training (VET) knowledge and skills as well as trainer and assessor competence and prepare a VET currency plan		11.1(1)(2), 11.2	351
	2.5	Combine vocational currency plan and VET currency plan into an overall professional development plan		11.1(1)(5), 11.2	352–356
3 Collaborate with peers in professional development	3.1	Observe facilitators in facilitation practice and provide constructive feedback	11.3	11.2	356, 357
	3.2	Invite peers to observe and provide constructive feedback on own facilitation practices	11.4		358
	3.3	Interview assessors in relation to the judgments they make in their assessment practices and provide them constructive feedback			358–360
	3.4	Invite peers to question own judgments in assessment practices and provide constructive feedback			361

Element		Performance criteria	Task	Assessment	Relates to page
4 Participate in professional development activities	4.1	Select and implement development opportunities to support continuous learning and maintain currency of professional practice		11.1(2)(3), 11.2	362–363
	4.2	Participate in professional networks to support continuous learning and maintain currency of professional practice		11.1(2)(5), 11.2	363–364
	4.3	Engage in processes that include observing peers in training and assessment practices and providing feedback		11.2	364–365
	4.4	Invite peers and others to observe and provide feedback on own training and assessment practices			365
	4.5	Use technology to maintain regular communication with relevant networks, organisations and individuals			366–368
5 Reflect on and evaluate professional practice	5.1	Research developments and trends impacting on professional practice and integrate information into work performance		11.1(1)(2)(4)(5), 11.2	368–370
	5.2	Use feedback from colleagues and clients to identify and introduce improvements in work performance		11.2	370–371
	5.3	Document professional development activities, learning and planned changes in behaviours in accordance with the organisation's systems and processes		11.1(1)(2), 11.2	371

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